CAPTURING THE STRUGGLE:
UNDERSTANDING THE METACOGNITIVE STRATEGIES FOR ACADEMIC WRITING OF MATURE,
WORK-BASED LEARNERS AT UNIVERSITY

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Abstract

This longitudinal, qualitative, practitioner research study investigated the metacognitive strategies that twelve adult, work-based learners studying on a foundation degree used to undertake academic written assignments. The research lens of complexity and transformational theory provided a unique conceptual and methodological framework to explore the learning experiences of the participants over the two year period of their degree. Data were gathered from 'feedforward' tutorials with the learners and their assessment grades. The study articulates the challenges, evident in the learners' narratives, as struggles. These struggles were aligned with concepts of emergence within a complexity framework and a key finding from the data is the importance of these in relation to transformational learning. Where transformational learning was evident this extended beyond the cognitive, to include emotional and social dimensions. Powerful emotional responses surrounded the struggles experienced by the learners. The study focused on professional, personal and academic identities and on the interconnectedness of nested realities where each interacts dynamically for these learners. Concepts of self-belief, self-efficacy and agency were central to this investigation into the metacognitive awareness of adult learners where motivation and purpose for learning presented as critical factors for undertaking the Foundation Degree. Academic writing strategies and the individual approaches to undertaking written assignments were analysed to explore implications

for practice within universities to meet the complex learning needs of non-traditional, adult learners. The findings have informed a proposed model for an architype tutor who is specifically able to provide the particular conditions to foster transformational learning and who addresses equity and power between the adult, work-based learner and the academy.

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Preface

This longitudinal qualitative research study explored the challenges that twelve adult, work-based learners experienced when undertaking written assignments for a Foundation Degree (FdA). Fundamentally, the research focus was on learning, and particularly transformational learning, through the lens of complexity theory. The synthesis of transformational learning theory (Mezirow, 2009; Taylor & Jerecke, 2009; Illeris, 2014) with complexity theory (Haggis, 2008; Fenwick, Edwards & Sawchuk, 2011; Byrne, 2005) presented a unique and original way of 'seeing' the cognition of the participants and acknowledged the 'multiply' networked dynamics of different sites of learning (Haggis, 2008, p. 167). It has enabled observation of learning beyond the cognitive to capture emotional and social dimensions. In adopting this theoretical framework, points of struggle and shifts in learning were visible, affording better understandings on which to build a pedagogical approach that is representative of the different learning needs for this particular typology of adult learners.

An aspect of learning is metacognition, thinking about thinking, and has been the particular focus of this research project. Negretti (2012) suggests that there is a paucity of research that supports understanding of the role that metacognition plays in the learning experiences of novice academic writers. Indeed, she poses that 'no study has so far taken a qualitative and longitudinal approach to investigate the *nature* [sic] of the metacognitive dynamics students engage in as they learn to write' (2012, p. 29). I argue that this research study has contributed to this body of knowledge and specifically in the field of adult work-based learning and academic writing where there is limited research evidence. A wealth of research focusses on undergraduate experiences of academic writing (Wingate, 2012; Lea & Stierer, 2000;

Clark & Ivanič, 1997; Grabe & Kaplan, 1996; Negretti, 2012) and much on those of postgraduates, some of which include work-based dimensions (Cameron, Nairn, & Higgins, 2009; Caffarella & Barnett, 2000; Wellington, 2010; Murray, Thow, Moore, & Murphy, 2008; Badley, 2009; Hunt, 2001; Gadsby & Cronin, 2012). Other studies have investigated non-traditional learners' struggles with academic writing (Lillis, 2001) looking at adult learners undertaking an undergraduate degree. As such the focus of this research that considered the metacognitive processes of work-based undergraduate learners offered the opportunity to contribute aspects of original knowledge to the landscape of current literature.

This research study explored the struggles that learners encountered when undertaking academic writing for a work-based Foundation Degree (FdA) in Applied Studies (early childhood) at Bishop Grosseteste University (BGU). BGU is a small Higher Education (HE) Institution situated in the city of Lincoln, in the east of England. For over ten years I have taught on the FdA programme and observed the challenges that FdA learners experience. In this research I have taken the role of practitioner researcher and was actively sited within the research context. Cousin (2009, p. 152) states that in undertaking practitioner research, it is possible that 'what we look for is often hooked into our own perspective and values, particularly regarding those who are not like 'us'' (Cousin, 2009, p. 152). As Cousin (2009) suggests this research is foregrounded in my own perspective and values and these have been the 'hook' and motivating purpose for this study. Although in contrast to Cousin's view, it is the similarities I hold with the participants rather than the differences that formed the central tenet for undertaking the project. At first glance, the participating learners in this study may not be perceived as like me, an academic tutor teaching in a university. However, my personal history of academic self-belief has resonance with the learners on the FdA whose early formal academic career has also influenced their perceptions of themselves as learners. The journey to my current role was not without challenge as my academic career did not start well. At the end of my primary school years, my parents were told by my teacher that she did not predict that I would get any O' levels

due to my lack of application to learning. From a familial background that values education, I was exited from the state sector and sent to a private boarding school where it was hoped that I would change my aptitude for learning and achieve better outcomes than those predicted. I struggled with the boarding aspect of this secondary schooling, particularly the emotional and social aspects of being in this learning context. Also, the primary teacher's prediction left an indelible imprint on my academic self-belief and I never fully regarded myself as an able or successful learner. It has only been in my post-graduate studies as a mature, work-based, adult learner that I have begun to experience greater self-belief and agency with learning. The change in academic identity, and specifically as an academic writer, has emerged from the careful tuition I have received from significant people as an adult returning to formal learning. In examining my personal history, I have been able to identify the critical aspects of my struggles that have shaped the focus and purpose for this research. Unlike me, many FdA learners such as those in this study, enter HE with limited formal qualifications although like me, as adults their interest in learning has been reignited through their professional lives as practitioners undertaking professional, academic and vocational qualifications. Where learning is purposeful beyond the extrinsic academic qualification and where new understandings can have impact on professional lives, a renewed motivation to study emerges. Here is where my shared perspective as a learner can draw parallels with the participants and where I perceive my role as a practitioner researcher was at its most effective. My academic identity and history informs the ontological considerations for this study. Equally, the consideration of difference was important and the view from Cousin (2009) of those not like 'us' has resonance and which forms a central focus throughout this thesis.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Mapping the contexts

The contexts for research form an essential landscape for understanding the specific phenomena under investigation. In this introductory chapter, discussion focuses on three key contexts for this study. These are articulated as nested sites with other sub-sites, or contexts within them; *the academy* with the nested site of Bishop Grosseteste University (BGU); *Foundation Degrees* with the sub-context of the particular programme under investigation, the FdA in Applied Studies (early childhood); and thirdly, the *adult, work-based learner.* I turn now to discuss these three contexts, although whilst presented separately, they have been viewed as nested and intersectional.

1.1.1 The Academy

For this study, the term 'the academy' refers to the social and academic world of HE and represents the broad collective of places of study in the United Kingdom (UK); universities and colleges. There are over 150 universities in the UK, many of which are long established and the UK is positioned in the world as having a 'world-leading' HE sector (Business, Innovation and Skills Committee, 2015). Places of study are tangible, although the academy represents more than buildings and physical spaces. Bourdieu uses the term 'social space' (1989, p. 19) to describe a way of being that extends beyond a physical space and which 'tends to function as a symbolic space, a space of

lifestyles and status groups characterised by different lifestyles' who are systematically linked among themselves. The academy is a social space that represents a distinct status group which has its own body of knowledge, language, and communication tool of academic writing which systematically links the group. The status referred to here is awarded by a society that values what is known and recognised as academic knowledge and a particular way of thinking. Those seeking to enter and then join the social space are vetted by the status group against agreed parameters established within them, usually academic awards. Academic awards are evidence of the specific knowledge and cognition privileged by the academy and which ultimately hold status within it:

> Thus titles of nobility, like educational credentials, represent true titles of symbolic property which give one a right to the share in the profits of recognition (Bourdieu, 1989, p. 21).

In recognising the social status of the academy, a particular form of power is acknowledged, that of symbolic power (ibid.). Notions of power and the value of knowledge were a concern of this study where educational awards are a form of currency. The term currency has resonance where learners pay to attend university, although it extends beyond this to include the social status of gaining an academic award and becoming part of the learning community that is the academy. Universities are, among other things, 'knowledge producing systems' (Greenwood & Levin, 2008, p. 65) through academic research and academic programmes of study. In November 2015, the Government published a Green Paper for HE, *Fulfilling our Potential: Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice* which stated as core aims to 'raise teaching standards, provide greater focus on graduate employability, widen participation in higher education, and open up the sectors to new high quality entrants' (DfBIS, 2015, p. 7). These proposed aims widen the purposes of the university beyond a knowledge producing system that Greenwood and Levin suggest (2008) and which provide important considerations for this study, specifically in the notions of raising teaching standards, employability and widening participation. These

aspirational aims of government are not unproblematic. In relation to raising teaching standards, Bourdieu, Passeron and De Saint Martin (1994, p. 6) argue that the philosophical pedagogy within the academy reflects the 'superior level of the education system' which academics occupy where there is a 'disdain' for reflexive and explicit teaching approaches:

> Their [academics] rejection of an explicit teaching
> practice follows from a perception of the student
> favoured by the professorial craft, one which is
> armed with all the certitudes and all the blindnesses
> of cultural ethnocentricism (ibid.).

If, as Bourdieu et al. (1994) suggest that the academy rejects or resists a transparent pedagogy, then the academy as a social space may struggle to change in light of this new aim defined by the government (DfBIS, 2015). The notion of resistance is of relevance as where symbolic power is afforded to the academy and a need to protect this position, then it is unsurprising that those permitted to join it have done so through their aptitude in adhering to the conventions and demonstrating the characteristics that define it that equally reinforces the 'cultural ethnocentricism' as Bourdieu et al. (1994, p. 6) suggest. This study seeks to expose the impact of cultural ethnocentrism on adult work-based learners through the mechanism of where this is most visible; academic writing.

The distinct characteristic of the academy is its use of academic writing as a means to create and establish knowledge:

> Academic writing practices and conventions can, therefore,
> be regarded as one of the means by which the academy
> produces, defines and polices itself as a distinct and
> privileged social institution (French, 2010, p. 20).

Academic writing conventions include referencing of others' work using specific rules associated with how these are presented and in the building of an argument through analysis, evaluation and synthesis. Typically, academic writing also adopts a particular

formal, objective authorial voice; dependent on the discipline with which the writing is concerned.

Wingate (2012, p. 145) states that the 'argumentative essay is the most common genre that undergraduate students have to write' and one which learners have to master. Academic writing is specific to the academy and represents a particular discourse which Lillis (2001, p. 14) states is an 'ideologically inscribed institutional practice of mystery' and which has a body of research associated with it.

Broadly, the field of research literature on writing grew from the 1980s and marked the beginning of much academic interest in re-examining the processes of writing and the teaching of it within schools. I was introduced to the seminal works of Frank Smith (1982) and Elbow (1981) as an undergraduate teacher trainee around this time and recall the influential changes in the teaching of writing in the primary school sector. These texts have remained an important aspect of my thinking for this study. Focus on academic writing in HE institutions emerged later with significant scrutiny of academic writing in the late 1990s with the critical framework articulated by Lea and Street in 1998 and continues to be of interest with increasing focus on practice and theory in the UK (Ganobcsik-Williams, 2010). The focus on academic writing emerged from HE's 'unprecedented growth in student numbers and a diversity of students' cultural and educational backgrounds' (ibid., p. 10). The introduction of FdAs into the academy in 2001 contributed to the diversity of the student body. More contemporary literature (Lea & Jones, 2011; Pfannensteil, 2010) focuses on digital literacies within the academy and the impact of the complex interrelationships between literacies and technologies.

In 2004, Street continued to develop the critical framework for academic writing which was built on earlier work of concepts of autonomous and ideological literacies (1984) and his work with Mary Lea (1998). Street (2004, p. 14) identified three broad pedagogical approaches to academic writing: the study skills approach, the academic socialisation approach and academic literacies approach. The study skills approach

assumes that literacy is a set of 'atomised skills which students have to learn' (Street, 2009, p. 348). This approach emphasises surface features such as spelling, grammar and punctuation and 'conceptualises student writing as technical and instrumental' (ibid.). This pedagogical approach focuses on 'fixing' problems with learners' academic writing. The learner is positioned within a deficit model that requires a generic set of skills to be taught and once acquired, is one who can write academically. This approach led to a refinement of the meaning of the 'skills' involved and a broader attention to a 'learning and socialisation approach' (Lea & Street, 2000, p. 34).

The academic socialisation approach is situated within a constructivist theory of learning and an understanding of the learner's 'cultural context' to enable the enculturation of the learner into the academy (Lea & Street, 2000, p. 34). The socialisation approach, however, continues to position the learner in a deficit position that requires change from the learner to become encultured into the academy rather than the academy adapting to the learner's particular context, or contexts.

As discussed, in 1998 Lea and Street posited the 'academic literacies' approach that 'moves beyond other models by challenging the assumption that students must simply learn the conventions of writing at university' or that the academy assists in the enculturation of the learner (Ganobcsik-Williams, 2010, p. 10). The academic literacies approach challenges the previously held deficit model assumptions in which the learner needs to adapt to the academy, instead viewing the university as the active agent in using new technologies, new forms of writing and studying that support the increasingly diverse learner. It 'views student writing and learning as issues at the level of epistemology and identities rather than skill or socialisation' (Street, 2004, p. 7). Haggis (2003, p. 98) acknowledges the 'richness and complexity of the multiple contexts' which each learner brings to the academy, and through this acknowledgment suggests that the academy has to reconsider the perceptions of the learner as a deficit model, or in need of enculturation. Rather, she advocates that study at HE level should be viewed as an apprenticeship into new ways of thinking and

expression for learners, which are explicitly modelled. This positions the novice academic writer as an agent for change, through a closely scaffolded approach by a significant other, namely a tutor. Lillis (2001) corroborates this, suggesting a pedagogical approach that combines different types of dialogue between the student-writer and the tutor-reader to support academic writing within the academic literacies discourse. Detailed work with learners' early academic writing drafts can support 'situated, working understanding' of what elements of academic writing look like (Haggis, 2003, p. 101). Indeed, there is a paucity of research that focuses on the way that learners learn, or fail to learn, through interaction with texts and writing (ibid.). This study seeks to contribute to this developing and important body of research knowledge.

As Street (2004, p. 7) corroborates:

> Viewed from a cultural and social practice approach, rather than in terms of educational judgments about good and bad writing, students' struggles with academic writing give us insights into the nature of academic literacy in particular and academic learning and institutions in general.

When viewed in this way, academic writing is seen as complex and intrinsically bound with social and emotional dimensions of the writer that influence its success beyond that of the cognitive. Academic writing is a creative, problem solving activity. As such, this research study investigated the participants' struggles with academic writing to offer insight into the nature of academic literacies for this specific group of learners at BGU. This project is sited within the context of the expansion of HE in relation to widening participation agendas (QAA, 2015; DfBIS, 2015), and the government's increasing focus on teaching and learning within the academy.

A specific site for the research is BGU which is nested within the wider academy. BGU, an Anglican foundation established in 1862, is an independent and specialist HE provider with a long reputation for the academic and vocational study of education. In 2006 it gained taught degree awarding powers, and in 2012 was awarded full University status. Traditionally, BGU's reputation is in teacher education although more recently, the portfolio of academic programmes is more diversified and reflective of the increasingly open market in HE. It remains, however, a small University with approximately 2200 students. BGU's history in teacher education has meant that a large number of the academic staff started their careers as teachers in the state sector. This is in contrast to other universities where academic tutors have begun their careers in HE primarily as researchers.

I am typical of tutors at BGU, as I started my career as a primary school teacher specialising in teaching children between ages 3 – 9 years. I worked for a number of years before having my own children in the mainstream school sector, and then returned to teaching in a part-time capacity. Following this, I worked within a Further Education College teaching courses at level 2 and 3 for those volunteering as support staff in schools and the early years sector. During this time, I completed a part-time Masters Degree in Education at BGU and worked as a visiting tutor on the FdA until I secured full-time employment as a permanent staff member in 2008. As a qualified teacher, I consider that a reflexive pedagogy is at the heart of my practice and ultimately shapes my work with learners.

Archer argues that reflexivity is the most important of personal emergent properties or personal development (2003, p. 9) and in this way supports agency. Practitioner research is the bedrock for a reflexive pedagogy in a cyclical and iterative way as it affords evidence based change. In addition, for the participants in this study,

reflexivity forms an important element to professional formation and in their decision to start a programme of study in HE; a foundation degree.

1.1.3   Foundation Degrees

Foundation Degrees were introduced by the Department for Education and Skills in 2000, under a New Labour government, 'to provide graduates needed within the labour market to address shortages in particular skills' (Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), 2015, p. 2) and the early years sector exemplified this market. The exit award for an FdA is at level 5 in the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications and an FdA course equates to the first two years of a regular undergraduate programme (QAA, 2008). David Blunkett, the Secretary of State for Education in 2000 introduced FdAs as part of the modernising of HE and as a vehicle for expansion within the sector (Taylor, C., 2008, p. 48). An ambitious target of 100,000 FdA students was set to be achieved by 2010 (Foundation Degree Task Force, 2004). Current figures issued by Universities UK (2015) indicate that this target was not realised and a fall in those taking FdAs is evident in the available data for 2013-2014 where the overall number of FdA students is just over 50,000. Taylor, C. (2008, p. 48) discusses FdAs as a 'new vocationalism' where academic and work-based learning are integrated and are intended to 'equip learners with the skills and knowledge relevant to employment, so satisfying the needs of employees and employers' (QAA, 2015). The QAA is also clear that FdAs contribute to widening participation and lifelong learning 'by encouraging participation by learners who may not previously have considered studying for a higher level qualification or prefer a more applied curriculum' (QAA, 2015, p. 2). A purpose of FdAs is to provide 'self-standing qualifications of specific value...that can also provide opportunities for further (lifelong) study' (QAA, 2015) and this may take the form of a further programme of study to achieve a level 6 bachelor's degree with honours. The purposes for FdAs of increased opportunity and widening participation

resonate with the *Teaching Excellence Framework* (DfBIS, 2015) discussed earlier. The appeal of an FdA for learners who have not previously considered studying in HE before outlines characteristics that are 'non-traditional' (Lillis, 2001, p. 4); learners from 'social groups who have historically been largely excluded from HE' (Ibid., p. 1). For FdA learners, these characteristics may typically include adult mature learners, particularly women, and those without formal qualifications such as A Levels. In law a person becomes an adult from 18 and therefore all those attending university could be classed as adults. However, I have used the term adult, in this context and throughout the study to refer to those 24 years old and onwards (Illeris, 2014, p. 89) as Illeris argues that it is in established adulthood that holds a distinct propensity for transformational learning. Lillis (2001, p. 3) also uses the term 'non-traditional' to include those learners from social groups who have traditionally been excluded due to ethnicity, and/or a working-class background. These characteristics are representative of the learners within this study, many of whom are mature, female learners who are first generation undergraduates in their social demographic. The term 'non-traditional' implies a deviation from the norm and potentially assumes the learner in a deficit position. Where Lea and Street (1998) suggest that the learner who has traditionally entered the academy with some academic qualifications is positioned as needing enculturation and socialisation, then the non-traditional learner potentially faces greater challenge with academic writing (Lillis, 2001; Nzekwe-Excel, 2012; Young, 2000).

A further distinction of the non-traditional adult learner is the different type of relationship within formal education they hold and which is a key difference between child learners and adult learners. Rogers (2003, p. 60) suggests that the child learner-teacher relationship is fundamentally different to the adult learner-teacher relationship in the hierarchical relationships defined by age and maturity as that of childhood to the adulthood of the teacher. These relationships can be discussed as concepts of hybridity which move beyond the dichotomies of powerless/powerful, self/other etc. (ibid.) and this is particularly relevant for the adult learner and the adult

teacher. The adult learner challenges the traditional notion of 'studenthood' (Rogers, 2003, p. 58) constructs as they are at odds with the dependent, conforming child learner where adults are expected to be independent and to take responsibility for themselves. In defining the adult learner as student they are positioned differently and by default, I argue, should be taught differently. Rogers (2003, p. 58) suggests that the relationship between child learner and teacher is a vertical one which indicates the hierarchical dynamic inherent in it, and the adult learner/teacher relationship is represented as a horizontal, adult to adult relationship. The horizontal relationship is more challenging within the academy as it is historically less ingrained and the challenges of the adult learner's positioning in HE is compounded with the academy's resistance to a reflexive pedagogy (Bourdieu et al., 1994).

1.1.4   Foundation Degree in Applied Studies (Early Childhood)

BGU has a history of including education related FdAs as part of a portfolio of programmes of study. The first FdA was introduced at BGU for those working as teaching assistants in schools in 2001. Subsequent to this course, one FdA with various pathways (early childhood; learning support; and children and youth work) replaced this and this study's focus centres on those learners on the early childhood pathway. The programme recruits well and over the period of 15 years since introducing FdAs at BGU, three Further Education Colleges offer the programme in partnership with BGU and currently there are approximately 350 FdA Applied Studies learners studying on the course at various levels across all sites. Learners can opt to progress into a third year of study to achieve a BA (Hons) Applied Studies in Early Childhood degree. The patterns for teaching the programme have been established to support and reflect the FdA learner's commitments to the workplace and learners attend taught sessions between 1 – 8 pm on one day a week during the academic year. This flexible mode, outside of normal working hours (9-5 pm) allows for minimal disruption to employers

and for learners to remain in employment alongside their studies; to 'earn and learn' which is a distinct characteristic of an FdA (QAA, 2015, p. 5). The programme's entry requirements stipulate that applicants must have at least one year's experience in practice prior to commencing their studies and continue to work in an employed or voluntary capacity for a minimum of twelve hours a week throughout the duration of the two year course. The prolonged and sustained experience in the workplace contributes to the overall learning hours on the programme where work-based learning is an 'integral part of the programme' (QAA, 2015, p. 5). The QAA (2015, p. 5) state the requirement for universities to recognise 'the knowledge, skills and understanding that an applicant for a foundation degree has already developed'. In acknowledging prior knowledge, the academy is also required to re-position and re-examine itself in terms of the 'cultural ethnocentricism' and superior knowledge that Bourdieu et al. (1994, p. 6) suggest.

The participants were all studying on the early childhood pathway of the FdA Applied Studies and were working in the early years sector in a variety of roles. Many learners on this pathway had decided to work in the early years sector following the start of their own families and have then typically undertaken a National Vocational Qualification, or equivalent at level 3 on the qualifications framework as described earlier. The practice based emphasis of these qualifications enables the learners to develop their academic confidence and self-belief which may not have been established in previous formal educational school experiences. This newly acquired confidence, amongst other factors, affords them the motivation to apply for the FdA programme at degree level.

Further motivators for the academy, and BGU, to create an FdA with an early years focus and for those working in the sector to undertake it, arose from a wider government (New Labour) commitment to have a graduate with Early Years Professional Status in every early years setting by 2015. The original agenda to upskill the early years workforce was initiated by the Effective Provision of Pre-School

Education Project (EPPE) (Sylva, Melhuish, Sammons, Siraj-Blatchford & Taggart, 2004), a longitudinal research study which identified better outcomes for children within a graduate led early years provision. In 2006, until the change of government in 2010, the New Labour government provided a Transformation Fund (in 2007 renamed as Graduate Leader Fund) to Local Authorities. A total of £250 million was made available to develop a graduate-led workforce (Mathers, Ranns, Karemaker, Moody, Sylva, Graham & Siraj-Blatchford, 2011). The Lincolnshire Local Authority funded those learners who met the criteria of working in private, voluntary or independent early years settings up to 90% of their course fees. This incentive for early years practitioners to capitalise on this funding enabled them to undertake an FdA and the subsequent progression route to achieve a BA (hons) degree. The graduates were then required to complete the Early Years Professional (EYP) Status (replaced by the Early Years Teacher Status (EYTS) in 2014) qualification to fulfil the requirements of the funding. The role of the EYP was to lead, support and mentor staff and to significantly impact on provision within the setting and was reiterated in the EYTS. Subsequently the advent of the Coalition Government in May 2010 saw the commitment to funding a graduate early years workforce rescinded, due to a shift in economic priority and the budget for the Graduate Leader Fund was significantly reduced. Currently only those practitioners working in a setting located within a deprived area can receive a contribution of £1000 for their studies in Lincolnshire and the remainder of the tuition fees are self-funded by the learner or through the Student Loan Company. The sample group began their studies in September 2013 and as such were largely funding their FdA studies through a student loan. The current (2015-2016) course fees stand at £6,750 per year and represent a considerable financial investment for an early years practitioner whose average hourly rate of pay is the minimum wage and where experience does not change rates of pay (Payscale.com). The monetary investment in undertaking the programme (irrespective of whether a loan is required to be repaid or not) is an important context for this research as it is evidence of the commitment that

FdA learners give to their studies and which extends beyond the economic to the professional, emotional and social aspects of their lives.

1.1.5   The Adult, Work-based FdA Learner

The non-traditional learner such as those on an FdA are positioned in the academy because of the particular characteristics that they hold: their age, gender, employment commitments, professional knowledge, family and financial responsibilities. These wider commitments and life experiences suggest a complex network of histories, demands and influences on FdA learners that are different from a traditional student. A difference for the FdA learner is that they have embarked on their studies whilst juggling the demands of a job, which for many represent working hours that are full time. These commitments are undertaken alongside those of caring for children and/or elderly parents, and may include the financial pressures of paying for mortgages, cars etc. The typical 18 year old school leaver attending university may experience the demands of re-locating at the beginning of a programme of study which is different for an FdA learner who typically attends an institution relatively near to their home and place of work. However, the FdA learner and the traditional student will both need to establish themselves within new social contexts and manage the difficulties of the intellectual expectations of their studies. The *purpose* of undertaking a programme of study alongside the complex network of additional demands on the FdA learner, and in achieving the academic award where there is no financial remuneration, was worthy of close examination and formed a key aspect of the data.

As previously illustrated, FdA learners enter the academy with more limited formal qualifications and those achieved post formal schooling are largely vocationally orientated. Many return to formal learning with the distinct purpose to become better professionals in the work-place, underpinned by a commitment to the young children with whom they work. Cooke and Lawton (2008) state that many early years

practitioners undertake formal qualifications in order to better themselves (p. 23). Research conducted by Knight, Tennant, Dillon and Weddell (2006) with learners undertaking an early years FdA indicated that the learners felt greater job satisfaction, confidence, and improved work-based skills from undertaking the programme. Knight et al. (2006, p. 12) report on six key factors that enabled the completion of the programme as high self-motivation, access to alternative sources of financial support, support and flexibility of tutors, strong peer support, workplace support and support from family and friends. With the exclusion of the factor of financial support which this study did not investigate, the remaining five factors serve as important considerations for the participants and their experiences on the programme and are explored throughout this thesis. High self-motivation is a critical component for learning and in adulthood is characterised by 'a kind of ambition that implies a striving to realise more or less clear life aims relating to family, career, interest or something else' (Illeris, 2002, p. 216). In this way, FdA learners as adults can be understood as wanting to learn something that is meaningful to them and a professional development course such as the FdA can provide this opportunity. As motivated learners there is some challenge for the academy to accommodate adults and this is heightened when the academic tutor may retain the power of knowledge through a lack of recognition of what the learner may bring to their learning. Equally the learner may be resistant 'in a more or less conscious way' to take responsibility for their own learning (Illeris, 2002, p. 221). It is only once the tutor insists on this, that the learner realises the full responsibility that 'goal-directed, effective, transcendent and libidinal' learning occurs (ibid.). In this way, the learner and the academic tutor are required to accept responsibility that each party has agency for learning to take place. This is a precarious state for learning, particularly where resistance can be present in both the academy and the learner.

This study explored the experiences of learning from the perspective of the learner to expose and discuss their experiences with academic writing and answers the research questions:

1. What metacognitive awareness of strategies for academic writing do work based learners have and does this awareness develop over time?

2. Are work-based learners able to evaluate their performance in their academic writing and does this develop qualitatively over time?

Through an investigation which explored metacognitive learning, points of resistance and challenge came to light. It is at the point of the learner's struggles where this research has been able to observe the conditions for challenge and indeed, for development as academic writers. The analysis of these conditions has supported a pedagogical approach that may shape the FdA in the future and facilitate change within the programme and the wider University.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1   Introduction

This chapter seeks to contextualise and map this research study within the literature and current discourse guided by the research questions (shown on page 24). During the course of my studies, I have iteratively and systematically returned to the literature to equally corroborate and contest my thinking at various stages of undertaking the research. This process has enabled a deep and thorough investigation of seminal texts to inform my work, along with more contemporary sources. In undertaking this approach my thinking has been developed using theoretical frameworks and concepts in order to answer my research questions. Badley refers to the process of academic writing as a 'problematical and tentative exercise in critical reflective thinking' (2009, p. 209). My endeavour in having undertaken this review is to provide a convincing discussion, argument and 'plausible account' (ibid., p. 210) that locates this research study firmly within the landscape of literature about the theories of transformational learning, academic writing and identities. In addition, this chapter explores concepts of knowledge, with specific reference to that within professional domains, metacognition and the theory of complexity.

2.2   Multi-Modality: Different ways of knowing and symbiosis

In order to explore the concepts of transformational learning, it is important in the first instance to understand the notion of knowledge itself. Knowing what knowledge is, is a highly complex intellectual act. Knowledge is created from individual experience and what is created may be far from a 'truth' 'but we can at least know when we are

mistaken' (Brownhill, 1983 p. 18). When sharing knowledge through writing, Badley suggests 'we cannot represent reality, the world, accurately. We can only provide our made-up descriptions of it and hope that our descriptions are authentic and useful ones' (2009, p. 210). Taylor argues that there is an 'instinctive drive among all humans to make meaning of their daily lives [although] because there are no enduring truths and change is continuous, we cannot always be assured of what we know or believe' (Taylor, E., 2008, p. 5). Knowledge is the product of learning. Knowledge can therefore be explained as a series of tentative thoughts that are constructed together to create granulated ideas, or private theories which are dynamic, organic and evolving (Eraut, 1994). From a postmodern perspective, Gibbons, Limoges, Nowotny, Schwartzman, Scott and Trow (1994) describe the dynamism in knowledge that Eraut (1994) outlines as a flux that represents change, challenge and enquiry. Usher and Edwards (1994, p. 1) also refer to postmodernism as 'complex and multiform… [that] resists reductive and simplistic explanation and explication'. Through the resistance of simplistic explanation; knowledge is a slippery concept within a postmodern context. If, as Eraut (1994) outlines, knowledge is individualised and is generated through private theories, a highly personal process is suggested that is specific to each learner. Indeed, in 'post-modern and post positivist days' claims of 'neutrality and objectivity' can no longer be sustained (Badley, 2009, p. 210). Concepts of neutrality and objectivity are discussed more fully later in this chapter in relation to dynamics of power. A postmodern perspective challenges the academy to consider and re-consider 'existing concepts, structures and hierarchies of knowledge' (Usher & Edwards, 1994, p. 3). The notion of hierarchies of knowledge referred to here is of particular interest to this study, and is contentious. The notion of a hierarchy of knowledge is contested in this study in two ways; firstly, that there is linearity to forms of knowledge and learning; and secondly that different forms of knowledge hold greater importance than others.

Gibbons et al. (1994, p. 19) explore the different forms of knowledge (Usher & Edwards, 1994) when referring to two kinds of knowledge; mode one and mode two. Mode one describes a more traditional concept of knowledge and is described as being in two realms; theoretical knowledge or fundamental knowledge, and knowledge that is applied. Applied knowledge is where theoretical frameworks are translated into practical applications. Atkinson and Claxton (2000, p. 2) refer to this form of learning as the 'scholastic model' where students start with academic knowledge and then put this into practice, which infers linearity. This mode can, at a simplistic level, be seen to be relevant to the FdA work-based learners in this study where the theoretical knowledge acquired within the academy is then applied to their practice. However, the notion of linearity is problematic with work-based learners as they enter the academy with professional knowledge which then requires the academic knowledge to be associated with their practice. The 'scholastic model' suggested by Atkinson and Claxton (2000) is indeed too simplistic where a linear acquisition of knowledge is presented. For work-based learners who are competent professionals who have acquired practice knowledge the process of applying knowledge learnt in the academy as part of the FdA is more complex.

Gibbons et al. (1994, p.19) argue that the concept of knowledge in mode one does not wholly reflect the postmodernist view of knowledge whereas mode two 'is characterised by a constant flow back and forth between the fundamental and the applied, between the theoretical and the practical'. The dynamic interplay between the theoretical and the practical is constant and also mutually dependent when studying for a work-based degree and I use the term 'symbiotic' to describe the relationship between academic and practice knowledge as a connectedness between domains of knowledge that are equally reinforcing. The notion of symbiosis embraces the concept of dynamic interplay and extends beyond this to represent the mutually advantageous relationship, when studying on a FdA, that these interconnections can provide where learning is reinforced simultaneously across both sites; the academy and the workplace. As such, this contests the hierarchy of knowledge that Usher and

Edwards (1994) present. In contrast, knowledge is viewed as a web of interlinking ideas where learning is acquired through the connections between different sites that resist linearity. Therefore, the location of the applied knowledge, that is the practice setting in the context of the learners in this study, is equally where the generation of new knowledge and theoretical frameworks emerge, rather than within the academy alone. The acknowledgement of the practice setting as also being a place for learning establishes a distinct shift away from the academy as being the primary owner of knowledge.

The knowledge that the learner acquires within the realms of their practices and life experiences may be termed professional knowledge and describes the knowledge, skills and understanding that are acquired from working and being in the 'learning milieu' (Parlett & Hamilton, 1987, p. 57); the environment or social setting where learning occurs. There may be many sites of learning. However, for this study the primary focus for investigation has been the workplace and the academy as key for work-based learners. The tensions or differences between these two sites may present the most challenge for these learners, which may be particularly located in academic writing. These challenges and, for many, the opportunities for reflection, can be identified between different academic and professional discourses which are discussed in more depth within this chapter. Stierer (2000, p. 193) argues that the academy does not acknowledge sufficiently the professional knowledge of the work-based learner, rather it views the learner as a novice academic. This view of the learner in HE is not restricted to those from more non-traditional backgrounds entering the academy as with 'the growing diversity of learners, prior experience of learning at the point of entry into higher education can no longer be assumed' (Haggis, 2006a, p. 522). The positioning of the work-based learner as the novice academic is representative of their more limited prior experience of having acquired formal qualifications. However, prior learning over many years in the workplace goes unacknowledged according to Stierer (2000). The positioning of the work-based learner should therefore be as the 'novice expert'. This oxymoron attempts to

acknowledge the expertise of the professional in a different learning domain and where the learner is the novice in the academy. However, the reconciliation between these two contrasts may present challenges for the learner, for the academy and workplace and positions them differently from the traditional learner.

The work-based learner is required as part of their FdA programme to make increasingly complex links in knowledge between the sites of learning (academic and professional); to make connections between the knowledge, skills and understanding in order to make sense of each as new knowledge is assimilated to prior knowledge. This is an important aspect of the learner's success on the programme. Where the connections are not able to be made, learners may find their academic and professional communities at odds with each other as theoretical knowledge is disconnected or cannot be assimilated with professional knowledge. A pivotal feature of this success may be attributed to aspects of individual prior knowledge as the conduit or bridge that connects, or makes sense, between the two. Knowledge, what is individually known and understood, becomes a critical feature in the construction and deconstruction of knowledge between the sites of learning. These unique private theories are acquired through experience from epistemological and ontological perspectives; they are situated within the social, historical, cultural setting and therefore are highly individualised and dynamic. The construction of personal knowledge is described by Vygotsky (1978, p. 56) as internalisation and occurs through a series of intrapersonal and interpersonal processes. The intrapersonal construction of new knowledge is supported through metacognition, thinking about thinking, and the internal conversation and dialogue with self. The interpersonal processes are represented through the interconnections and dialogue that the learner has with those within whichever site of learning the knowledge may take place; the academy or the workplace, or indeed both. This social constructivist perspective (Vygotksy, 1978) has resonance with work-based learners who are required to construct, reconstruct and, I propose, possibly deconstruct personal knowledge, or private theories, in order to successfully undertake an academic programme. The disruption, or disequilibrium,

that work-based learners may face within private theories is that they may be required to deconstruct, or relearn, knowledge that they have already acquired through their professional learning. This process may create a disequilibrium for learners, as Claxton (2000, p. 46) comments:

> Professional development involves the shifting, dynamic interplay of different ways of knowing and models of specific situations need to be developed which take into account their unique rhythms and 'melodies' of learning'. The uniqueness of each professional learner warrants an individualised approach that supports different ways of knowing.

This may be particularly so for those work-based learners who have been in practice for many years where their practice knowledge is engrained and is therefore described as tacit, or implicit, knowledge.

The symbiotic relationship between practice and theoretical knowledge is dependent on practice knowledge being explicit whereas tacit knowledge guides our actions without the ability to communicate fully what this knowledge is (Greenwood & Lincoln, 2008, p. 66). Tacit, intuitive knowledge describes a way of doing that is not deliberate or conscious, and as such becomes embedded within normalised practice for the practitioner. When attempting to explain these actions, learners are frequently dismissive of tacit knowledge as being of little consequence or importance, because it is just what they do. Tacit knowledge remains inexplicit, ignored or viewed as irrelevant by the learner unless an active process of reflection (Eraut, 1994, p. 15) is undertaken which is supported and subsequently validated by the academy as legitimate knowledge; where practice knowledge is linked to theoretical frameworks. The act of reflection, or close examination, of their practice is often triggered by their learning within the academy where theoretical models and concepts can be linked to, or explained as, practical understandings. This process goes beyond reflection, I argue, to incorporate criticality where critical reflections are undertaken and examined to become 'explanatorily coherent practical knowledge' and represents

'internal consistency' alongside consistency with evidence (Bereiter, 2014, p. 5). This is aligned with Gramsci's (1971) contrasting notion of common sense which describes practice knowledge as just 'what is done' with good sense which is in understanding why, linked to evidence. The inexplicit tacit knowledge becomes explicit and then linked to theoretical concepts to explain it. Bereiter (2014, p. 4) articulates the connected knowledge between theory and practice as Principled, Practical Knowledge (PPK). The link between know how (practice knowledge) with know why (theoretical knowledge) leads to PPK. Bereiter (2014) is clear that practice knowledge can be explicit although unprincipled. The term 'unprincipled' may suggest unethical practices, imply a practice that is lacking in moral principles or cast a judgement on the practitioner. However, it is important to make clear that the interpretation of 'unprincipled' for this study's purpose has been taken as a term to mean practice that is more implicit than explicit as Gramsci's (1971) notion of common sense describes. The premise that underpins this interpretation is that where practice is linked to theory it is ultimately improved through the understanding of **why** actions in practice are undertaken. This is relevant for those who work with young children as it is assumed that in understanding practice from a critical, principled perspective then better outcomes for the children will follow. PPK represents knowledge that is explicit and principled as it is explained and built through links to published evidence and represents the critical purpose for me, as a tutor on a work-based professional development programme, to support learners' understandings of their work in the early years. However, the process of making the implicit into the explicit may not be unproblematic. Claxton (2000, p. 36) comments that tacit knowledge embodies 'observations, distinctions, feelings, perceptual patterns, and nuances that are too fine-grained to be caught accurately in a web of words' and argues that deliberate critical reflection runs the risk of 'undermining [the] skilled performance' of the professional (ibid.). The practitioners who have considerable experience and knowledge within their field may find it difficult to take a fresh look at themselves as their practice has become deeply engrained, habitual and embedded which may

inhibit flexible and imaginative ways of thinking about what they do (Bastick, 1982). These tensions hold significance for the participants in this study.

The transformation of knowledge from 'unprincipled' to principled through the lens of PPK is a critical focus for this study and is discussed further in subsequent sections of this literature review. As Bereiter (2014, p. 14) states 'principled knowledge should not merely connect theory with practice but should enable the continual and occasionally radical improvement in practice'. He presents PPK from a more global view at macro level where bigger changes can be made, although I argue that PPK is transferable at local, micro level to the learner themselves. PPK provides a catalyst for change and empowers agency through increased self-efficacy. Academic writing for a work-based learner provides the opportunity for critical reflection and therefore, links to be made between practice and theory to support the development of PPK and provides the opportunity for deep learning to occur.

2.3 Learning, Transformational Learning and Struggle

The primary focus of this study has been to investigate the awareness of metacognitive strategies that work-based learners use to undertake written assignments as part of their FdA studies and were examined over the period of two years of their programme. I have explicitly focused on identifying the points in their studies where learning was qualitatively transformed. Learning is an integral and fundamental aspect of any programme of study in HE, although it is complicated, complex and never guaranteed as 'students do not learn everything that they are taught' (Illeris, 2002, p. 13). Learners, from a social constructivist perspective, build knowledge in unique and highly individual ways, for example learners can experience the same taught session and each constructs personal knowledge in cognitive, social and emotional domains in different ways based on prior knowledge and

understandings as discussed earlier in this chapter. Illeris (2002, p. 16) describes learning as two connected part processes which mutually influence each other:

> Firstly, the interaction process between the learner and his or her environment...Secondly, the internal psychological acquisitional and elaborative process which leads to a learning result.

Illeris (2002, p. 17) is clear that this definition of learning covers 'motor, emotional, motivational, attitudinal or social character' and is intrinsically bound with identity (Illeris, 2002). This definition foregrounds the work in this research and provides the foundations to discuss transformational learning as an added dimension of learning that is uniquely an adult learning capability (Mezirow, 2003).

Transformation refers to a change or 'alteration into something qualitatively different' and the concept of transformational learning is defined as learning that 'entails a qualitatively new structure or capacity in the [adult] learner' (Illeris, 2014, p. 5). The new capacities of the learners in this study were observed in their academic writing, in how they approached the task of writing and through the grades achieved. Transformational learning was identified where a distinct change to the strategies for writing was evident; this was observed alongside where an assignment grade reflected this change positively or negatively. Similarly, transformational learning was evident where a positive or negative grade provided the catalyst to the learner changing their approach to writing assignments following critical reflection, which is a uniquely adult capability (Mezirow, 2003). The conditions for change were also investigated and were critical for understanding when and how transformational learning takes place. For many of the learners in this study transformative learning was located in the dynamic change from unprincipled to principled knowledge as Bereiter (2014) describes in the concept of PPK. Transformational learning:

> ...is understood as a uniquely adult form of metacognitive reasoning. Reasoning is the process of advancing and assessing reasons, especially those that provide arguments supporting beliefs resulting in decisions to act. Beliefs are justified when they are based on good reasons. The process of reasoning may involve such tacit knowledge as aptitudes, skills and competencies (Mezirow, 2003, p. 58).

Mezirow (1990, p. 2) refers to 'meaning schemes' which describes habitual thinking, based on tacit knowledge or expectations where there are unchallenged ways of thinking or 'implicit rules' (Illeris, 2014, p. 7) that become established ways of doing. These are likened to the perceptual patterns (Claxton, 2000) alluded to earlier. Meaning schemes are also much like the private theories that Eraut (1994) suggests. Habitual thinking is more established in adults than in children, solely because of the timeframe of maturation. Private theories may be evident for work-based learners where established meaning schemes in practice determine how things are done and these may be practices based on government policy or are modelled by colleagues. Alternatively, they could have been underpinned by trial and error by the practitioner or are driven by assumption. The implicit rules that underpin practices are not necessarily linked to theoretical frameworks as PPK (Bereiter, 2014). In undertaking a professional development programme, the FdA learners are given the opportunity to explore theories and evidence against their practice meaning schemes. Opportunities are provided in multiple ways through taught sessions as part of the programme, exposure to relevant texts that may introduce concepts or offer chances to develop understandings, independent research and in academic writing for assignments. In undertaking academic writing, learners are able to explore and write about knowledge that is not necessarily based solely on their experiences or assumptions. It is the exploration of new concepts, ideas and thinking that allows their professional understandings to be underpinned by a range of potentially contrasting theoretical frameworks. Mezirow (2009, p. 4) suggests that these explorations are crucial to the making of new meaning schemes. The challenge for the work-based learner is that

academic writing draws on the synthesising of the two realities or sites of knowledge; their practice knowledge and academic knowledge. The linking of what they know and understand in practice with theoretical knowledge makes for a difficult process as the close scrutiny, or reflections on practice in relation to theoretical frameworks may create a feeling of unease or dissatisfaction where these are unable to be easily aligned without a shift change in either realm of knowledge. Mezirow (1990) outlines that in order to elicit a transformation of learning where the learner is changed, it is insufficient to just identify these habitual meaning schemes, there is a need to act, or engage with them in some way through critical reflection. Transformational learning can be inhibited as:

> A defining condition of being human is our urgent need to understand and order the meaning of our experience, to integrate it with what we know to avoid the threat of chaos. If we are unable to understand, we often turn to tradition, thoughtlessly seize explanations by authority figures, or resort to various psychological mechanisms, such as projection and rationalisation, to create imaginary meanings (Mezirow, 2009, p. 3).

The cognitive demand of undertaking the linking of practice with theory to transform meaning schemes is challenging for many learners and in critically reflecting in the symbiotic way as described earlier, the learner may be unable to resolve the disequilibrium or feelings of unease where what they knew as a certainty (a prior meaning scheme) now becomes uncertain. The period of discomfort may last for some time and where a learner is unable to tolerate this or cannot make an alignment between the two sites of knowledge, resistance may occur (Taylor & Jarecke, 2009, p. 283). A return to equilibrium can occur through the possible explanations of authority figures as Mezirow (2009) states. Alternatively, transformational learning is enacted where the learner is able to accommodate the new knowledge, theory, with the existing knowledge to re-establish a new and different state of equilibrium:

Transformative learning, especially when it involves subjective reframing, is often an intensely threatening emotional experience in which we have to become aware of both the assumptions under-girding our ideas and those supporting our emotional responses to the need to change (Mezirow, 2009, p. 7).

The conditions, such as the 'intensely threatening emotional experiences' that Mezirow (2009) describes to surround the point of transformation have been a point of focus for this study, as they provide the possible template for how the academy may foster transformational learning. Mezirow (2009) makes clear that transformational learning has been primarily researched in the field of adult education and as such was highly relevant to the participants in this study. 'Adulthood...is the golden age in relation to both identity and transformational learning' in that having established a reasonably stable identity from the age of mid-to late twenties that there is opportunity, perversely, to disturb this basis in relation to all parts of this identity (Illeris, 2014, p. 89). In addition to a more formed identity of the mature learner, a further condition for transformation is that the learner has a purpose for change. The decision to study on the FdA programme and having an identified purpose in relation to this is a key influence on their success which for the work-based learner may require the management of many demands on their time from family, work and their studies. The distinct purpose of undertaking the degree becomes a critically motivating aspect on their studies and propensity for change. The decision to study on a professional development course can be with the intention to improve their work with young children for the benefit of those they work with; children and colleagues. The intention may also be to gain the formal qualification in order to further the learner's career either within the sector, or to become a qualified teacher for example. These intrinsic and extrinsic motivators to achieving and completing the degree are importantly linked to a purpose for change. Motivation is a key aspect of transformational learning and, for adults this motivation in learning is distinctly different to that of children (Illeris, 2002; Jones & Thomas, 2010, p. 72). Unlike children who attend statutory schooling, adults may have greater independence to

choose and take responsibility for the choices they make. However, Rogers and Illeris (2003) suggest that for many adults learning is non-voluntary which may have resonance for the learners in this study where there was the potential that they were coerced by their employer to undertake the FdA. Although no evidence in the data indicated this; adults coerced to study are not motivated to learn (Rogers & Illeris, 2003). An important motivational difference between adults and children is that adults are more inclined to learn about what is meaningful to them (Knowles, Holton & Swanson, 2005), whereas children will learn what adults tell them to; the extrinsic motivation overrides the intrinsic. For adults, the powerful impetus to learn is intrinsic and where transformational learning takes place in adulthood, learners *choose* what they learn (ibid.) and, therefore, ultimately have a greater readiness and orientation to learn. The differences between adult and child learning have stimulated much debate concerning the distinction between styles of teaching and are frequently captured in the dichotomised discourses of andragogy and pedagogy (Knowles et al., 2005). Knowles (Knowles et al., 2005, p. 64) developed an andragogical model that was acknowledged to be built on several assumptions although which provides a framework for thinking about adult learning and has resonance with transformational learning theories and practices in the context of this study, to which I now turn.

In commencing their studies and in the context of this study, learners are required to meet the defined characteristics of an FdA which involves solving problems, the critical evaluation and analysis of established principles in their field of study and also to understand the limits of their knowledge (QAA, 2015). A framework for the learner is provided as part of the programme to meet these characteristics such as in the FdA learning outcomes and criteria which are translated explicitly through teaching, assessments and independent study by the learner. Where the learning is deemed purposeful by the learner, transformation can occur and is linked to one of the assumptions identified in the andragogical model established by Knowles (Knowles et al., 2005, p. 64); the need to know why something needs to be learnt. The need for purpose as a condition for change also forms one of the six practices as defined by

Taylor and Jarecke (2009) and which build on the theories of Mezirow (2009) regarding transformational learning. The six practices indicate the conditions for learning, rather than as definitive statements and are for learning to be; a purposeful and heuristic process; a way of confronting power and engaging difference; an imaginative process; a way of fostering reflection; learning as modelling; a process of leading learners to the edge. I have discussed the first practice for transformative learning where learning is purposeful and now address the significance of the other five in relation to the participants in this study.

Work-based learners are required to closely examine their practice along with the beliefs and values that underpin their established schemes of meaning (Mezirow, 1990) and in doing so may challenge their perspectives. In a transformational learning frame of reference, this requires engaging with difference and challenging power such as that of the government, along with their own power to be agents of change both within themselves and their practice. The notion of challenging power extends beyond the learner to include the dynamics between groups of learners, with tutors, and within other relationships beyond the academy in their personal and professional lives (Taylor & Jarecke, 2009). Many FdA learners are mature women, which has resonance with the sample used for this study, who have left formal schooling with limited qualifications as discussed on page 18. For this group of learners, to undertake the FdA is a form of personal empowerment that rails against personal histories and family expectations to position themselves within the academy. In addition to this, in undertaking the programme these early years practitioners are endeavouring to professionalise their practice and the sector overall which was evident in their narratives. Knowles's (Knowles et al., 2005) andragogical model suggests that the prior learning experiences of adults shape them differently from child learners. These can be both positively and negatively where learning habits and private theories are more formed and may require re-forming during the learning process and a shift in identities.

Academic writing provides the conditions for three of the practices for transformational learning as an imaginative process, as a way of fostering reflection and modelling for learning. In the creation of a written text where work-based learners are required to link practice with theory and to compose a cohesive discussion requires imagination of the 'future' text for what this aspires to be (Chanquoy, 2009) and creativity in problem solving to create a 'cognitive map' (Lavelle, 2009, p. 415) in reference to the future text. Taylor and Jarecke (2009) argue that an imaginative process involves engagement beyond cognition to include emotional and spiritual dimensions of learning. The acknowledgement of an emotional dimension in transformational learning is critical to this study and will be discussed further in this chapter. In order for the links between practice and theory to be made, the learner is required to reflect and I have argued, critically reflect in order for these connections to be made. Modelling for learning is evident in academic writing through the published texts that learners have access to and engage with as part of their programme. In addition, modelling takes place from the relationships that are established as part of undertaking their studies and evidenced in the participants' narratives. These relationships may be within the community of learners on the programme and also with the tutors on the programme as 'knowledgeable others' (Vygotsky, 1978). Trust, respect, encouragement and empathy are core conditions for the modelling within relationships to be effective, which was evidenced for me as illustrated on page 9. These conditions are not unique to adult learners in their learning; however, a key difference between child learners and adult learners is the relationships they have with their teacher (Rogers, 2003, p. 60) as discussed on page 18. Rogers's (2003) notion of hybridity has relevance as:

> ...hybridity involves agency, power and movement: the hybrid creator uses whatever is felt to be needed in any particular setting to achieve the goals intended. There is here considerable fluidity; hybridity can change when needed, it is not fixed (Rogers, 2003, p. 28).

The hybrid creator, I argue, can be either the academy or the adult learner in this instance. In this study, both are positioned equally although change does not necessarily occur simultaneously. The notion of change and fluidity are concepts within complexity theory and are discussed later in this chapter. Adult learner and adult teacher relationships were critically important within this study.

The final condition is, I propose, the most critical of the six practices with regard to the particular lens of complexity theory that has been used as a way of looking at the twelve participants over the two years of the data collection. The notion of leading learners to the edge precipitates the notion of disequilibrium (discussed earlier on page 30). Where learners are led 'to the edge' (Taylor & Jarecke, 2009, p. 283) or outside of their comfortable environment, feelings are created that disturb the learner and create discomfort. The need to re-establish an equilibrium, triggered by the feelings of discomfort, creates a challenge for the learner. The challenge is also described as a struggle and forms a central concept in this study. The use of the term 'struggle' in this instance is intended to depict the strength of discomfort that surrounds the difficulties that learners face. A struggle also requires deliberation from the learner and impacts on their sense of self and identities. The term challenge has been used interchangeably with struggle throughout this thesis. If learners are led to the edge, or are presented with a 'disorientating dilemma' (ibid.) in any one of the sites of learning this may result in a struggle. The process of resolving the struggle may involve their professional, academic, personal lives or as a combination of any one of these. Transformational learning where the learner is changed occurs in the resolution of the struggle and the learning is progressive as a result of the change. Learning, however, may be resisted where there is a reluctance to critically reflect and accept or, indeed, reject new perspectives or possibilities. Importantly, Illeris (2014, p. 92) identifies that there is little acknowledgement in the discourse of transformational learning that transformation can be regressive rather than progressive and can result in the withdrawal by the learner where they 'do not have the strength to get through something new'. Whilst seemingly a negative experience as the original purpose of the

learning is not reached in withdrawing from the learning, equilibrium is restored as a more secure position for the learner is re-established through the increased self-awareness and understanding of their own limitations. The new state of equilibrium is changed. A shift in goal where the learner may replace the original purpose with something else, a different programme of study for example, is referred to as a restored transformation. Both regressive and restored transformations suggest a realignment of identity.

The struggles that were central to the participants' experience on the FdA programme were observed during the data collecting phase and are discussed in the following chapter. In undertaking the FdA, many learners are led to the edge by teachers as Taylor and Jarecke (2009) suggest. However, I argue, that learners themselves have the agency to lead themselves to the edge as for many of the participants the challenge of applying, being interviewed and accepted on a programme of learning in HE is outside of their habitual environments and continues when they are required to undertake written assignments as part of the programme. For many who left school with limited formal qualifications, this is a struggle which may continue in many of the processes of writing. Piaget (1980) uses the term disequilibrium to describe the process where new learning, or knowledge, cannot yet be accommodated, made stable, or linked with what is already known. The process of scrutinising practice through critical reflection creates disequilibrium where discrepancy is created between current knowledge and new understandings. This is an important stage for a transformation of knowledge, or new cognitive levels (Piaget, 1980, p. 111) and for professional growth to occur. Where this is specifically located is within the undertaking of academic writing. The notion of leading learners to the edge is a central teaching practice for transformational learning and goes beyond the andragogical model outlined by Knowles (Knowles et al., 2005). Whilst Knowles' framework for thinking about teaching practices has relevance to this study it is not, therefore, a definitive model and as such I have resisted the term andragogy throughout this thesis. Whilst the term pedagogy equally does not, based on Knowles

(Knowles et al., 2005) assumptions, capture all aspects of teaching adults, I have adopted this term over any other to describe the art of teaching irrespective of age. In adopting the pedagogical conditions for leading learners to the edge to trigger a disequilibrium (Piaget, 1980) has resonance with that of emergence in complexity theory and has informed the conceptual framework for this research. In the next section, I introduce and discuss the key concepts of complexity that have been applied and synthesised with those identified from transformational theory.

2.4   Complexity Theory

When researching in educational contexts, complexity theory offers a valuable and unique way of thinking about educational systems as it offers a framework within which to observe the interconnectivities and dynamic shifts within and between those under investigation. Complexity theory is a heterogeneous body of theories according to Fenwick et al. (2011) originating in evolutionary biology, mathematical fractals, general systems theory, chaos and cybernetics. It is relatively recent that the theorising of complexity theory, in terms of human and organisational learning, such as in the field of education, has been undertaken. It has gathered momentum by researchers as a theoretical and methodological way of investigating in education and beyond, with increasing numbers of publications since 2000, including the journal *Complicity* dedicated to complexity theory. Complex adaptive systems, emergence, emergent conditions, self –similarity, self-organisation and feedback loops are key concepts in complexity theory and have been a central influence for the theoretical and methodological framework for this study. The synthesis of the theory of transformational learning and complexity has provided a particular lens.

Complexity theory offers a unique way of looking at the world and is described as a way of thinking differently to understand 'things in context' (Haggis, 2008, p. 161). It is

able to uncover new relationships and connections 'between stability and non-linearity, order and chaos that coexist in systems' (Fenwick et al., 2011, p. 20). A complex system may represent a range of different entities such as a classroom of children, a team of professionals, a Facebook site, 'or a digestive system, an infectious disease, a hurricane' (Fenwick et al., 2011, p. 19) and may also include objects within the environment such as technological devices. A system may also represent an individual, as in this study, where the multiple, interconnecting worlds of the personal, professional and academic are specifically acknowledged. Fenwick et al. (2011) state that complexity theory can offer greater insight where a research participant is seen as a complex system or more specifically as a complex adaptive system (CAS) (Haggis, 2009; Alhadeff-Jones, 2008) which interacts in multi-directional ways with other complex adaptive systems such as the workplace, other learners, their family, for example. The varied interactions that a CAS may have with other complex systems may be extensive and beyond those described here, however, when viewed in this way a complex network of systems is evident in a multiply, nested way. The term 'nested' describes the complex system as nested within and intersecting with other nested systems in non-linear ways where interconnections are multi-directional (Bryne, 2005). Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) identify this connectedness as a key feature of complexity theory where everything is linked both externally and internally. In this way a participant, a CAS, is observed through a complexity lens as being a synthesis of different parts that are sustained and altered through its interactions with other complex systems. A CAS constitutes a dynamic, or complex system (and I shall use these words interchangeably) which constantly adapts to its surroundings and is perpetually changing. The learners in this study are therefore, within a complexity term of reference, individually complex and as such their 'knowledge, identities, practices and symbols' are unique (Fenwick et al., 2011, p. 21). When researching using the lens of complexity theory, the individual uniqueness of each participant, or CAS, means that lines of causation cannot be traced. Linear explanations of observations cannot therefore be possible when complex systems are

enmeshed and dynamic, demonstrating multiple fluctuations within itself and with other systems. In considering the participants in this unique way, the *differentials* of experience can be more easily extrapolated and observed (Haggis, 2009) where cross sectional analysis is resisted. This is discussed more thoroughly in chapter three in relation to methodological concerns when using this approach. The inter-nesting within a CAS also poses interesting questions about the concept of self, or identity, and how this may be defined.

Complexity theory acknowledges the network of different systems that interact with each other in multiple, dynamic ways and in this way offers a unique way of seeing the world. However, for the purposes of research when considering a frame of reference of complexity theory, it is important to specifically identify which, out of the multiple nested systems, is the focus of investigation, as the different permutations could be endless. I chose to adopt the approach outlined by Haggis (2009) where a 'system's extraction' is applied to identify which of the nested systems is under scrutiny. An extraction of these allows for the different systems to 'remain in view' (p. 7) and resists a more generalised view of a broad context per se. The selected three contexts under scrutiny were identified as; context 1 represented the learner; context 2 as the sample as a group of CAS, or 'collective learner' (Davis, 2005, p. 87); and context 3 was identified as Bishop Grosseteste University (BGU) (see Figure 1). For context 1, the CAS was viewed as an open system and observed as having a set of particular 'conditions' (Haggis, 2009, p. 9), at a particular time. The 'local conditions' of the participant that Haggis (2009, p. 9) describes includes their individual histories which are influenced through their on-going interactions with other CASs such as their family and work, for example. The local conditions also include the learners' studies and BGU. The conditions emerge from a permeating interconnectedness and as such, participants are as intrinsically influenced by their past as they are by the present. The process of how this interplay influences the future is significant and in complexity theory is described as emergence, which will be discussed further. The dynamic system that

describes the participant has evolved and continues to do so through the constraints of larger systems within which it is embedded, for example context 2 and 3. The person-as-adaptive-system is viewed as:

> …emerging as a peculiarity from a set of *specific initial conditions* [sic] at a particular time, into a range of *multiple and embedded* other systems, it has *evolved and changed* through time within the constraints of the larger systems within which it is embedded and in response to changing multiple conditions (Haggis, 2009, p. 9).

It is important to note that the professional context of the participants is not explicitly acknowledged as part of the system's extraction as the work settings of the participants were identified within the 'local conditions' of each CAS and were therefore embedded within context 1.

Figure 1: Complex system's context extraction

Context 1
Complex Adaptive System under focus

Context 2
The sample group

Context 3
HE institution
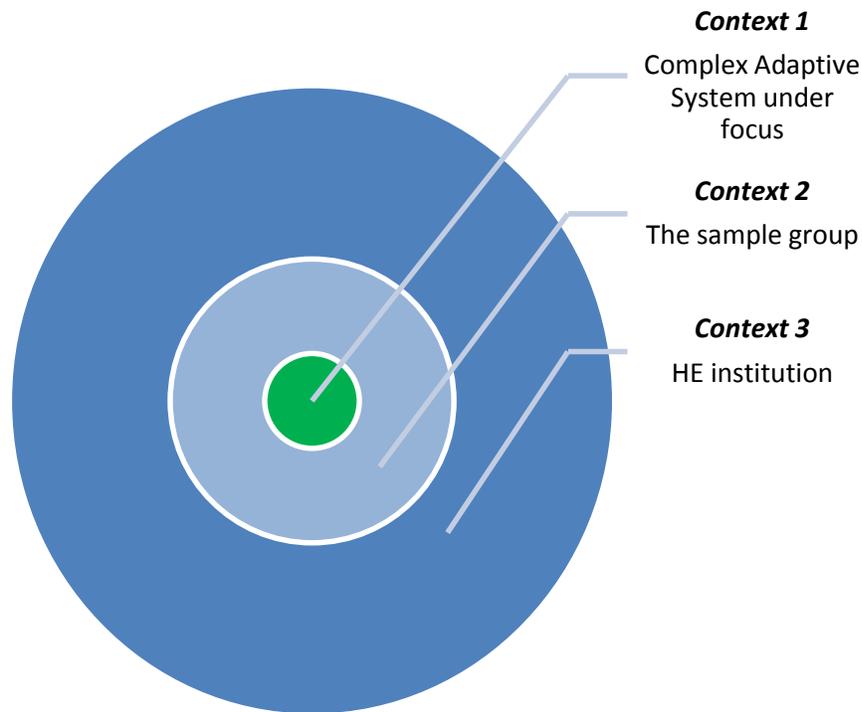
The concept of emergence is central within complexity theory and represents transformational learning in the context of this study where the learner is changed. Through the lens of complexity theory and concepts of emergence, the learner does not have a core self or personality (Haggis, 2009, p. 9), rather a *sense* of self which is dynamic, open and continually changing over time. The evolving capacity of the CAS, the participant, was observed and specifically the conditions under which the change occurred. The particular dynamic of time is a specific consideration of complexity theory as it is over time that changes can be identified amongst what Bryne (2005, p. 105) describes as 'much of the same'. These points of change are described as 'phase shifts', transformations or emergence. Bryne (2005, p. 105) suggests that the 'accumulation of continuous change leads to the crossing of a threshold of some kind' and these transformations make each CAS uniquely different. The differentials emerge

because of the different nested complex systems within which each CAS is located as each interacts uniquely and within the theoretical discourse of complexity, each self is individually dynamic and context specific (Haggis, 2009). Where a learner experiences disequilibrium, complexity theory suggests that it is the combination of 'particular contingent perturbations in the system' (Fenwick et al., 2011, p. 24) that trigger the internal adjustments and changes in response to the demands of an altered external environment (Cohen et al., 2007). The internal adjustments can also be articulated as transformational learning where the learner is changed or adapted. Emergence may be a response to changing external conditions and thus be a catalyst to a changed identity, or identities. It is through observing the emergent patterns and the emergent effects associated with these, of the participants in this study, that has resonance in understanding or revealing their identities.

In acknowledging the concept of emergence it might, therefore, suggest some sort of chaotic structure that is continually re-inventing itself. Complexity theorists, such as Haggis (2009) and Davis and Sumara (2008), comment that chaos within the CAS is not evident, as self-similarity is observable as patterns of change. Fenwick et al. (2011, p. 26) describe this through reference to nature where the branch of a fern is similar to the structures of the smaller leaves. Each iteration of the leaf is similar but also has a slight variation. Piaget's theory of assimilation (1980) corroborates this idea in terms of learning where newly acquired learning is 'fitted', or accommodated with previous learning. The assimilation process requires the previous knowledge to evolve through the 'adaptation' (Piaget, 1980, p. 77) and accommodation of new knowledge. Piaget likens these adaptations in knowledge to the evolutions in the natural world where an organism has become changed in response to its environmental circumstances over a period of time such as 'the shape of a fish, or the bill of a woodpecker' (ibid.). He argues that these changes are not random, rather they are built on what is already exists. Therefore, for the learner, knowledge is not acquired in a chaotic way; it is constructed and adapted through self-regulation of prior understandings. The process of assimilation, followed by accommodation into the learner's cognitive structures

supports higher level functioning where 'order is created out of the disorder' (Fenwick et al., 2011, p. 27) through self-organisation. Self-organisation and transformation was observed in context 1, the CAS and in context 2, the sample. Haggis (2009, p. 13) describes self-similarity as an orientation where 'unexpected degrees of similarities [occurs] *within* [sic] each longitudinal story'. These self-similarities are determined by the specificity of the system's own dynamic structure and are orientations which shape 'a kind of attitudinal habit of engagement' (Haggis, 2009, p. 12):

> ...orientation is curiously consistent with itself; it is as if the flow of experience and response to experience gradually lays down habitual pathways, lines of least resistance, which tend to form and direct new flows of experience and response (ibid.).

Haggis (2009, p. 13) makes clear that an orientation is a 'stance in relation to life' and not just to learning. The orientation of a CAS is not an expression of an internally generated self; rather it is an emergent pattern that is evolving out of multi-directional interactions *within* itself and other complex adaptive systems. This can be described where the professional 'self' is possibly faced with change through the academic 'self' and these changes have occurred through the engagement with the academic programme on many levels. One of these levels may be within the interactions with fellow learners across the cohort who are also professionals within the field of early years as a '*collective learner* – with a coherence and evolving identity all of its own' (Davis, 2005, p. 87). Illeris also describes this as 'collective transformative learning' (2014, p. 99). The context 2 of this study, the sample, depicts a sub-group of the whole cohort and is represented by, I argue, a coherence and identity of its own. In a dynamic CAS where many systems are interacting simultaneously, there can be no reduction in the system's patterns to causes and effects. In attempting to locate single or simple causality, the principles of complexity are undermined and are therefore resisted in these terms of reference as already discussed. The patterns of emergence are unpredictable as when the CAS changes a new set of options for choice emerges. However, through understanding and observing the 'local conditions' that

Haggis (2009, p. 10) identifies, it is possible to note what emerges from these, and can be described as emergent effects. The conditions may include feedback loops (Fenwick et al., 2011; Cohen et al., 2007) which offers an explanation for emergence within the CAS. Positive feedback loops support transformation. Fenwick et al., (2011, p. 25) suggest that complicity describes when systems not only interact but 'interact to change one another, and perpetuate something new'. Complexity theory is specific that feedback loops are required to be positive for transformation to emerge, as negative feedback loops drive the system back to its 'norm of equilibrium' (Fenwick et al., 2011, p. 24). However, I argue that when notions of complexity are synthesised with transformation theory, the concepts of regressive and restored transformation do identify changes within the learner. As discussed earlier, where a learner withdraws from the programme because they perceive it as beyond them, a negative feedback is a trigger for change; the withdrawal. Here a negative feedback loop is the catalyst for a transformation where the learner is more self-aware of their own abilities, personal circumstances or the purpose of completing the course has changed. As such emergence is evident.

Haggis (2009) states that by observing and charting each participant's individual orientation, the nature of the learner's narrative is no longer mysterious. In adopting the lens of complexity theory and multiple contexts, the intersected conditions for transformation learning have been made visible. Through the synthesis of complexity with transformational theory, I have been able to examine the data with a unique lens and with a particular focus on learning and cognition. The following discussion addresses a critical function of cognition, that of metacognition and relates to the two research questions for this study.

2.5   Metacognition, Self-Belief, Self-efficacy and Agency

Metacognition is an important aspect of cognition, learning, in that it is the 'capacity to reflect upon one's own thinking, and thereby to monitor and manage it' (Greeno, Collins & Resnik, 1996). Metacognition is thinking about thinking and enables the learner to self-regulate learning to reach desirable goals (Negretti, 2012). Kitchener (1983, p. 222) suggests that metacognition includes three parts:

> [1] knowledge of self and others as cognitive processors when they are engaged in a task or goal, [2] knowledge about specific cognitive tasks or problems themselves and [3] metacognitive experiences, i.e., feelings of wonder or puzzlement which leads to the re-evaluation of strategies.

The 'puzzlement' that is referred to resonates with the notion of struggle, or disequilibrium. Where a re-evaluation of strategies to resolve the problem is applied [3], the learner needs to be aware of the task [2] along with being also aware of themselves and the 'tools' they have to use [1]. Negretti (2012) defines [1] and [2] as metacognitive awareness, and [3] as metacognitive monitoring and regulation. Negretti (2012, p. 145) provides further explanation of metacognitive awareness with three distinct aspects: declarative knowledge, procedural knowledge and conditional knowledge. Declarative knowledge refers to the identification and awareness of strategies and concepts that are important in relation to a specific task and defines *what* to apply**.** In the context of the learners who were the focus of this study this may mean their professional and academic knowledge. Procedural knowledge refers to how to apply these concepts and strategies, that is *how* to perform the task and conditional knowledge is awareness of *when and why* to apply certain knowledge and strategies. Metacognitive monitoring refers to learners' abilities to judge their own performance and has resonance with self-organisation in complexity theory and specifically within this study, in their writing. In judging their own writing performance, participants are able to identify their own strengths and weaknesses, to self-organise   appropriate   knowledge   and   strategies   associated   with   their

development. A key hindrance to writing success for those who have little academic heritage, is a mental representation of the expected text (Chanquoy, 2009) on which to judge performance. The absence of the expected text affects metacognitive awareness in so far that the writer cannot know what they do not know. Academic heritage in this context describes those learners with a historic, established academic background which might typically mean having acquired formal qualifications post aged 16. Having a mental representation of the text prior to commencing academic writing is a key condition for success, and explains, in part, the difficulties that non-traditional, adult learners in the context of this study, have with academic writing and the tasks required of them:

> Mental representation of the task will therefore influence metacognitive dynamics entailed in writing: student writers' metacognitive awareness of how to adapt strategies to achieve determinate rhetorical purposes and their ability to monitor and evaluate the successfulness of their texts (Negretti, 2012, p. 146).

Allal (2000, p. 149) identifies that metacognitive regulation is related to three operations; anticipation, monitoring and adjustment. Anticipation is aligned with Chanquoy's notion of a 'future' text (2009) where the writer has a representation of the task ahead and is goal orientated in respect of this. The writer is able then to monitor the strategies used in relation to this and adjust the discrepancy between the anticipated text and the actual. This monitoring of performance at text production level is reliant on the metacognitive awareness of the strategies to undertake the task itself. It is through the learner's additional metacognitive awareness of what, how, when and why to apply strategies in writing, and the metacognitive regulation in the ability to judge their own performance, that learning can occur. Haggis (2006a) states that knowing what to do, and an understanding of how to undertake the task, is dependent on deciding on a schedule for approaching the task. Despite the motivation to undertake the task, for many learners the not knowing of what to do, in some cases may mean many misspent hours spent committed to study because the learner

struggles to coordinate their metacognitive knowledge because they do not necessarily know what to do. A question is therefore raised about how metacognition helps inexperienced writers and as previously discussed on page 7, Negretti (2012) makes clear the need for further research on the role that metacognition plays in the learning experiences of novice academic writers. Limited metacognitive awareness can, therefore, hinder transformational learning. In this way, metacognition is a condition for and key component of agency, where learners and the environment can 'reciprocally influence' one another:

> Individuals' ability to exert agency presupposes their awareness of what they can do and their ability to develop strategies to control and regulate it (Negretti, 2012, p. 144).

A learner that is metacognitively aware has the agency to complete a written assignment, they have a **belief** that they have the capacity to undertake a task, the strategies to use and the regulation of these appropriate to the goal. In this way self-efficacy and agency are aligned as self-efficacy is closely linked to motivation and forms the foundation for personal accomplishment. These beliefs provide the learner with the agency to motivate them 'through self-monitoring and self-evaluation activities as well as self-regulation, supporting the setting of goals and selection of strategies' (Ortoleva & Bétrancourt, 2015, p. 100). To summarise, metacognitive functions act as a condition to underpin self-efficacy and agency where the learner's self-belief is interwoven with their capacity to complete the task.

> Self-efficacy beliefs have also shown convergent validity in influencing such key indices of academic motivation as choice of activities, level of effort, persistence, and emotional reactions (Zimmerman, 2000, p. 87).

In acknowledging the interconnecting factors of metacognition, self-efficacy and agency when the work-based learner is viewed through a complexity theory lens it

suggests that they are multiply influenced in positive and negative ways during the course of their studies. Perceived success and failure can be influencing factors that may enhance or reduce the learner's perception of their capability to undertake the task and this perception may have been influenced by prior success or failure. In the context of this study this may, for some learners, be due to the grades achieved for assignments. A further influencing factor on self-efficacy belief is in 'vicarious experiences' (Ortoleva & Bétrancourt, 2015, p. 100) where the learner observes others undertaking the task in a successful way and these affect the learner's feelings of competence as a measure of their own capacities. The learners frequently became part of close friendship groups who were bonded by their shared endeavour to undertake the programme and therefore the influences on each other's self-belief can be equally supportive and unsupportive at any given point. A positive influencing factor on self-efficacy can be 'verbal persuasion' (Ortoleva & Bétrancourt, 2015, p. 101), or encouragement and sources of this can be fellow learners, along with significant others in any one of the environments that the learner interacts with. Included in these sources are 'literacy brokers' (Lillis & Curry, 2006, p. 14). Literacy brokers may be academic professionals, language professionals or nonprofessionals who act as 'mediators' (ibid.) for the learner with their written text. A fuller discussion of literacy brokers is included later in this chapter, however, in the context of supporting self-belief; the literacy broker may be able to provide the verbal persuasion necessary to support the learner's self-efficacy. Bandura (2006) also indicates that physiological factors form a key source for self-efficacy beliefs in respect of the learner's tension, pain, anxiety, fatigue. The sources for, and conditions contributing to, self-efficacy are important to recognise and were evident in the data. Feedback loops identified for emergence (Fenwick et al., 2011, p. 24; Cohen et al., 2007) both internally as metacognitive awareness and task perception; and externally from assignment grades influence self-belief, self-efficacy and subsequently agency. Transformational learning is therefore either afforded or hindered. In this way, the concept of struggle, or disequilibrium, is relevant to self-efficacy as the emotional

'conditions' of the CAS affect positively and negatively the capacity for emergence. Zimmerman (2000, p. 86) draws on the work of Bandura (1997) who states 'that self-efficacious students participate more readily, work harder, persist longer, and have fewer adverse emotional reactions when they encounter difficulties than do those who doubt their capabilities'. Self-efficacy has been examined through the learner's self-belief defined by academic confidence in the data analysis.

Metacognitive awareness and regulation, thinking about thinking, forms a central concept in this research and as I have argued, is closely aligned with self-belief which affords self-efficacy and ultimately, agency. Self-efficacy is a dynamic construct which changes over time and refers to task specific capability. It is 'an important motivational construct as it influences individual choices, goals, emotional reactions, effort, coping and persistence' (Gist & Mitchell, 1992, p. 186). Identity is deeply connected to self-belief and efficacy.

2.6   Identity

Haggis (2009, p. 9) argues that a stable, core self is a Western tradition whereas complexity theory draws on the idea of impermanence, where a 'different, dynamic ontology' underpins the sense of self. The notion of multiple realities, or ontologies, outlines that an actor in their world observes and defines their understandings of it through an individual's lens which is uniquely shaped by experience (Birr Moje & Luke, 2009). Background experience provides the landscape for the development of different, indeed multiple, identities. Complexity theory views each individual as heterogeneous, and composed of multiple identities which together present a different view, or reality, of the world that is specific and unique to them. It is therefore complicated and even unhelpful to compare and contrast each individual learner with another. This study adopted the perspective that the participants have multiple, evolving identities, as do I. I am a researcher, a parent, a sibling, a child, a

professional, an academic, a teacher, an employee and it is impossible to capture, separate and explore all of these. As Josselson (1996, p. 29) states:

> Living our identities is much like breathing. We don't have
> to ask ourselves each morning who we are. We simply are.
> ...identity is never fixed; it is constantly evolving.

The concept of identity has multiple meanings in theoretical terms (Birr Moje & Luke, 2009) and commentators have developed many of the ideas of Erikson (1968) whose social psychological understandings of identity suggested that whilst external forces are influential. Identity formation is a largely unconscious and internal process (Jones, Chloe Kim & Cilente Skendall, 2012). It has been more contemporary commentators (Josselson, 1996) that have suggested that identity is socially constructed and in less linear, sequential paths than those outlined by Erikson (1968). Jones et al. (2012, p. 702) draw on the concept of intersectionality:

> …as a framework that more completely and accurately
> captures the complexities of everyday life and identity by
> explicitly linking individual, interpersonal, and social
> structural domains of experience.

This notion of intersectionality has resonance with complexity theory where there is no core or static self as Haggis (2009) discusses, instead a CAS has a more fluid sense of self that is dynamic and responds to interactions with other complex systems. The term 'adaptive' within a CAS is significant when describing how the different identities are ever-changing and evolving. The interactions, intersections and inter-relationships between and within each CAS means that identities are primarily socially constructed (Birr Moje & Luke, 2009; Jones et al., 2012). It is important, therefore, to define the term 'social' when making claims of socially constructed identities. In the context of this research, the term social refers to the influences of different, current and past social contexts on an individual's varied identities. Due to the interconnectedness of complex systems, it is also necessary to define the role of the social *between the* systems. This is represented through the dynamic between the participants and how they are perceived within the social grouping for example, a learner may present a

well formed academic identity in one group, but not in another and this identity is dependent on the perceived academic identities of the other participants in the group. This is illustrated for a learner where in their personal lives; their academic identity is secure as within their family group they may be the first to attend university and therefore perceived as academically able within this context. This may reinforce the learner's academic identity positively, or possibly negatively where the learner is viewed as the 'outsider' within their family context through their alignment with the academy. In addition, when the same learner is in attendance at university with experienced tutors and academics, their academic confidence and identity may be less secure. Social relationships therefore shape the organic, changing nature of identities within different social groupings. This can also occur across contexts; for example, where the participant's identity may be well defined is in their professional context. However, this becomes less secure during their studies on the programme. Whilst developing an academic identity, their professional understandings are examined and it is through this scrutiny that their professional identity may become destabilised. In any one of these identities, there may be challenge presented in the illustrations I have discussed, or within any other 'multiply' interconnected experiences (Haggis, 2008, p. 167). Learning is deeply connected to identities and a premise for this study, with regard to understanding concepts of identity, is that transformational learning is defined as all learning that 'implies changes in the identity of the learner' (Illeris, 2014, p. 107).

Adult identity is an important consideration within the context of the participants in this study. As previously discussed, the sample were all adults, including some mature adults, across an age range of 20 – 52 years of age. Illeris (2014, p. 90) identifies that mature adulthood, defined by the ages of 45-65 years, is when the learner passes a 'life turn'. The 'life turn' is conceived as a perception that life is no longer unlimited which strongly motivates the mature adult learner to do something that they consider important to themselves or others. This may include the desire to prove something to themselves and others that they have not previously had the opportunity to do. This

has resonance with three of the participants who fell within the mature adulthood age bracket, where learning for them is often 'characterised by a personal libidinal motivation without the aura of necessity or external incentive that often forms the basis of learning in earlier adulthood' (ibid.). The term 'libidinal' that Illeris (2014) uses, depicts a lustful motivation to learn at this stage in life and captures a powerful, intrinsic driving force to undertake learning. This is especially so where the learning benefits those groups or movement that the learner empathises with, which in this context are young children. The strong sense of purpose in a life turn as a condition for transformational learner can radically influence changing identities. McClaren and Da Silva (1993, p. 64), drawing on the work of Paulo Freire, also comment that experiences never occur outside of particular social and cultural forms. These experiences are produced through regimes of discourse which serve particular interests and relations of power and which, in turn, affect the formation of personal identities. Concepts of power will be discussed further in this chapter. The dynamic shifts in multiple identities, that are interconnected, are a focus of this study and central to understanding the role that academic writing may have in these changing identities.

2.6.1   Academic Identity

The interconnectness of different identities of any one participant makes isolating and identifying specific identities challenging. It is important that the following discussion of specific, contextual identities is understood through the particular lens of complexity theory. The terms learning, academic, writing and academic writing identities should be viewed as co-existing, or *multiply* existing as each informs and develops from the other (Haggis, 2008, p. 167).

Ceislik (2006, p. 237) refers to a learning identity as being informed by an individual's 'learning career'. A learning career denotes the movement of an individual through

different social contexts and statuses both past and present which influences and shapes their engagement with education, it describes long-term biographical experiences. Ceislik (2006) suggests that a learning identity refers to the dispositions of the individual, or their orientation as Haggis (2009) describes for a CAS within a complexity framework, and the examination of the learning career along with the learning identity allows for the complex relationships that individuals have with learning to be better understood. Indeed, this study endeavoured to better understand the struggles or particular complexities that adult work-based learners experience with academic writing.

For the purposes of this study, the term 'academic identity' refers to a sense of self within the academy rather than informal and non-formal learning, where a learning identity encompasses the sense of self in the full range of learning experiences. An academic identity includes understandings and perceptions of self as an academic; someone who undertakes the activities of a scholar; academic reading and academic writing and all that that embraces; for example, analysis, evaluation, synthesis and argumentation. Therefore, academic writing identity is interwoven with academic identity. An academic, and therefore writing, identity is shaped by all the activities, events and experiences, associated with learning past and present, formal and informal. Writing identity is described by Clark and Ivanič as 'the autobiographical self' (1997, p. 137) where the writers' life history affects the way that they write. For the participants in this study, a learning career, or autobiographical self, may have been formed through formal learning from school based experiences, professional learning and learning within the academy where barriers to learning such as low self-belief, the social background of the individual encompassing aspects of social class, gender and attainment can all impact on their sense of self regarding their learning.

A wealth of research has been undertaken to seek the views of undergraduate and postgraduate learners about academic writing and many report the negative emotions and struggle that learners experience (for example Caffarella & Barnett, 2000;

Wellington, 2010; Wingate, 2012; Murray et al., 2008; Young, 2000; Cameron et al., 2009). However, there are more limited studies that explore the views and experiences of work-based learners on an FdA programme (Nzekwe-Excel, 2012; Taylor, C., 2008). Emotions surrounding writing affect academic identity and self-efficacy both positively and negatively and these can be equally empowering or paralysing where 'fear and anxiety can cripple early writing endeavours' (Cameron et al., 2009, p. 270). Learners must make a 'critical shift' in academic identity...[that] entails positioning oneself not as inexperienced student but as writer and academic with a legitimate voice and contribution' (ibid.). Cameron et al. (2009) argue that much of the fear that learners feel towards their writing is related to limited understandings about the processes of writing, particularly where writing is iterative, messy and recursive. In not knowing, the learner is left to struggle to meet the expectations of the task with only the exemplars of published work as a frame of reference where the tussles of iteration and reiteration are hidden as a final published text.

In writing, the learner has an 'intensely personal relationship with self' (Cameron et al., 2009, p. 272) where their academic identity, most specifically, is formed and re-formed. Emotional responses may be specifically visible in response to the grades the learner receives for their written assignments. Positive emotions such as a deep satisfaction and pride may be experienced for a perceived 'good' grade. Alternatively, powerful negative emotions of anxiety, fear and disappointment can be associated with a lower or failed grade. These experiences and emotions are closely linked to self-efficacy and belief about competencies in writing. Grades may induce the feeling of being exposed where writing can feel like an 'intellectual striptease' (Caffarella & Barnett, 2000, p. 46). These feelings may be amplified when the learner is in a senior or management position within the workplace where the exposure is across the environments of the university and in the place of employment. Young (2000) suggests that feedback on marked work has an impact on the learner's self-worth and on identities. Learners with a high self-worth are more receptive to feedback and

assessment of their writing, whereas those with low self-worth frequently see the feedback as 'an indictment of themselves' (Young, 2000, p. 414). I propose that the dynamic and possible tensions between their different 'selves' and specifically, for the focus of this study, their professional and academic 'selves' of the participants is what is uniquely challenging for these learners as individuals and as a collective of learners as complex adaptive systems.

In examining academic identities, it is important to explore the role of the academy and particular pedagogies to understand how the learner is positioned. The academic literacies discourse suggests positioning the learner differently. As previously discussed on page 14, the academic literacies approach challenges the previously held deficit model assumptions of a learner who needs to adapt to the academy, instead viewing the University as the active agent. Indeed, the academic literacies approach views student writing and learning as specifically linked to identities (Street, 2004, p. 7). The acknowledgement of the role of identity in this approach has particular resonance for adult work-based learners. The multiple identities, namely the added dimension of the professional self, with which work-based learners identify, are an important consideration for the academy in relation to the different discourses and different linguistic features that may be alien to them. Although, as addressed earlier, the learner's professional experience may be largely unacknowledged. Alienation is illustrated in the academy's traditional convention of the use of third rather than the first person authorial voice. An objective, formal writing voice is largely expected in academic work and which may affect learners' sense of identity with the academy. Objectivity may distance the learner from their writing, limiting authorial ownership. However, a recent shift in thinking across HE as a whole has seen changes to the use of academic voice where academics working and researching in the discipline of the social sciences increasingly locate themselves more explicitly within their writing through the use of the first person voice. The change in positioning of the writer is attributable to the increased use of qualitative, interpretivist paradigms that Badley (2009, p. 210) refers to as the post-modern, post-positivist methodologies that no

longer claim neutrality or objectivity as discussed earlier. The introduction of FdA programmes as work-based courses to the academy in 2000 which requires learners to directly draw on their own experiences and practice (QAA, 2015), particularly at BGU, signified a change in positioning of the learner where the first person voice is encouraged over the third person. This change, however, is not unproblematic as the use of first person voice positions the learner's voice as centre stage in writing and may stifle the writing process in that the writer's autobiographical self feels exposed and self-conscious. To counteract this, the programme tutors at BGU encourage the use of the passive voice which denotes formality and some degree of objectivity as the writing resists the littering of the first person 'I' within the work although supports the use of first person where necessary. This middle ground between first and third person voice prevents an overly subjective, journalistic writing style and shows authorial ownership of the learner's practice illustrations, although this is not without its difficulties for the writer to manage. The notion of middle ground does not necessarily support a secure academic identity as the learner may feel a sense of altered voice (Lillis, 2001; Cameron et al., 2009; Clark & Ivanič, 1997, p. 134). Clark and Ivanič (1997, p. 142) refer to identity as the 'discoursal self' which is the writers' representation of themselves in the text.

The discoursal self is represented by the work-based learner as an interconnection between the academic and the professional as it is within academic writing that these emerge and potentially interact with each other in a dynamic way. The discoursal self presents a statement about an individual's identity through the language used and the messages conveyed; the practices of the particular discourse:

> Writers take on the identities inscribed in the particular conventions they draw on, and these conventions position them both in their own eyes and in the eyes of their readers. However, this process of drawing on conventions is not completely free-ranging. Which conventions people draw upon depends partly on their life-histories, experiences and affiliations to particular groups, and partly on the pressure to conform to the prestigious conventions

for the type of writing in the institutional context (Clark & Ivanič, 1997, p. 143).

Authorial voice is therefore potentially constrained by the institutional context, or more specifically the reader within that institution context. The reader, or perceived gatekeeper, makes judgements on the learner's competence within the conventions of an assessment, but also on them as an academic. It is within the boundaries of academic writing where academic identity can be formed. The formation of a confident writing voice is dependent on understanding the literacy practices and conventions adopted by the institution and also on the confidence of the learner in feeling that they have something of significance to say, or an affinity with the subject being written about (Pittam, Elander, Fox & Payne, 2009). Haggis (2006a, p. 526) clarifies that the academy cannot expect all learners to enter HE 'already knowing how to do things such as respond to a reading list and a set of essay questions, engage with new types of text genre and adopt a critical stance in relation to ideas in published form'. The inclusion of others' and the learner's viewpoints makes developing the writer's 'sense of self' (Cameron et al., 2009, p. 269) challenging as the activities of de-constructing and re-constructing that Badley (2009) refers to are not proficient, or indeed understood by the novice academic writer. Where learners reflect and re-construct through their thinking through writing, Badley (2009, p. 215) suggests a re-shaping of the writer emerges where they become '*critical* [sic] participants in both academic and social life'. A re-shaped or re-worked self-image as an academic writer requires the development of an academic identity. An emerging academic identity may be in tension or competition with other senses of self, or identities such as their professional or personal identities. The establishing of an academic identity is challenged by the different discourses and different linguistic features that may be alien to the work-based learner. The process of examining professional practices, linking this to theoretical concepts and wider reading, and in discussing the interrelationship through comparing and contrasting between these various sites of evidence challenges both their professional identity in the first instance as well as the academic identity of FdA learners.

Elbow (1981) states that writing requires two conflicting skills; creating and criticising. Text production refers to the creating skill and criticising depicts the process of refinement and revision. The critical voice of the novice writer tends to be far stronger than the creative one (Cameron et al., 2009, p. 272) which poses a problem for the learner as the writer can, therefore become their own worst critic. The voice of the critic and the voice of the creator have to unite to work collaboratively in order to undertake academic writing and this involves the developing of multiple drafts of writing. The refinement of a piece of writing may mean several iterations of the text to reach the end product which requires motivation, and an intensely personal relationship with the self during the writing process to examine the feelings of self-doubt, anxiety and fear associated with this (Cameron et al., 2009) which limits the formation of a secure academic identity. The learner can feel vulnerable and reluctant to have ownership of ideas in the re-constructive activity of writing and therefore the writing becomes a mere regurgitation of the views of others through cutting and pasting from academic reading rather than as a creative process of 're-construction' of ideas (Badley, 2009, p. 212). The work-based learner may be no different from other learners in respect of their feelings associated with writing. However, the dynamic element for these particular writers is in the locating of their own practice experiences and examples in relation to the views of others which afford them an active role in the re-construction of ideas and concepts. The complexity emerges, as discussed, in supporting the metacognitive processes that enable both knowledge and tacit knowledge to be visible in writing.

A learner's academic identity as a writer is important in supporting their studies and is informed by their learning career (Ceislik, 2006). It is necessary, therefore, to examine the participant's formal educational histories and experiences as these have contributed to their sense of self. As discussed on page 15, Foundation Degrees contribute to widening participation in the academy, as it encourages learners who may not previously have considered studying in HE (QAA, 2015). Their practice experience forms a key part of the entry requirement for the course which enables

many work-based learners to be accepted on a programme of study without many formal qualifications or academic heritage. Therefore the 'intellectual competencies of 'the academy'…: the construction of a *coherent argument* [sic]; appropriate *uses of evidence*; the privileging of *analysis and criticism* over description (Stierer, 2000, p. 180) may have not been evidenced through undertaking prior formal qualifications. However, the work-based learner arrives at the academy with a wealth of practical experience within their field of work. The more limited formal academic learning is an important consideration for both the learner and the academy as the intellectual discourse of the academy may emerge as being at odds with the professional discourse, where there is a disconnect between practices as part of the academy and the workplace. Stierer argues that it is within academic writing that these two discourses are 'most acutely focused' (ibid.) If the intellectual discourse of the academy is one of dominance and preserved as such and if, as Stierer (2000) suggests, academic writing is where this dominance emerges, then the writing practices within HE are a primary source of tension. This tension may be more acutely focused for work-based learners because of issues related to professional identity and literacy practices associated within the learner's professional field. However, within the field of early years education this is ever more acute because the emergence of Early Childhood Education as an academic discipline, and indeed as a profession, is relatively recent.

2.6.2   Professional Identity

In order to discuss notions of professional identity, this section of the literature review must begin by exploring how a professional is defined and then as a professional within the context of early years education. Eraut (1994) suggests that traditional professions are identified as socially powerful by their professional knowledge base and expertise. The knowledge base of professionals enables social influence which

provides the profession with a distinct identity and professional autonomy. Indeed, Larson (1977) argues professionalisation is the translation of specialist knowledge and skills into social and economic rewards. A professional has knowledge that society relies on (Evans, 2008) which is derived from a prolonged period of study, typically to graduate level or beyond (e.g. medical doctors and lawyers) and more recently within the last fifty years, for teachers to receive Qualified Teacher Status. In having an academic requirement to enter the profession there is therefore an established academic heritage. I use the term academic heritage in this context to describe a long standing discipline that is recognised by those inside and outside of the sector with its own particular body of knowledge, discourses and identity. Early Childhood Education (ECE) has only recently gained academic legitimacy in the academy since the early 1990s when undergraduate and postgraduate ECE programmes were introduced in the UK (QAA, 2007). In this way, the academic heritage for those in the early years continues to emerge. For those studying a Foundation Degree, suggests that an FdA programme for early years practitioners has even less of an established academic heritage.

The professionalisation of the early years workforce has been a part of the *Ten Year Strategy for Childcare* (Department for Education & Skills, 2006). The term 'professionalisation', in this context, refers to the creation of a graduate early years workforce (Lloyd & Hallet, 2010). Much debate has centred on whether the term professionalisation can be used to describe the graduate early years practitioner (Moss, 2008; Oberheumer, 2008) and this discourse focuses on the legitimacy of defining the early years professional alongside other traditional professions. The reason for professionalising the early years is based on the value of practitioners' work with young children in their formative years in order to improve future outcomes and social capital. Indeed, Cooke and Lawton (2008, p. 6) comment that early years services are critical for delivering 'economic prosperity and social justice for Britain'.

The Effective Provision of Pre-School Education (EPPE) project findings indicate the enduring positive cognitive, social and emotional outcomes for children who have attended a quality early years setting (Sylva et al., 2004) especially where the setting is led by a graduate teacher. Practitioners' work with children in the early years does, therefore, contribute to society through their specialised, and increasingly recognised, body of knowledge.

However, currently in the early years sector, graduate status remains a new and emerging requirement and many enter the employment sector with limited qualifications at level 2 and 3. Although with an increasing, additional requirement for level 2 GCSE in Mathematics and English, it is still possible to work in early years settings without these. The landscape for ECE has changed considerably since 2008 when a statutory early years curriculum was introduced (Department for Children, Families & Schools, 2008) with subsequent iterations of this influenced by government and parliamentary changes since then (Department for Education, 2012, Department for Education, 2014). Practitioners within early years settings are currently required to report to parents, to keep records on children, to work in an integrated way with other professionals and to undergo rigorous government inspection as part of the curricular framework (DfE, 2014). The demands to share and report on their professional knowledge to a variety of audiences are increasing. Street (1992, p. 5) identifies that 'literacy practices are constitutive of identity and of personhood' and this has resonance with the early years practitioner. The ECE practitioner and emerging professional may use specific literacy practices that reflect the more limited formal schooling experiences within both the workplace and on their programme of study. As such these literacy practices position the learner (Street, 1992), the early years practitioner, and constructs an identity informed by these. As Clark and Ivanič (1997, p. 5) argue:

> …it is important to see writing as a social practice,
> embedded in social relations within a specific community,
> each with its own complex ideological and conventional

practices within which individual students have to find identities as writers that they feel confident and comfortable with.

The notion of writing as social practice is discussed in more depth later in this chapter.

To summarise, identities are bound to self-belief which affects the self-efficacy and agency of the learner. The agency for the learner to complete an academic written task is determined by their persistence and resilience to work towards the goal which at local level is the assignment and at global level is the FdA itself. Metacognitive awareness and self-regulation have been discussed as critical to self-efficacy as part of a cyclical, reinforcing system and is supported through the process of transformational learning. The system requires a dynamic shift, triggered by a catalyst, which I present as a struggle and through this the learner becomes changed. This system has been explored through academic writing of the twelve participants and I now turn to discuss the conditions and components that underpin the process of undertaking writing.

2.7   Writing

Writing is an important aspect of modern literate societies and there are many different sorts of writing that suit different purposes and functions (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996, p. 3). Writing is not merely speech in written form (Smith, 1982; Clark & Ivanič, 1997). The benefit of writing for communication rather than speaking is that the reader and writer do not have to be in the same place or space. Writing in this instance needs to be considered, concise and precise as it is able to be more scrutinised by the reader. Writing is interpretable as unlike face-to-face interactions, there are no checking processes that the reader's interpretation is as the writer intended it. Vygotsky (1978, p. 115) describes the development of writing for the writer as second-order symbolism where written language consists of signs and symbols that derive from the words and sounds of spoken language (first-order

symbolism). Gradually, writing develops to become what is referred to as a direct symbolic system where the intermediate link of spoken language disappears and 'written language is converted into a system of signs that directly symbolises the entities and relations between them' (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 106). As a direct symbolic system, writing is more formal and stylistically different from the spoken word.

Writing is 'powerful' because it transcends time; as the reader may not be located in the same place as the writer or even in the same century. As such, writing is permanent and a concrete representation of thinking at a particular moment. It is a more conscious way of thinking, and therefore makes writing a more self-conscious process (Clark & Ivanič, 1997). Smith argues (1982, p. 5) that writing is always personal. The process of writing is complex, often difficult, and requires multi-faceted skills to undertake it (Murray & Moore, 2006, p. 5). There are two main aspects of writing that require different skills; transcription and composition. Transcriptional skills refer to the secretarial aspects of writing such as spelling and grammar. Compositional skills are required in the creation of meaning. The writer, therefore, has to consider these different aspects in the writing process; often simultaneously, sometimes separately. Many writers, including myself, find writing a challenge for a wealth of differing reasons. For some it is a frustrating business (Contah, Gregory, Kennedy & Mor-Sommerfiled, 2005 p. 25) and for others 'a messy and iterative process of bringing ideas together' (Cameron et al., 2009, p. 207). Writing requires high levels of motivation as it can be an isolated and lonely activity that demands concentration, physical skills, knowledge of writing conventions and varied genres, among others. A key aspect to writing relates to the perceived self-identity of the writer which may be pivotal to the success of the process as already outlined. Research conducted by Cameron et al. (2009, p. 274) suggests that the consistency of feelings of self-doubt, anxiety and fear that are associated with writing indicate that these are not individual attributes as discussed earlier. The specific genre of academic writing is no different in its demands of the writer, and is defined by features notably in the construction of argument, along with the idiosyncratic nature of referencing. If

as Elbow suggests that '…the ability to write is unusually mysterious to most people' (1973, p. 12), then it is surprising that any human engages in the process of writing, and especially so for academic writing. Grabe and Kaplan (1996) comment that writing abilities are not naturally acquired, they are culturally generated and transmitted, and the need to communicate through writing is socially driven, as Bourdieu et al. (1994, p. 4) state, 'academic language…is no one's mother tongue'. Therefore, the purpose of writing must be of significance where its unique function in 'meaning-making' is to 'hold thinking still' for inspection, allowing time and space to shape ideas (Clark & Ivanič, 1997, p. 110; Smith, 1982) and in this way writing provides a tool for the writer for making his /her own sense of the world:

> We cannot observe ourselves thinking, but we can observe
> the products of thought. And the most powerful tools for
> doing so is *writing* (Smith, 1982, p. 32).

Clark and Ivanič (1997, p. 112) and Grabe and Kaplan (1996) identify that the 'meaning making purposes' for writing are numerous. One purpose is writing for record-keeping and is historically the most common use for writing in forms such as lists and instructions or where information is written down in order that it does not have to be committed to memory and may not specifically be used to communicate to others. Other record keeping purposes, however, do communicate to others, for example when an event or experience is recorded for future times such as legal documents for marriages where the writing serves as a permanent archive, although often without a specific audience in mind. Writing for communication serves a different social function. The writer may have certain intentions for communicating and specific information to convey (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996). In having an audience, the writer is more likely to use accepted writing conventions. Writing can be purposefully used in disseminating ideas (Clark & Ivanič, 1997) through a means where there is more permanence, where it can be reproduced and distributed to a wider audience. This makes writing a self-conscious and deliberate process.

A further purpose of writing is as evidence for the writer's understanding, or knowledge telling (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987, p. 6). Clark and Ivanič (1997, p. 117) argue writing used as evidence of understanding is a specialised form of writing that exists only in educational institutions, although not all. In some countries, evidence of understanding is demonstrated through oral assessments. They outline that writing is by no means 'intrinsically superior' (ibid.) for fulfilling this function. However, I argue, where writing is used for thinking (Clark & Ivanič, 1997), or as Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987, p. 6) describe, knowledge transforming, and as an overlapping function of writing as evidence of understanding, it can transcend oral communication. This is compounded through the permanence of writing, the power that this may hold and the uniqueness of writing in providing this function.

The most powerful of the writing purposes defined by Clark and Ivanič (1997) and Grabe and Kappan (1996) is where writing is used for thinking and this is where it is most legitimate in its use within the academy. The higher order cognitive competencies of the academy, such as the construction of a coherent argument, using appropriate evidence, criticality, synthesis and analysis (Stierer, 2000) are able to be demonstrated through writing. Whilst the end product of the writing used as evidence for understanding can show these competencies, it is the process of undertaking the writing that can transform knowledge for the writer (Catt & Gregory, 2006). As Smith (1982, p. 1) states 'the act of writing can tell the author things that were known (or not known) before the writing began'. If, therefore, writing can provide the vehicle by which knowledge and understanding can be examined, rearranged and developed, then it can be a tool for thinking and ultimately transformational learning.

The role of the academy is central to learners and their writing as the intellectual discourse of higher education is 'saturated in writing' (French, 2010, p. 20). French (ibid.) argues that the academy may present itself as transparent in what it deems as 'good' writing, although this is not evidenced in other research. Lillis and Turner (2010, p. 57) refer to their study where learners 'knew that they were expected to write

within a particular configuration of conventions, [however] they were constantly struggling to find out what these conventions were'. Learners' awareness of rhetorical goals for written assignments requires for them to have knowledge and understanding of the purposes of the writing; analysis, evaluation and synthesis through argumentation, voice and stance, and awareness of audience and context (Wingate, 2012). Gourlay (2009, p. 189) argues that learners need to navigate their way to an understanding of the rhetorical demands in academic writing and as these are far from transparent in the academy (Lillis & Turner, 2010), she describes the 'indeterminate, tacit nature of academic writing'. The terms 'critically analyse', and 'argument' may require explicit teaching for the learner to understand the requirements and complex dimensions of the task and as Wingate (2012, p. 146) argues, the construction of an argument is rarely explicitly taught in HE, with tutors themselves often having only 'tacit' knowledge of these concepts. In this way, academic writing is frequently disguised by 'complicated and unequal manifestations of cultural power operating within and through higher education' (French, 2010, p. 20). The notion of cultural power is of relevance within the context of the learners within this study and can be viewed through understanding how the learner is positioned when engaging in academic writing. The positioning of the writer is a critical aspect of this study as writing is a social practice and is socially situated.

2.7.1   Writing as a Social Practice

Writing is a social practice 'consisting of a complex set of physical, socio-political, cognitive and affective elements' (Clark & Ivanič, 1997, p. 81). This viewpoint acknowledges the lens of complexity theory in depicting writing as consisting of interconnected elements of communication; to oneself and to an audience, and is therefore socially situated. Fairclough (1989, p. 25) argues that people do not make meaning in a vacuum, rather the processes of production and interpretation are

inseparable, and these are 'inextricable from the local, institutional and socio-historical conditions within which the participants are situated' (Clark & Ivanič, 1997, p. 10). The process of making meaning through writing is reliant on understanding the social context in which the communication is situated, and the writer's perceptions of this. Lillis (2001, p. 34) refers to the language and literacy practices of the academy as having a particular discourse that is politically, culturally and socially situated and in these practices having three distinct meanings. Firstly, that language and literacy discourses involve specific instances of language uses, for example the use of the term 'argumentation' in HE means a specific practice within academic writing. Secondly, that what people do with language tends to be repeated, practised and is socially validated through 'life routines' (ibid.). Bourdieu (1991) refers to how individuals engage in socially validated practices as 'habitus', which describes how attitudes and dispositions are developed within a social context and the practices that people employ as 'schemes of perception, thought and action' (Bourdieu, 1989, p. 14). An example of this is the convention of referencing in academic writing as a particular practice validated by the academy. The third meaning for social practice that Lillis (2001, p. 34) identifies draws on the work of Barton and Hamilton (1998, p. 6) and is, she argues, the most abstract because it conceptualises the link between 'the activities of reading and writing and the social structures in which they are embedded and which they help shape'. An explanation of this is located within the interconnectedness of the practices of reading and writing, where the loop between reading informing writing, and vice versa, is reinforced through being socially situated. For example, if a learner is unable to access the discourse of an academic text where the language is socially situated within the academy, then it is therefore more challenging to understand and cannot therefore lead to the de-construction of the texts to analyse, evaluate and synthesise ideas (Badley, 2009). An academic argument is reliant on different viewpoints and positions in order that the writer might analyse the issue to be able to establish their own position. These are derived and then constructed from academic reading. The reading of academic texts is therefore

fundamental to the learner's ability to write academically, where reading and writing are 'inextricably linked' and are 'interacting processes' where one affects the other (Epting, Gallena, Hicks, Palmer & Weisberg, 2013, p. 240). For those entering the academy with more limited exposure to academic texts, denoted by their lack of formal qualifications such as the FdA learners in this study, then this affects their ability in some respects to write academically. For these learners, access to relevant texts may be hindered by reading comprehension, word recognition, orthographic (spelling) and sentence processing (ibid.). The interplay between these multiple factors, and realities, makes the process of writing complex. A writer's social reality closely defines their identities; how a person sees the world informs how they see themselves and others.

Satterthwaite (2003, p. 108) discusses 'the members' specialised discourse' or the language of the academic in their teaching and within the texts available to learners. Here the notion of the knowledgeable *insider*, as Harris refers to the academic (1992, p. 379), positions the learner therefore as the *outsider* to this specialised vocabulary. This is especially so, for example, within modules on the FdA programme where learners are introduced to the technical vocabulary of research. Satterthwaite (2003, p. 109), from research conducted in an HE institution, quotes from a learner '*...there are many words that make reading literature hard work. I find myself adopting the 'opera' approach: you have no understanding of what they are singing about but pick up the clues*'. Another learner comments '*There's something exciting about the flow of language which you don't understand*'. The learner perhaps demonstrates a curiosity in the perceived intellectual elitist language at the heart of this perception and, in turn, curious that it is possibly through the use of language, the academy is at its most strange. Bourdieu et al. (1994, p. 19) argue that 'language is the most effective and the most subtle of all techniques of distancing' where the learner, through fear of 'incomprehension or only half comprehension' of a taught session in HE, feels unable to disclose their confusion or ask questions for clarification. Academic discourse has

the potential to affect the learner's sense of self and impact on their academic identity overall.

An important aspect of writer identity is the sense of self as author (Clark & Ivanič, 1997, p. 152); the author's sense of presence and authority within the text. The sense of self as an author depends on many factors, for example, whether the learner feels they have something important to say and when their written assessments are judged by 'knowledgeable insiders' (Harris, 1992, p. 379) their sense of authorship may be constrained. Bourdieu's (1989) notion of symbolic power has relevance here, as discussed on page 11, where those privileged with education make decisions about what defines the dominating discourse, often without contestation by the learner. This hegemonic practice requires learners to 'enter a game of fictive communication. To play the game, they must embrace the vision of the academic world which casts them in a state of unworthiness' (Bourdieu et al., 1994, p. 17). The symbolic power held by the university, and perceived by the learner positions them as 'outsider' until they graduate. Symbolic power is granted to those such academics for having obtained significant recognition and who are then in a position to impose recognition. As Hyland (2005, p. 173) makes clear:

> Writers seek to offer a credible representation of themselves and their work by claiming solidarity with readers, evaluating their material and acknowledging alternative views, so that controlling the level of personality in a text becomes central to building a convincing argument.

In 'claiming solidarity' the learner may have to compromise their own voice in their writing in order to meet the requirements of academic discourse as Hyland (2005) suggests. There is a contradiction for the learner where within the academy criticality is privileged; however, it is only through using the agreed conventions of the discourse that a learner can legitimately challenge thinking. The significance of gatekeeping, intellectual discourses and notions of cultural power are important considerations when exploring the academic and professional identities of learners. The positioning

of the learner (Clark & Ivanič, 1997, p. 136), the academic writer, is determined by the socio-cultural context of writing, the broader context of society and the specific institutional context of the particular 'act of writing'. These varied contexts at both micro and macro levels are constrained by conventions or, as Clark and Ivanič (1997) describe, 'rules of behaviour'. These rules of behaviour are evident in academic writing as, for example, the conventions for referencing as discussed earlier. Through using specific discourse conventions, the individual is identifying themselves with the interests, beliefs and power relations that are associated with it (ibid., p. 137).

Other conventions of the academy corroborate the notion of power relations that Clark and Ivanič (1997) suggest, as it is at graduation ceremonies where perhaps power is explicitly observable. During the graduation ceremony at BGU and indeed at many HE institutions, the graduands are asked to stand during the procession of the academic staff or 'knowledgeable insiders' (Harris, 1992, p. 379) who are then positioned on an elevated platform before them. Once the graduands have received their award, a sense of collegiality is established as learners have earned their badge and can now join the club (Satterthwaite, 2003, p. 108). The club publicly acknowledges that the graduand has been able to write, and therefore, think in a way that is deemed scholarly. Lillis (2001) refers to academic writing as having the function of 'gatekeeping'. The academics are therefore, within this analogy, the gatekeepers. As Satterthwaite (2003, p. 106) elegantly conveys:

> It seems that the sober and serious business of learning
> and teaching is inextricably bound up with the conferment
> or withholding of awards; or perhaps 'rewards' is a better
> word for the kind of recognition that follows successful
> accomplishment in this competitive and censorious coterie,
> where the best of any of us can hope to belong.

The graduation ceremony is significant and feels of particular importance to me as a tutor as the learners I teach become members of the club where I also have earned my membership badge. This is especially meaningful as these learners have learnt the skill of a particular literacy practice which is at odds with the other dominant contexts

and discourses of their lives. It is curious that the role of the academy according to Rowland (2003, p. 15) has always been to 'critique existing knowledge and contest the assumptions', although the manner by which academics undertake their role is through a 'privileged literacy practice' that does not allow for 'diversity in meaning making' (Lillis, 2001, p. 12-13) beyond that of argumentation. Where academics, who have their badge, are gatekeepers for learners wanting to be part of the club, the conventions are continually reinforced. Although Clark and Ivanič (1997) argue that individuals can either accept the patterns of privileging or contest them by adopting and drawing on other conventions. I propose that any contestation that a learner may make is prevented, for example, through the assessment process. Irrespective of the assessment type, written or through oral means, these aspects of cognition are required to be evidenced in academic work for an FdA specifically (QAA, 2015). There is also an argument that whatever assignment type, writing provides, at least, the starting point for planning of the argument that is to be presented. As such, writing provides the opportunity for the privileged aspects of cognition to be shown and there is significant research evidence to illustrate the power of writing, particularly academic writing, to indeed, meaning make in accordance with these. The process of knowledge transformation through writing is discussed further in this chapter.

Clark and Ivanič (1997, p. 134) suggest the conflict of identity experienced by learners in the academy between their 'former selves and their becoming selves' where other commitments and worlds are juxtaposed with the academic world. It is this tension that I seek to explore within academic writing. I will now discuss writing and the power that academic writing has to support transformational learning.

2.7.2   Writing for Meaning Making

This section of the literature review discusses the writing process and the strategies that writers use to create written texts. For most writers, writing is difficult and

academic writing offers a particular challenge as it requires attention to the writer's own 'thoughts, but also the content and style conventions of the community for whom the piece is being written' (Torrance, Thomas, & Robinson, 1994, p. 379) as described earlier. This challenge is exacerbated by the feelings that the writer has about themselves as a writer and to their written text being assessed as is commonplace in the academy. The writer's approaches to writing are a critical focus for this study and when learners undertake academic writing, it can be knowledge transforming (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987, p. 6) indeed where this occurs, the writer has engaged in deep learning. Transformation may occur multi-dimensionally; professionally, personally and academically. Lillis, Harrington, Lea, and Mitchell (2012) use the term 'transformative' in relation to academic writing when learners, through their writing, identify, situate and contest knowledge. Transformation usually occurs for the writer when there is a tolerance of not knowing and an acceptance of uncertainty (Lillis et al., 2012). The notion of uncertainty, suggests a disequilibrium (Piaget, 1980), which may be followed by emergence (Bryne, 2005) or transformation as previously discussed. The process of writing, or the critical journey to the finished text, is therefore important and the scrutiny of each participant's journey offers a rich and insightful exploration of the challenges and uncertainties that learners face. The understanding of the process as challenging is a key feature of transformation because as Catt and Gregory (2006), Smith (1982) and Galbraith (2009) state the power of writing where thinking and writing occur simultaneously, where we are writing to discover what we think is a demanding and active cognitive undertaking. The complexity of managing multiple elements of the writing process requires the task to be divided up into smaller sub-tasks that are performed in series, rather than simultaneously. The series of sub-tasks and the sequences that individuals undertake these is referred to as writing strategies which are the focus of this research project. This section of the chapter locates this study within the landscape of literature developed on writing processes and learning.

There are two distinct, separate research paradigms related to writing development; psycholinguistic and cognitive approaches (Alamargot & Fayol, 2009, p. 23). These two approaches 'mirror the opposition between the two categories of units constituted by the sentence and the discourse' (ibid.) whereby the psycholinguistic focuses on levels of sentence and word production and the cognitive approach examines how texts are organised, produced and processed by the writer. Alamargot and Foyal (2009) argue that these two research approaches are polarised in their generation of models related to the writing process in that they pay little attention to each others'. There is currently, therefore, limited consensus of a definitive model that embraces both paradigms, or indeed uncontested models within either. This study's focus is on the writing strategies of work-based learners rather than the linguistic aspects of sentence production, therefore, the cognitive paradigm and associated theoretical models are more appropriate for this research study.

The cognitive paradigm in the research of the writing process centres on information processing, rhetoric and communication (Alamargot & Fayol, 2009) where two types of knowledge are outlined as necessary for writing; knowledge about the context of the writing and knowledge about linguistics such as syntax (grammatical construction), lexical (vocabulary); and the rhetorical (writing style). These components rely on the working memory to undertake these processes and results in a dynamic situation which depends on the goals, the audience, the conditions under which the writing is done and the text produced so far (ibid.). This dynamic situation is often the reason why writers feel challenged when producing text. Galbraith (2009) suggests that the writer can experience cognitive overload when the process requires multiple components to be undertaken simultaneously. The synthesis of these components can lead to cognitive conflict, resulting in inertia, 'writer's block', or writing pauses (Epting et al., 2013) which are discussed later in this chapter. The challenge, therefore, for most writers is to create the 'unidimensional' text from the multidimensional process of writing (Alamargot & Fayol, 2009, p. 26) where the eventual written text becomes a 'cognitive map' which is then the subject of further revision (Lavelle, 2009, p. 415).

The identification of these processes can be supported through metacognitive awareness of the different components and strategies to meet the demands of writing as referred to earlier. A key aspect in understanding the strategies lies in the appreciation of the various necessary components by the writer. Current thinking suggests that there are three broad components in the writing process; planning, formulation and revision (Alamargot & Fayol, 2009) and the sequence of these is dependent on the content, the audience and the writer's linguistic abilities, and, I argue, their sense of selfhood as a writer.

A principle and seminal model for the cognitive processes of writing was devised by Hayes and Flower (1980, p. 11), as a tentative writing process model (Figure 2) and which has formed the basis for wider research and development. The model was generated through the analysis of writers' processes using a technique of protocol analysis (Hayes & Flower, 1980). A protocol is a description of a task performance where the writer thinks aloud as they write, which then forms the data for analysis. The model (Figure 2) does not suggest a linear process for writing where these elements occur in a fixed sequence. Clark and Ivanič (1997, p. 92) agree that writing is a 'non-linear, recursive process in which the writer moves forwards and backwards from one element to another' during the process of writing, as the arrows in the model depict.

The writer is required to engage with the three key components of planning, formulation, (termed 'translating' by Hayes & Flower, 1980) and revision (Alamargot & Fayol, 2009) at different stages in their writing. The writing process model by Hayes and Flower (1980) depicts a knowledge-telling process rather than knowledge transforming (Galbraith, 2009) and has continued to be revised to reflect that the writing process has the capacity to transform knowledge and understandings (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987; Berninger & Swanson, 1994). These seminal models have afforded the ground work for further thinking about writing processes for writing as knowledge transforming. Much of the research undertaken in writing was undertaken

in the 1980s and 1990s and a plethora of concepts and models were subsequently produced. This study has been foregrounded in these, although in this chapter the focus has been centred on the subsequent work of Galbraith (1999; 2009) and Galbraith, Torrance and Hallam (2006) who have continued to develop a model which shows writing as a knowledge-constituting process.

Figure 2: Model of the Writing Process
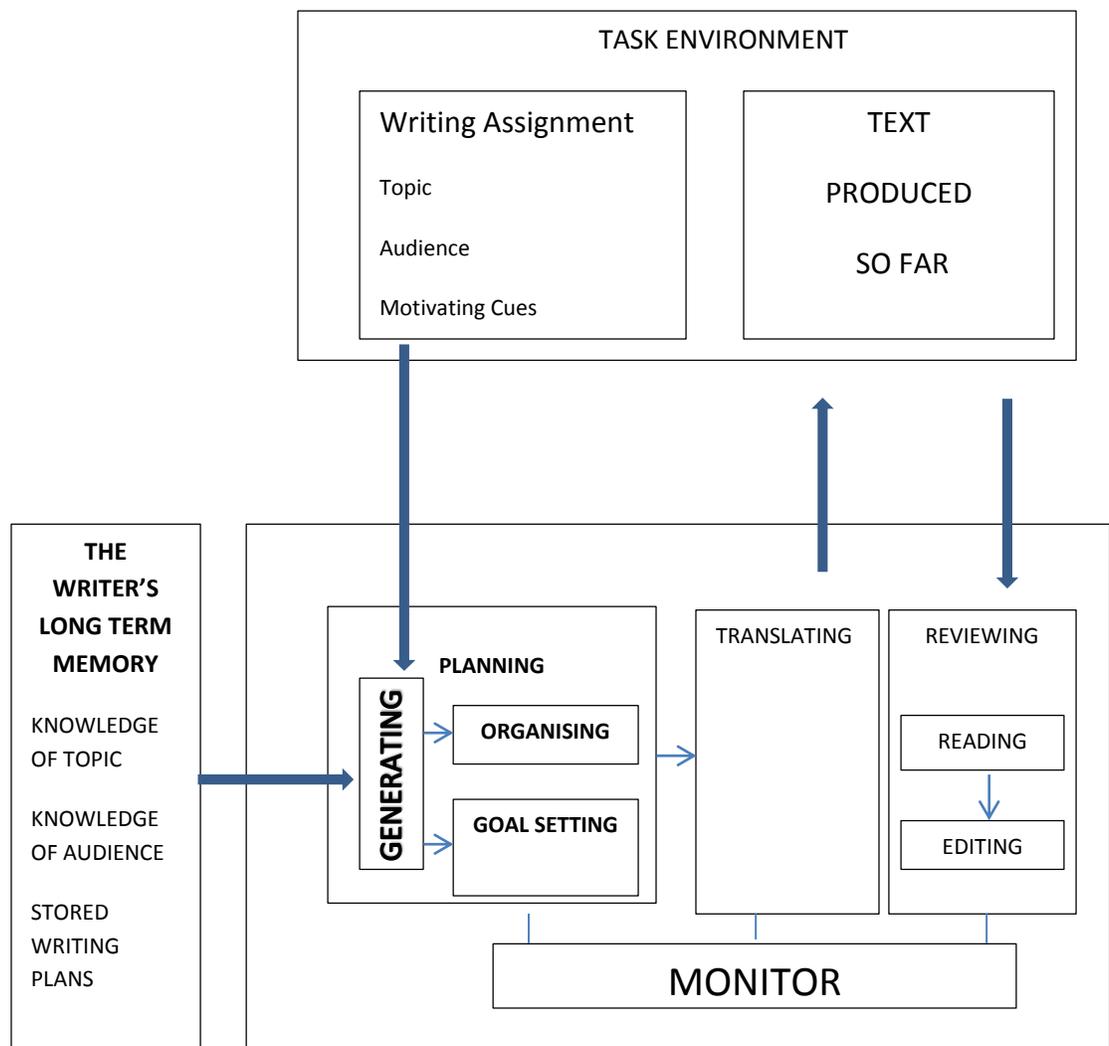
(Hayes & Flower, 1980, p. 11)

Writers 'commonly describe writing as an act of discovery, stressing that writing involves finding out what to say in the course of writing' (Galbraith et al., 2006, p. 1340). This describes the process of transformation where the act of writing is a creative, cognitive process; as a way of re-ordering, refining and *creating thinking* (Smith, 1982). In academic writing, learners are required to think critically about issues and concepts, to identify an argument and draw out the tensions and dilemmas from a range of perspectives (Wingate, 2012). As previously discussed, these ways of thinking can be evidenced in other forms of communication, for example through assessed discussions or an oral presentation, however, in the process of preparing for these assessment genres it is likely that writing has been the means of recording, organising, restructuring and representing their thinking initially to support the verbal translation of these. As such the act of writing supports the development of analysis, synthesis and evaluation which requires close examination by the learner of the concepts and issues and requires metacognitive awareness, or self-talk, which Archer (2003, p. 15) refers to as reflexivity. Reflexivity describes a 'generative ability for internal deliberation upon external reality (Archer, 2003, p. 20), and these deliberations support agency and change. Lichtman (2013, p. 158) suggests reflexivity is about being open, aware and forthcoming. In the context of this study, reflexivity requires the learners to internally and critically explore their understandings of both practice and theory which can trigger the learner to be pulled out of the 'automatic pilot' mode of skilled behaviours (Eraut, 1994, p. 144) such as those within the workplace; tacit behaviours as discussed on page 30. To reiterate, in undertaking critical explorations of practice within theoretical frameworks, the learner may experience a sense of unease or disequilibrium. Eraut (1994) makes clear that for an equilibrium to return, action has to be taken in order for the equilibrium to be reinstated. This action may represent the rejection of the new or the assimilation of new knowledge with previous knowledge which may occur within the process of writing for thinking. Writing for thinking, I propose, is a term that defines one of the ways for the exploration of these intuitive actions and is located within academic

writing. The act of writing, away from practice, is where learners can engage in deliberate and critical reflection; writing for thinking. The assimilation of new knowledge defines deep learning. Mezirow (2003, p. 61) argues that following critical reflection of self, the adult learner has the capacity to engage in reflective judgement. The 'final stage of reflective judgement can offer a perspective about their own perspective, an essential condition for transformational learning' (ibid.).

The following discussion explores the distinct components of planning, translating and reviewing along with the associated sub-tasks related to the undertaking of writing for assessments within the identified aspects of content, the audience and the writer's linguistic abilities. Writing content and audience are encompassed in the 'task environment' component of the Hayes and Flower model (1980). However, the writer's linguistic abilities and their perceptions of themselves as a writer within the academy form a further critical dimension to the writing process.

2.7.3 Task Environment and Memory: conditions for transformational learning

The writing model that Hayes and Flower propose identifies an aspect in the process of writing termed the 'task environment' (Figure 2) which refers to 'everything outside the writer's skin that influences the performance of the task' (1980, p. 12) such as the writing assignment, the audience and the writer's motivation. Where Clark and Ivanič (1997, p. 92) contest Hayes and Flower's (1980) model is in their perception of the removal of the writing process from the writer's context, the interpersonal aspects of writing and the 'pressure of convention'. They argue that where the writer is positioned and their perceptions that shape the generation of the information for the writing task, stating that ideational meaning, or meaning-making, is linked to social realities. That writing is linked to social realities resonates with Bruner's (1996) first mode of making meaning that refers to 'intersubjectivity', where our realities are constructed through social interactions. The notion of intersubjectivity is an

important consideration for the work-based learners in this study as their understandings of meaning making in the genre of academic writing is largely outside of their realities.

An important influence on the writing process is the writer's memory (Hayes & Flower, 1980, p. 11; Dam-Jensen & Heine, 2013). Whilst Hayes and Flower acknowledge the importance of the long term memory, subsequent models of writing processes (Galbraith, 2009) have identified that working memory also has a crucial role in writing. Long term memory includes the learner's knowledge of the content required for the assignment, and for the participants includes drawing on their knowledge of practice in relation to this. In respect of drawing on their knowledge from practice, work-based learners should have a wealth of experiences to draw on as a starting point for generating ideas from memory. The writer is required to access both long-term and working memory at different stages in the writing process. Kellogg, Whiteford, Turner, Cahill and Mertens (2013) state that expertise within the discipline, and in this case the early years, relieves the working memory as expert, disciplinary knowledge is located within the long-term memory enabling greater fluency in the text production stage as 'writers must juggle multiple processes and representations as they compose' (Kellogg et al., 2013, p. 168). Working memory is limited in capacity so the learner must also rely on their long-term memory to retrieve representations of the intended text. Chanquoy (2009, p. 83) uses the term 'future' or intended text to describe the mental representation of the writing, as described earlier, which is stored in the long term memory. The interplay between the working and long term memory is critical to the completion of the writing. Where work-based learners may be challenged is in the perception of a future text and this is relevant for the participants where their more limited prior academic experiences may hinder the representation of the intended text. The learner is challenged if they do not have a visual representation of an essay to retrieve. Due to concerns about plagiarism, the programme team at BGU have typically not provided exemplars of assignments. In addition, there is a perception that the learners may be compromised through seeing

an example of an assignment in that it may restrict their creativity in producing their own ideas. On the other hand, there is a legitimate case for offering previous examples of the assignment prior to commencing planning as it supports the development of a 'future' text for the learner that provides assurance that the task is not representative of the published texts that they have read and is achievable. I recall reading Masters Degree dissertations when I was undertaking mine and found it useful for developing an intended text to support long term and working memory. Postgraduate work is more readily available for learners rather than for undergraduates. I argue that based on the work of Kellogg et al. (2013) and Chanquoy (2009), there is a clear rationale for a pedagogical approach that provides examples of previous assignments to undergraduate learners to support their academic writing as the concept of an intended text forms a central and critical aspect of the writing process overall.

Kellogg et al. (2013, p. 168) are clear that 'writing competence cannot be reduced to working memory alone' and that other conditions for writing are important. One such condition is the writer's understanding of the rhetorical goal and, more specifically, the knowledge of the audience. Knowledge of the audience for the writing is a critical aspect for learners in HE as it is here that much anxiety lies for the writer where the reader is the 'gatekeeper', as discussed earlier, alongside perceptions by the learner of the reader being the 'knowledgeable insider' (Harris, 1992, p. 379). The knowledgeable insider describes the academic tutor who understands and knows the conventions of the academy along with the discipline knowledge that the writing explores. The participants may not have written a formal academic piece of writing for many years and this may pose added challenge in understanding the academic discourse, the specific conventions and the expected level of content of academic writing in HE. The writer may then be fearful, or 'paralysed' (Friere, 2005, p. 49) and feel vulnerable in writing for a gatekeeper who is the knowledgeable insider. The demands of academic writing may prevent any generation of text and requires a certain motivation, or regulation of these fears to be established. I have previously

discussed the power of the emotions that can surround academic writing and Friere (2005, p. 52) refers to a 'rigorous discipline, which we must consciously forge in ourselves' to overcome in order to perform the writing task. The 'rigorous discipline' that Friere describes (2005) is related to the metacognitive monitoring and self-regulation, and is within the function of the 'monitor' that Hayes and Flower (1980) depict in their model (Figure 2) which provides an essential function for the writing process.

The following and final sections of this chapter are broadly articulated as the processes of writing; planning, translating and reviewing. These are discussed in relation to the strategies used to undertake them and it is important to note that the order in which they are presented is not indicative of any linear order in which they are undertaken by the writer. For example, planning may occur during translation and the revision of text may be at various points during the generation of a first draft. Writing is messy and iterative as alluded to earlier and the approaches that each writer takes to complete the text are highly unique to them. The understanding of an individualised process of writing has made the structuring of the next sections in this literature review challenging as there is, inevitably, an overlap between and within the different processes. In this way, the sub-headings have been included as signposts rather than as definitive and linear.

2.7.4   The Central Executive and Planning

The 'monitor' (Figure 2) provides the role of being a 'central executive' (Galbraith, 2009, p. 49) that is responsible for when and how the processes in writing are carried out by the learner. This way of monitoring the process of writing can be likened to the notions of self-regulation defined in complexity theory and in metacognitive monitoring, as discussed earlier in this chapter, where the complex adaptive system (CAS) is able to create order 'out of the disorder' (Fenwick et al., 2011, p. 27) and

involves managing problems such as cognitive overload. The prevalence of the monitor in this process is central to the overall completion, or not, of the writing task. The central executive coordinates which processes should be carried out by the writer and when (Galbraith, 2009) and regulates these against the rhetorical goal; the requirements of the assignment task and the audience. Galbraith (1999; 2009) and Galbraith et al. (2006) refer to two types of monitoring when writing is undertaken; high and low self-monitors. High self-monitoring writers are sensitive to self-presentation in relation to the audience and expression, and use these as cues for regulating their writing. The high self-monitor is able to control their expressive behaviours to meet the rhetorical goal; the assignment learning outcomes and criteria. The low self-monitor expresses themselves verbally and non-verbally as they see it without over regard to the social rhetorical demands of the situation. The low self-monitor is less concerned with the assignment goal, and is more inclined to 'express their thoughts directly as a reflection of their current state' (Galbraith et al., 2006, p. 1340). Prior assumptions had been made that these two types of self-monitoring 'embody the contrast between knowledge telling and knowledge transforming' in writing where the low self-monitor seeks to tell their beliefs about the subject and the high self-monitor generates content that satisfies their rhetorical goal (Galbraith, 2009, p. 57); argumentation for academic writing. The role of the monitor for these writers affects the prevalence of transformational learning. Whilst the careful and focussed pre-writing planning of content by high self-monitoring writers towards a specified goal supports the generation of new ideas at the planning stage, it frequently restricts the generation of new ideas, or knowledge transformation (Galbraith, 1999) overall. Indeed, Galbraith and his colleagues suggest that low self-monitors produce a larger number of new ideas when the writing is undertaken without prior planning. Galbraith et al. (2006) identify that high self-monitors who show the ability to generate new ideas by outlining content before writing the text in full, do not achieve the same coherent organisation of ideas on completion of the text as low self-monitors do who wrote an unplanned draft. Galbraith et al. (2006) deduce

from their research that low self-monitors achieve greater transformation of knowledge through their approach to writing than high self-monitors which is evidenced by the coherence of drafts showing greater understanding. This appears counter-intuitive where those writers whose rhetorical awareness would seem to support their knowledge transformation are not those who, from this research evidence, show the greatest change in knowledge and understanding. This evidence suggests that where planning and outlining content to support rhetorical goals can be purposeful in generating new ideas, the process of transformational writing is restricted by the constant reference to the writer's plans; the goals. Galbraith and his colleagues are clear to indicate the tentative understandings that can be taken from their findings and that further research is needed. I argue that there may also be currency in the consideration of the role of the 'intended' text (Chanquoy, 2009) in relation to pre-planning and transformational learning.

The role of planning is discussed further in the next section of this chapter, however, the prevalence of the central executive is key where its function is viewed, as in this study, to problem solve and orchestrate the processes and strategies for writing. The decisions that are made by the central executive are central to the writing process and are informed by metacognitive awareness, which is affected by writer's self-belief and self-efficacy. Self- efficacy influences agentic behaviours to task perform. As such the learner cannot know when to apply strategies to task perform if they are unaware of what to apply and so the central executive is dependent on metacognitive knowledge to undertake its function. Writers need to be able to have the knowledge of what to write, how to write and when to apply the correct strategy against the rhetorical goal in order to perform the task. The illustrated, linked processes are also dependent on the conditions, or task environment, for transformational learning to occur. These are complex and interdependent, dynamic processes. I will now discuss the three distinct strategies for writing: planning, translating and reviewing.

Most writers will undertake some form of written planning outline prior to text production, particularly when there is a rhetorical goal or context (Torrance et al., 1994, p. 385). This may take the form of a rough draft, notes, mind-maps or single statements. The volume and detail of pre-planning is highly individual which may form a rigid structure that the writer then follows in the translating stage such as described for a high self-monitor, or for a low self-monitor this may be a loose overview that allows the ideas to form as they are written as Galbraith et al. (2006) suggest. I argue that within a programme of study the learner at some point during the writing processes is required to be aware of the demands of constructing the text in accordance with this goal. In this way, the learning outcomes and assessment criteria related to the task, along with academic writing conventions, are pivotal in all writing processes, although especially at the planning stage. Should the learner be unable to generate ideas or plan in order to meet the demands of the academic task (the assessment criteria), then the writing is not deemed as successful by the academy, irrespective of the levels of analysis, evaluation and synthesis that is evidenced. As such, pre-planning and planning during the writing for assignments appears to be a critical aspect of the writing process as a whole.

Pre-planning and planning during text production are what Hayes and Flower (1980, p. 12) refer to as the process of generating information for writing within the 'planning' stage where writers use their long term memory to retrieve information that forms this first stage of writing against the goals determined for the text. Ideas and knowledge for the task are generated through a series of probes that form 'associative chains' which can become broken if an 'item' from memory is deemed not useful to the task (ibid., p. 13). The writer will typically, according to Hayes and Flower (1980), undertake three retrievals before the associative chains become broken and the need to seek out further information beyond long term memory is required, such as relevant books, research journals, internet material. These associative chains are used to create notes which are characterised as single words or fragments of sentences. The internal 'monitor' (Hayes & Flower, 1980, p. 11), as previously discussed, supports

decision making and depends on the overall strategy of the writer but allows for what Negretti (2012, p. 144) terms as 'strategic self- regulation'. Galbraith (2009) argues that the process of generating knowledge is not as simplistic as Hayes and Flower (1980) suggest due to the way that knowledge is stored in the long term memory. Knowledge is far from 'fixed' information which is instantly retrievable in the way that Hayes and Flower (1980) depict, rather retrieval requires a more active process, a synthesising of networks of information generated anew to context specific requirements, indeed, the rhetorical goal. Galbraith (2009, p. 60) proposes that there are occasions when retrieval of knowledge, to say what they want to say, is more immediate in certain instances, however, the generating of ideas for a particular rhetorical goal allows for the stored networks of information to be drawn on in new and different ways suggesting knowledge transformation. Galbraith's model of knowledge constitution (2009, p. 58-62) extends beyond those of Hayes and Flower (1980) and Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987) to capture writing as a network of idea generation which during text production, rather than in planning, involves the synthesis of ideas as opposed to just the retrieval of knowledge. Whilst this transformation can potentially take place as a cognitive process, the writer's translation of these ideas into the text may be hindered by their linguistic capabilities in that what the writer can be thinking about may not be able to be written, as learners frequently comment '*I know what I want to write, but I can't seem to write it'*. Galbraith (2009, p. 61) suggests that where this occurs, numerous cycles of text production are required to capture this implicit knowledge. The cycles of text production can be hampered by rhetorical constraints where the writer can become paralysed in the development of their ideas. Paralysis or writer's block demands time to rethink, redevelop and reconstitute ideas. The cycles of planning and text production requires time to complete in an unhurried way to allow for the generation of ideas to develop in a recursive, iterative way and for learners who are juggling many demands on their time, this may not be wholly feasible, particularly when it requires high levels of motivation and cognition. Writer's block may require the

learner to return to their plans, or the literature to support the planning of writing and also the translation of their ideas into text.

2.7.5   Translation

In undertaking the physical act of writing for text production, the learner has to have acquired the skills of the translator, or composer, along with those of the transcriber. I use the terms translation and composition interchangeably throughout this chapter to refer to the physical act of handwriting or typing the text in full into an external format, which is different from planning which may be in diagrammatic or note form. The composing process may be divided into two types; composing to re-tell or tell and composing which involves making new meanings and is transforming (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996). The complex skills associated with composition where writing is transforming, and which are particularly valued in the academy (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996, p. 6), are where the learner creates 'ideational meaning' (Clark & Ivanič, 1997, p. 110). The ideational meaning that is created represents a particular way of looking at the world which is defined by the writer's values and beliefs. In order to have a legitimate writing voice in HE, the writer is required to be persuasive in the translation of their ideas and as such needs to connect with their own value system for this to be successful (Hyland, 2005). The writer has to be secure in their own argument and understandings to present these within writing convincingly. Writing is connected to the positioning of the learner in terms of their identities, self-belief and value systems and as such is deeply personal as discussed earlier. In turn, the learner has to be aware of and connect with the 'communal ideology or value system' (Hyland, 2005, p. 175) within which they are writing. This may be as discipline 'insiders' (ibid.) within the academy or as I propose, as professional insiders and these are intrinsically bound with identities. The work-based learner's particular way of looking at the world may not align with that within the discipline and the tensions between the academic and

professional identities emerge. The writer must, however, present certain forms of argument in their writing which are deemed 'valid and effective' and presented in ways which the reader is 'likely to find persuasive and so writers must draw on these to express their positions, represent themselves and engage their audiences' (Hyland, 2005, p. 176). This may create discomfort and challenge as the learner's values and beliefs are required to be compromised or changed. Alternatively, the writer must learn the discourse for argumentation of the academy to challenge the values and beliefs held within the discipline and this requires bravery when the writing is judged for the purposes of an academic qualification. Although, to return to the concept of PPK (Bereiter, 2014) it stands to reason that when practice is underpinned and connected with theory that it becomes linked to the discipline and is principled. The key point of contestation here is to whom the knowledge is principled; the academy, the learner or both.

The move to 'translating' ideas is a highly individualised decision. Some writers may plan all of their ideas prior to text production, while others prefer to attempt a full first draft without detailed pre-planning that involves all of the processes (generating, organising, translating and reviewing) before returning to the next phase of generating (Galbraith, 2009) in a recursive and iterative way. More and more writing is done using electronic rather than manual, mechanical devices and 'handwriting is increasingly marginalised' (Mangen, Anda, Oxborough & Brønnick, 2015, p. 228) and this is especially the case at BGU where learners are required to word process and submit assignments electronically. Writing using a keyboard engages the writer differently as a cognitive and sensorimotor process (Mangen et al., 2015, p. 229). Typing, when undertaken efficiently involves all ten fingers, where handwriting is dominated by a hand preference. Very few people master handwriting well with both hands. The novice handwriter tends to use available cognitive capacity to form letters and this layer of focus may impact on the quality of the content. As the handwriter becomes increasingly competent at the transcriptional aspects of forming letters, the cognitive domain is free to focus on content. Skilled typists can keep their eyes on the screen,

however, for those not as electronically literate; their focus is on the keyboard. The visual attention is then broken from the writing itself. Therefore, keyboard writing generates more frequent technical errors (ibid.). Mangen et al. (2015) argue that writing generated by technology is more abstract and detached due to the separation of the writing process of typing with the visually produced text on the screen. In this way, writing onto a computer can compromise the 'haptic affordances'; the ergonomic impact of physically writing, which for some writers which may affect cognition. Sensory and visual interaction with pens, paper, pencils during the handwriting process, and keyboard and screen in writing electronically may, for some writers, impact on embodied cognition where cognitive processes 'are fundamentally based on a reinstatement of external (perception) and internal (proprioception, emotion and introspection) as well as bodily activities' (Mangen et al., 2015, p. 230). The demand by the academy to present and submit work electronically can create a struggle for the learner.

In using a keyboard and word processing programmes learners are relieved of the mechanics of transcribing, along with supported with tools for editing and reviewing their work with cut and paste facilities. However, for many learners, word processing presents challenge where they do not have the skills to electronically translate their ideas onto the computer. These learners may be resistant to writing straight onto the computer and the process of doing this may add a cognitive demand to the task through navigating the skills to undertake this. More mature adult learners who are less computer literate may experience struggle in making this transition. Epting et al. (2013) suggest that that composing directly onto the computer extends what would have been pre-writing planning into the writing process itself through pauses and edits during the translation phase. Pauses allow for the adjustments of content and structure against the intended or 'future' text (Chanquoy, 2009). A longer pause, or writer's block, is where the writing is halted due to cognitive overload and text production ceases until this is resolved. Cessations such as these may elicit negative emotions for the learner and it will be the management of these and the learner's self-

belief that supports the motivation to attend to and resolve the difficulty in order that text production can continue. In this way the learner is affected by internal and external conditions which affect their writing strategies and the decisions made in response to these. Internal conditions may be 'feelings, memory and the level of competence and knowledge' (Dam-Jensen & Heine, 2013, p. 93). External conditions may depend on the complexity of the task and the length of the text. Time may also be a contributing factor as already discussed.

Many learners struggle to write into text their ideas, whether handwritten or not, and pauses (Epting et al., 2013) provide the moment to re-align thinking or processes for writing. In realigning thinking learners may be required to return to the literature; a condition of successful academic writing is successful academic reading as discussed earlier. The skill of writing is supported by reading. Epting et al. (2013, p. 241) make clear the links between being a proficient reader and being a proficient writer; those with 'richer reading histories' have greater print exposure, and as such produce better quality writing. Print exposure allows for the building of vocabulary and spelling processing skills along with phrasing, sentence structures. Learners can use their reading to model phrases and writing styles particularly where they may struggle to start a sentence, or paragraph. Where learners have increasingly engaged with high quality academic sources, such as peer-reviewed journals, over a period of time then the quality of their writing should, therefore, increase accordingly. FdA learners may not have an academic heritage where they have had exposure, both physically and cognitively, to academic sources prior to starting their programme of study and may find it difficult to access appropriate texts to support their thinking. This may be due to more limited research skills to seek out relevant sources either electronically or within the university library and also in accessing the text itself which may contain technical, academic language or are written in formal styles that are initially more difficult to read as discussed earlier. Alternatively, Lea and Jones argue that many learners writing in HE today are using a hybrid of approaches when meaning making where 'written, visual and multimodal texts' are now part of the writing process

(2011, p. 383). In sourcing information for a writing task, learners may turn to various electronic information sources in the first instance such as Wikipedia (Lea & Jones, 2011; Stapleton, 2010; Pfannenstiel, 2010) rather than a book. The access to a wide range of electronic sources through the web provides learners with a wealth of information that can then be overwhelming, 'requiring a sophisticated level of rhetorical complexity' to bring the different texts together (Lea & Jones, 2011, p. 385). As discussed earlier in this chapter, the synthesis of the practice knowledge with the wealth of wider sources and experiences as part of an academic programme is a highly demanding cognitive undertaking. Badley's (2009, p. 212) notion of viewing academic reading as de-construction where the reader 'reads the texts of others in a spirit of critical appraisal' in order to examine the work of others to reinforce or contest one's own stance on the issue under discussion is relevant to return to as part of this discussion, and is defined as an interpretative process. In translating their ideas into text, the learner may return to the literature to support their thinking and writing. The reader seeks ideas from undertaking reading for their particular academic purpose, as Badley states:

> I believe that when we read other texts, we do so not in
> order to reproduce them exactly but in order to examine
> them for ideas which mean something for our own
> particular purpose (2009, p. 212).

The 'we' that Badley refers to are postgraduate writers and whilst his comments are relevant to the purpose of academic literature for academic writers, I argue that for the undergraduate participants, their relationship with academic reading is far more complex particularly when they begin their course as relative novices with academic texts. Reading and accessing appropriate and relevant texts that are not then reproduced exactly in the learner's own writing represents particular academic skills. Like any academic writer, the FdA learner sits on a continuum of development where improvement in reading and writing skills never reach a definitive end to becoming an 'expert', the writer just gets better. Learners in HE, however, do need to understand their role with academic reading as critic and 'de-constructor' as Badley suggests so

that they are able to 're-construct' a written text that explores and builds on the ideas that they have engaged with in the literature:

> I would suggest that the therapeutic, deconstructive and affirmative *reading* [sic] of texts should help us become better able to construct and de-construct our own texts (*writing*) to meet our own aims and purposes. This is to propose that reading as de-constructing prepares us for writing as constructing and re-constructing. The de-constructing (*reading*) process enables us to analyse, collect, evaluate and interpret important educational materials. The constructing and re-constructing (*writing*) processes help us to synthesise, re-collect, re-evaluate and re-interpret our texts (2009, p. 213-214).

Cameron et al. (2009) state that in order for learners to undertake these processes they have to understand that they have a 'legitimate' academic voice and contribution to make. Haggis (2006a, p. 527) makes clear that whilst non-traditional learners may enter HE with limited academic heritage, this is not necessarily 'related to their capacity to benefit from higher education in the future'.

In generating writing electronically, the process of translation may occur earlier. The increased use of word processing may accelerate the writer's processes to this stage before writers have fully planned or generated their ideas (Torrance et al., 1994, p. 380), which may, in turn, potentially support greater knowledge transformation (Galbraith, 2009). The capacity of a word processor to reorder, organise and edit writing enables the writer to be released from the constraints of re-drafting by hand and support the iterative cycles of revision which may, in turn, prompt less pre-writing planning in favour of translation. The computer releases the writer from the expenditure of some cognitive energy in the translating phase where spell and grammar checkers, lexical searches (Stapleton, 2010) and the mechanistic aspects of handwriting are alleviated through the use of electronic tools. Experienced writers will undertake to plan, translate and revise in recursive cycles rather than in a linear progression from pre-writing planning to translating (Torrance et al., 1994, p. 380). Galbraith (2009, p. 52) suggests that when writers have planned carefully, the

cognitive load of translating is easier, although it may not support transformational writing for some as discussed earlier in this chapter. Galbraith offers a dual process model where writers use both rhetorical planning and dispositional text production (generating text without a plan) to support their thinking, where 'planning delivers potential content for realisation in the text, and unpredictable formulations in the text lead to revision of the writer ['s] global plan' (2009, p. 62). The unpredictable formulations describe the creation of ideas during text production and transformational learning. Writers will vary according to how much they rely on either of these processes. The individualised writing disposition is dependent on how the learner sees themself and is, therefore, interwoven with their different identities in a complex way. A writer's efficacy in writing is intrinsic to their view of the world and of themselves.

2.7.6   Reviewing, Revision and Editing

At different points during the writing phases, learners will attend to various levels of the revision of their text. This may occur throughout text production as an iterative and recursive approach and equally it may be undertaken at the end to produce multiple drafts of the text. Some writers will undertake one or other, or possibly both of these approaches and apply different types of revision at different points of the process (Chanquoy, 2009). I use the term reviewing to encompass all of the activities of evaluating and changing the text to align with the intended or future text as described in earlier sections of this chapter. The intended text provides the template for the writer to work towards.

There have been many theories (Hayes & Flower, 1980; Scardamalia & Bereiter, 1983, 1986; Flower, Hayes, Carey, Schriver & Stratman, 1986; Hayes, Flower, Shriver, Stratman & Carey, 1987; Hayes, 1996; Butterfield, Hacker & Albertson, 1996) and concepts regarding the revision phase of writing which have informed this study. The

revision process is a 'cognitively complex and costly process and means both the implementation of a correction and the different procedures used to revise' (Chanquoy, 2009, p. 80). Revision includes examining the text from two distinct domains; composition and transcription. Composition refers to what has been written against the rhetorical goal and transcription refers to secretarial aspects of writing such as spelling, grammar, punctuation and for academic writing, referencing. These two domains divide broadly into *what* and *how.* Different layers in each domain are required to be diagnosed, detected and corrected. This may involve major re-working of the text or at a more minor word level. It may also involve global revisions of the text or at local level for specific sentences and paragraphs. The complexity of the revision process can overwhelm the learner, alternatively the learner may not be sufficiently aware of the writing conventions at either compositional or transcriptional level to detect and then diagnose the revision (Butterfield et al., 1996) that is required to satisfy the rhetorical goal or intended representation of the text. Chanquoy (2009) suggests that where the learner allows for a space in time between writing and revision, the intensity of the revision is increased albeit that these may remain at transcriptional, presentational level or at a deeper semantic level. The delay between writing and revision allows for a more detached view of the text, particularly in line with the rhetorical goals of the task. For work-based learner where time may be a constraining condition that prevents the space to undertake this, this provides a challenge.

As part of the reviewing process, experienced and novice academic writers may opt to use literacy brokers (Lillis & Curry, 2006, p. 5). Literacy brokering describes mediation where the learner seeks support for one, or both, domains of writing; composition or transcription. Lillis and Curry (2006) identify three categories of literacy broker: academic professionals, language professionals, and nonprofessionals. Academic professionals include those who are regarded as general academics, discipline experts, or subdisciplinary specialists. A general academic refers to a literacy broker who is unrelated to the discipline in which the learner is studying, but who will know the

broad writing conventions and expectations of the academy. A general academic may be one of the Learning Development tutors at BGU who support learners across all disciplines as academic writing specialists. A discipline expert can offer the learner more discipline focused support for revision and a subdisciplinary specialist literacy broker may concern a postgraduate learner whose work is more specialist and niched. The discipline expert, however, may not be an academic writing pedagogue as with the general academic. The literacy brokers who are language specialists would typically be used by learners whose first language is not English and this does not specifically apply to the learners in this study. The final category of literacy broker is the nonprofessional, and this may include those deemed by the learner to have 'a serendipitous knowledge of English' (Lillis & Curry, 2006, p. 14). Friends, family, neighbours, spouses and partners may be termed nonprofessionals. There is perhaps a further category for FdA learners that is not included within those proposed by Lillis and Curry (2006) who I shall term work-based professional literacy brokers, and are characterised by those as colleagues in the workplace. There is a case that those within the workplace may be located within the category of discipline expert due to their experience in practice. On the other hand, they may not have the theoretical knowledge required within the content of an assignment, or knowledge of the conventions of the academy as described. The categories of literacy brokers offer different forms of mediation and expertise. The academic professional orientates mediation to content, 'discipline specific discourses' (ibid.). The academic professional is able to offer the textual support for compositional and transcriptional revision through detecting and diagnosing of what needs changing. However, the dynamic of the relationship that the learner has with the academic professional is critical to the success of this. The reviewing tutor may also be the academic who marks the learner's final submission and this inevitably creates a power dynamic of the 'gatekeeper' as discussed earlier. The learner may, therefore, be resistant to seeking support from this category of literacy broker where they can feel exposed and vulnerable. Conversely, discipline experts may provide the most valued support for assignments as they can

relay the specific expectations in terms of the rhetorical goal of the assignment as they may well have written the assignment brief. Although more importantly, the academic expert may not be able to provide the emotional and motivational support that a family member or friend may supply. The feelings that surround writing are a critical aspect of to whom the learner turns to seek support for their work. Whilst the nonprofessional literacy broker is able to provide emotional support, their orientation is towards transcriptional aspects of writing; spelling, grammar, sentence structure. They do not have the discipline expertise to engage with the conceptual content of the assignment and the learner's writing may be compromised in this way. Each literacy broker in the typology that Lillis and Curry (2006) proposes an aspect of support for the compositional, transcriptional, social and emotional domains of academic writing although one does not support a holistic mediation for the learner. The prevalence of literacy brokers for learners is an important aspect of their view of themselves as writers and is represented in who they chose to seek mediation from. Feedback, at compositional and transcriptional levels and by any literacy broker at any stage of the writing process, can be both constructive and destructive and may be a 'costly' process (Chanquoy, 2009, p. 80). For learners whose academic confidence and identity is fragile, feedback can be a point of struggle. The ideal literacy broker is a trusted, sensitive academic expert who understands the writing process and is able to mediate the learner through the assignment writing process. The architype for this literacy broker is also one who provides examples of a future text, who models to the learner strategies for writing and supports the struggles that the learner may face. This exemplar is possibly unrealistic and also in many ways, conversely, is a hindrance to the learner in terms of transformational learner as it is through a disturbance, a struggle, that the CAS seeks to re-establish the equilibrium and thorough the process of undertaking this becomes changed. The activities of academic reading and academic writing should begin with a 'state of doubt, hesitation or perplexity over a problem or question' (Badley, 2009, p. 214). As such, these activities become a process of inquiry.

2.8   Summary

This literature review has focused on key and relevant concepts from the literature that form central tenets for this study and informed the analysis of the data. The concept of PPK (Bereiter, 2014) has been important where links between theory and practice underpin the professional and academic lives of the FdA learner and is a specific outcome of undertaking this programme of study, particularly when viewed from the perspective of a mutually beneficial and symbiotic relationship. Theories of transformative learning and complexity are synthesised to provide a unique conceptual framework for observing the struggles and challenges that the work-based adult learners faced when undertaking written academic assignments. These struggles have been articulated as a disequilibrium and the conditions that surround these experiences provide insight into pedagogical practices for change. Key conditions for transformational learning extend beyond the cognitive to emotional and social factors primarily located in the relationships with the academy, academic tutors and the learning community within which the learner is sited. Metacognitive awareness, thinking about thinking, forms a central role in academic writing and supports self-belief, self-efficacy and agency simultaneously. Transformational learning is linked to self-belief and identities and has been specifically located within the processes of writing; planning, translating and reviewing.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

In the previous chapter, complexity theory has been discussed as forming a critical theoretical framework for this study. In this chapter, the complexity framework extends beyond the conceptual to provide a methodological way of thinking about the design of this research. Fundamentally, the design of a research study forms the underpinning philosophical principles of a particular way of seeing the phenomena that are under investigation. In undertaking this small scale, qualitative research, I have had to examine closely my values and understandings of how knowledge is created and represented along with concepts of truth and objectivity. Through this critical examination I have experienced challenge and struggle to create a research design that reflects my epistemological beliefs in my role as practitioner researcher. As Lichtman states:

> …the researcher's role is critical to qualitative research. She is the one who asks the questions. She is the one who conducts the analyses. She is the one who decides who to study and what to study. The researcher is the conduit through which information is gathered and filtered. It is imperative, then that the researcher has experience and understanding about the problem, the issues, and the procedures (2013, p. 25).

In making the important decisions for designing this research, the difficult questions of who, what, why and how were complex in line with the research questions. The component pieces and the piecing together of these to form a 'picture' or intended design that maps onto my research intentions has not been unproblematic. There are

multiple options in research design that require a strategy to select those that are needed to undertake a credible project for the 'picture' to be viewed and which are usually determined by establishing the four key tenets. These four 'corners' represent the *who*, *what*, *why* and *how* of the research design where each support each other and are critical to the whole picture; in answering the research questions. The trial and error of then finding the right strategy and design is paramount and represented the struggle I faced to answer the research questions in a way that aligned with my philosophical understandings and ontological perspectives. The following discussion in this chapter explores the rationale that underpins the four corners of this research design and then examines the challenges of piecing the picture together.

3.1.2   How? Shared, Different and Multiple Realities

A critical and challenging aspect of the research design was in the location of myself within the process as practitioner researcher. My position was central within the investigation in relation to the direction, interpretation and outcomes of all aspects of the project. The different roles that I hold as a researcher, a tutor and, ultimately a learner were interwoven and complex, making it difficult to separate them. This complicated position created tensions for the research design to establish what role I held at different times. Within these roles and specifically as tutor to the participants the power dynamic needed to be transparent and acknowledged within the research design, the analysis, and presentation of the findings. A key concern for the research was that the position of power that I held over the participants as their teacher and gatekeeper (Cousin, 2009, p. 21) had the potential to effect learners' disclosure about their experiences on the programme within the research process. In many ways, a researcher cannot really know the effect that they have had on participants, although they can be transparent in the processes of research to self, the participants and to

their reader. In declaring their position in the research and the world, and in relation to the particular lens that has been used, the researcher can:

> …tell us how they see things from their particular stance. They cannot tell us how things actually are. In order to do so, they would need to show that they possess a god's eye view of the world. Without such an Olympian vision, no matter how prescient or omniscient they might want to be, or how strong their data are, they cannot claim to tell it like it is (Badley, 2009, p. 210).

This research cannot claim, therefore, to have been undertaken through a position of neutrality. However, I argue that this does not diminish the value of the study, rather a complexity theory lens argues for different voices and views to be heard (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 34). The different voices in this study are those of the learners heard through their teacher. The strength of hearing these distinct voices, in this distinct way allows for the power dynamic to be perceived and used positively as it is through the power I hold as a teacher that I can pursue change specifically at programme level and potentially influence those within the wider institution. It was important, therefore, to acknowledge the influence of the power relationship both positively and negatively on the research process and how that shaped the research design. The pedagogical changes that I suggest based on the research findings can only be afforded through the process of reflexivity.

The challenge of hearing different voices and in making the learners' multiple realities visible required a particular methodological perspective that acknowledged shared and different ontological perspectives. I was drawn to the work of Haggis (2003; 2006a; 2006b; 2008; 2009) who uses complexity theory in her research with learners in HE as a methodological tool. Haggis (2008, p. 161) describes complexity theory as a way of thinking differently to understand 'things in context' and advocates its capacity to investigate difference and particularity. The relevance of difference to this study takes into account that ontological perspectives are 'multiply connected' (Haggis, 2008, p. 167) within complex systems of institutions, social or cultural practices

(Mason, 2002) which resonates with the multiple realities of the participants in this study in their personal, professional and academic lives. Mason (2002, p. 14) makes clear that it is only once alternative ontological perspectives are acknowledged that a researcher is able to recognise their own view of the social world. As such, the concept of difference is critical, as discussed throughout chapter two.

Complexity theory has provided a particular lens for seeing and for analysing the data at the different context levels (see page 44) that allowed for different voices and histories to be heard. It is this particular combination of factors that affords the dynamic or complex systems their uniqueness:

> Complexity theory challenges the nomothetic programme
> of universally applicable knowledge at its very heart – it
> asserts that knowledge must be contextual (Byrne, 2005,
> p. 97).

In challenging the nomothetic programme, or laws, of universally applicable knowledge that Byrne (2005) describes, complexity theory allows for multiple realities of the researcher and participants to be more visible particularly in the context of change:

> Individuals, families, students, classes, schools,
> communities and societies exist in symbiosis; complexity
> theory tells us that their relationships are necessary, not
> contingent, and analytic, not synthetic. This is a challenging
> prospect for educational research, and complexity theory
> offers considerable leverage into understanding societal,
> community, individual, and institutional change; it provides
> the nexus between macro and micros research in
> understanding and promoting change' (Cohen et al. 2007,
> p. 34).

This study uses a complexity lens with the dual purpose of a theoretical and methodological framework to expose change and specifically links change with transformational learning.

In considering how to undertake this project and in examining my values, it was important to acknowledge beliefs of how knowledge is created and therefore my epistemological position and story. A personal epistemology reflects ontological perspectives and positions. Epistemological stories are located in time (Hetherington, 2012) and are far from static, absolute, nor provide objective, universal truths that are complete (McNiff, 2002). In complexity theory (Haggis, 2008; Byrne, 2005), knowledge is contextual but also socially constructed (Vygotsky, 1978). My own personal epistemology emerges from the understanding of multiple realities and is not, as Unger, Draper, and Pendergrass (1986) outline, value free as the relationship between personal experience and personal epistemology is a reflexive one where one informs and influences the other. This study adopted a social constructivist epistemology within an interpretivist, qualitative paradigm. This philosophical position emerges from the theories of Vygtosky (1978) that I studied on my first degree and which remains a fundamental bedrock to my thinking as a teacher and as a researcher. Knowledge constructs are formed first between people and social groups before becoming internalised into 'an internal mental function' (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 89) within the learner, as discussed on page 29. The role and use of language, and therefore literacy, in these processes is fundamental within a social context.

The underpinning beliefs and values of how knowledge is created and the understandings of multiple realities at the heart of the research process have informed the research design; how the research was undertaken.

3.2   Research Questions

Translating the broad, general aim of research into focused research questions where 'specific, concrete answers can be given' is critical to effective research (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 81) and whilst the research questions are included earlier on page 24, further explanation of these within the overall research design is important and revisited here. In generating specific concrete research questions, a critical path to answering

them was created. As discussed, this study was concerned with learning and specifically learning in academic writing for twelve adult work-based learners. The research investigates how the learners approached and undertook the task of writing assignments. Therefore, the research questions were two-fold:

1. What metacognitive awareness of strategies for academic writing do work based learners have and does this awareness develop over time?

2. Are work-based learners able to evaluate their performance in their academic writing and does this develop qualitatively over time?

In examining metacognitive strategies and awareness, I was able to observe the approaches to academic writing that the twelve learners took and how these changed over the course of the two year programme. The work of Negretti (2012) informed these research questions and the research by Lillis (2001) supported the development of the research tools as part of the methodology for the project.

3.2.1   Who, What, Why?

The **who, what** and **why** were shaped by my personal history, values and beliefs. As discussed earlier on page 13, my personal history of being a primary teacher and a commitment to critical reflection as part of my practice underpinned the need for the considerable endeavour of a doctoral study to be firmly rooted in my role as tutor to FdA learners; to ultimately have the purpose to reflexively inform my practice. The purpose of having better understandings of the learners' experiences to stimulate pedagogical change was important. In examining practice through the lens of the learners provided both the purpose and participants; **why** and **who**. **What** to study was established from a hypothesis generated from my experience of working with FdA adult learners and from having observed their difficulties with academic writing when undertaking written assignments. I have witnessed the distress, anxiety, tears, self-

doubt, fear and anger from learners when they bring drafts of writing or plans to tutorials, when they receive feedback and grades. However, the most problematic decisions for the research design arose from *how* to undertake the research, as practitioner research:

> …puts the insider [the practitioner researcher] in a place that requires the researcher to tread a fine line between the prevailing academic norms and values of the university with the norms and values of the workplace, for the researcher must be critical of the practices revealed through their study, whilst potentially continuing to engage with them (Drake & Heath, 2011, p. 19).

3.3   Methodology

This study adopted a theoretical and methodological framework from complexity theory and as such uses a multiple case study approach where each participant was viewed as a unique CAS and was identified (see page 44) as context 1. Context 2 was the collective of learners, and context 3, in the system's extraction (Haggis, 2009), was viewed as BGU. The dynamics within and between these systems were examined and were not seen as linear or sequential. Through allowing for the unpredictability of these interactions, and with other systems not directly under scrutiny as part of the system extraction such as the workplace, afforded richer understandings at multiple levels. Philosophically this is an important distinction and suggests a dynamic and complex way of looking at the world through research and the research process articulated through a complexity theory framework (Haggis, 2008).

This small scale, qualitative study collected data from twelve adult, work-based learners using the method of feedforward tutorials over a two year period (September 2013-July 2015). The FdA is a two year programme and provided a natural start and end point for the data collection (Appendix A). Haggis (2009, p. 6) is clear of the value of longitudinal research that adopts a complexity theory lens because it allows for

dynamic processes within each context under scrutiny to be observed over time and where emergence, discussed on page 46 can be visible. The data were captured at four points during the two years; once in each semester (Appendix A). The learners had experienced two cycles of submitting assignments and feedback prior to each of the tutorials as part of the usual assessment cycle of the programme. Forty eight feedforward tutorials were undertaken which were audiotaped, transcribed and then analysed. In order to trial the feedforward tutorial method in advance of the main study, a pilot study was conducted in July 2013 with six level 4 FdA learners which investigated their views and experiences of academic writing at the end of their first year of study on the programme. The feedforward tutorial pilot data were transcribed and analysed to extract key themes that formed as points of investigation for the main study or validated those generated from the literature, for example the emotions that surround writing became increasingly pivotal to the experiences of the learners along with academic confidence and self-belief. Lessons were also learnt by way of rehearsing the techniques of undertaking feedforward tutorials and are discussed later in this chapter.

3.3.1   Selection and Ethics

An essential and fundamental principle of the study in order to support equal commitment to the research process was that the voluntary participation of the learners was free from obligation. In this way, ethical codes were rigorously followed (British Educational Research Association, 2011; Bishop Grosseteste University Research Ethics Policy, 2014) and ethical consent from the Bishop Grosseteste University Ethics Committee was approved for the project prior to undertaking the pilot study. The need to establish clear ethical boundaries for all stakeholders was critical in relation to the power relationship that existed between the learners and myself, and was an ethical challenge. Transparency about the project (Cousin, 2009)

and in practitioner research, as discussed earlier in this chapter, can assist in ensuring the research remains ethical. From the start of the study, the cohort for 2013 – 2014 academic year was informed of the project and volunteers were requested. The sample size of twelve was modelled on other small scale research projects (Negretti, 2012; Lillis, 2001), such as this, which used similar methods when investigating the academic writing of learners in HE with a sample size of between 10 and 17 participants. I had anticipated that in recruiting twelve participants, this would have allowed for any that chose to withdraw for whatever reason. This was not realised as all twelve remained as part of the study for the two years of data collection. Withdrawal of participants from small scale studies such as this can be problematic, although Cohen et al. (2007, p. 175) suggest this should be regarded as natural rather than 'irksome.' In the recruiting process exactly twelve learners volunteered which negated any further sampling strategies. I had opted to undertake a simple random sampling (Cohen et al., 2007) out of the group of volunteers had there been more than twelve and would have drawn names out of a hat. The sustained sample size was a strength of the study and this may be attributed to the relationships I held with the learners, which is explored further in this thesis. On the other hand, those who volunteer for a longitudinal study are arguably committed to their studies as part of this and potentially less likely to withdraw from either. Silverman (2006) outlines the importance of not coercing or pressuring people to participate in a study. Informed, written consent was established and all data were confidentially gathered and stored. The right to withdraw from the project at any point was stated. I was mindful of ensuring that the participant learners continued to be comfortable with their inclusion in the research at the four tutorial points and the transcripts were corroborated by the learner to avoid misrepresentation or misinterpretation (Lichtman, 2013). The demographics of the sample were representative of FdA learners (Appendix B); they were all adult women with the exception of one adult male. All the participants were white British which is reflective of BGU and of the surrounding county of Lincolnshire which is not typically ethnically diverse. Three of the female participants in the sample

were mature adults aged between 45-51 years. All of the participants were working in the early years sector in a variety of roles as practitioners, room leaders, or managers. The participants' personal histories are outlined in Appendix B. The anonymity of the participant learners was maintained throughout and the learners chose their own pseudonym, or requested that I selected one for them. In this way confidentiality was ensured.

3.3.2   Research Tools: Feedforward Tutorials and Assignment Grades

The decisions by any researcher in selecting research tools are far-reaching and, along with the method of analysis, have considerable influence on the research results and the particular phenomena that is studied. The 'feedforward' tutorials were a research tool aimed to facilitate a narrative of the learner's experience of academic writing for assessments. These took place at four points in the two year programme (Appendix A). The tutorials were modelled on the investigative tool used by Lillis (2001) in researching the writing experiences of non-traditional learners in HE. Feedforward tutorials were intended to provide a 'talking space' (Lillis, 2001, p. 9) where participants could share their assignment texts and talk about the processes of undertaking it. The tutorials also provided a 'talking space' about the assessor's commentary on their work and the summative feedback following the return of assignments. The assessor may, or may not, have been me and all assignments were marked anonymously and as such all learners' identities (and each marker's identity) of submitted assignments remained undisclosed until the tutorials. The term 'feedforward' is carefully chosen to reflect the developmental intension of these tutorials within a supportive relationship between learner and tutor, and a person-centred learning approach. Lillis (2001, p. 9) refers to her role as tutor/teacher in using this data collection tool as the 'powerful participant' within this context. The 'gatekeeper' role, as previously discussed, was of relevance and the feedforward

tutorial aimed to minimise the 'power' dynamic through the careful use of open-ended questioning in order to assume the less powerful role of listener. I found the role of listener challenging in the pilot phase and actively tried to not lead the discussion in the main study. In not using a traditional interview format for the research tool, I opened the space for dialogue that was not dissimilar to a normal tutorial that I would undertake with learners and one that continued to acknowledge the relationship between the learner and me as practitioner researcher. I was mindful to allow the learner, in many respects to lead the discussion and only where relevant, I asked questions. The dialogue flowed easily with this approach and Lillis (2001, p. 132) outlines the 'mediating potential' in these talking spaces between learners and tutors for the development of a pedagogy that supports academic writing, and the individual learner's control over meaning making which has the potential to benefit the research process and, I argue, the learner. The mediation potential supports writing consultation where it can be the space for discussing the challenges of writing, the emotions that surround the processes and strategies to support text production. A key purpose of using this one-to-one talking space was to capture the richness of a dialogue that was able to unravel their experiences over the time in each tutorial and across time over the two years beyond one-off conversations. I perceive that the relationships formed with the learners both in and outside of the tutorials as part of the normal business of being their teacher were mutually respectful and beneficial, although not without some challenges as the open space for talking afforded the opportunity for some frank and transparent discussion. Primarily these challenges centered on the strong emotional responses that the learners had at times where they cried or were distressed during the tutorials. These emotional responses were mostly triggered by a low grade or low self-belief in their academic work much as Cameron et al. (2009) suggest. Following these instances, I was aware of the vulnerability that participants felt which required careful and sensitive responses; this was particularly relevant in my dual role as practitioner researcher. Equally, learners shared some deeply personal experiences from their histories that had shaped their self-belief as

learners. The talking space of the tutorials allowed for these to emerge and I viewed these confidences as a testament to the learners' trust in my role as researcher and as their teacher.

For the first tutorial, I had prepared set questions as prompts where necessary and in some of the first tutorials these were all utilised, in others a more organic discussion emerged which presented some challenges in the analysis phase and are discussed later. Questions were then generated as threads of enquiry for each learner from the analysis of each of the first transcripts and as such were bespoke to them. I was, however, aware of the points of focus for the study in the remaining three data collection phases. In adopting this approach to the tutorials, the learner's narratives took centre stage and the power dynamic more balanced.

The decision of where to hold the tutorials was problematic as the practicalities of arranging meetings with the twelve learners was not always straightforward. On only four occasions, I met with learners outside of BGU, in the participants' work settings or their home. The remaining 44 tutorials were conducted in my office through agreement with the participants. This was a practical solution to accommodate all of our commitments in that my office was private, relatively quiet and available. In using my office at BGU, pragmatics may be viewed as overriding considerations of research neutrality, however, the research tool of the feedforward tutorials were closely aligned with tutorials that were undertaken with learners as part of normal practice on the programme and as such sought to mitigate against the unfamiliar or practical challenges. On the occasions where I met with learners outside of BGU I felt that the conversations were less fluid and transparent, particularly where on one occasion Lucy's son (of primary school age) was in the room when we met at her home. I felt in this instance that we were both conscious of the additional presence although he did not contribute. Lucy's role as a mother perhaps hindered the otherwise honesty about her experiences as evidenced in the other three tutorials. Equally this was the case when I met Mariea at BGU, due to the demands of being a single mother of two

children, one tutorial included her 5 year old daughter and on another occasion, her baby. I met Tom in his work setting, in a designated room where staff can meet with parents. We were able to be private, although I felt that Tom was unable to relax in quite the same way as in other tutorials as I think we both felt uneasy with my presence in another aspect of his life, the workplace setting, that felt alien. The meetings at BGU, the primary site of the interconnection between the learners and me, felt to be the most normalised. The practicalities of undertaking this research require the acknowledgment of the additional complexities and commitments that these adult learners have included in their academic lives. I was not able to hide from the power dynamic of the academy or me and therefore, as argued earlier, I have placed it centre stage for increased transparency and to militate against misrepresentation. As Murphy (2013, p. 8) indicates:

> Power is a notoriously difficult concept to pin down, and the researcher can all too easily fall into the trap of looking for power in the wrong places, or worse still, misrecognise their own capacity as power brokers in educational research.

In being a power broker as Murphy (2013) suggests, I was mindful of my work and experiences beyond the data collected in the tutorials; the 'in situ' (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 181), informal data. In working with the participants, I was afforded a wider insight of their experiences outside of the tutorials that I captured as additional field notes. To maintain trust and rapport with the learners, I specifically referred to instances that had occurred outside of the tutorials, in the following tutorial, so that the learner was aware of, and party to, what had been observed where relevant. For example, in tutorial 3 with Rachel when she became upset and I chose to end the tutorial in response to this. For transparency, I referred to our discussion that followed ceasing audiotaping with Rachel in the next tutorial.

The learners' assignment grades formed an important data source and were obtained from the learners directly. Corroboration of these was through access to the student data system as part of my role as tutor. The disclosed grades that the learners

achieved provided a useful starting point for discussion in each of the tutorials and were used as a backdrop for analysis of the tutorial narratives. Grades were seen as an indication of the quality of the writing defined by the learning outcomes and assessment grading criteria (Appendix C and D) which are underpinned by national standards for levels of learning in HE (QAA, 2008). The threshold of 40% is the pass mark for the programme and written assignments are graded according to evidence shown equally in four broad areas; knowledge and understanding; analysis and evaluation; practical knowledge; and transferable skills. Knowledge and understanding refers to the content and concepts discussed within the written assignment. Work is equally graded on where learners have analysed, evaluated and synthesised concepts and ideas with the literature. Practical knowledge is graded accordingly where learners have included links to practice and transferable skills refer to the quality of how the other three areas are communicated in written text. As argued earlier, the criteria do not demonstrate any particular hard truths or objective statements in so far that marking and grading learners' assignments is an art rather than a science; subjective rather than objective. As a subjective art, the grading of learners' work across the academy is not unproblematic and Haggis (2006b, p. 528) argues that 'academic expectations are in themselves quite difficult to grasp' for learners and, equally for the academics who mark the assessments. The academic expectations of learning outcomes for modules, assessments criteria and assessment grading grids (Appendix C and D) are frequently opaque and require 'decoding' (ibid.) in order for the learner to respond to them and meet the demands of the assessment task. Equally, the grade given to the learner may be arbitrary in that it is the marker's interpretation of these expectations, outlined in the assessment grading bands, into a numerical value. The understanding of the 'art' of grading foregrounds the data collected. The critical path undertaken was in viewing the grade profiles of the participants as an indicator of learning that was richly underpinned by the narrative data generated from the feedforward tutorials. In this way, assessment criteria serve as a framework for judgement along with the internal and external moderation

processes associated with an academic programme in HE. Whilst arbitrarily subjective, the grade profiles do offer some insight when viewed in conjunction with the learner's narratives. As such, the grades were analysed at participant level (context 1) across all four tutorials and also at collective learner level (context 2). The grades for all assessments, including oral assignments such as group presentations or discussions, were analysed and are presented, in addition to grades for written assignments only, which included essays, research reports, portfolios and case studies (Appendix H). These form part of the discussion in the following chapter.

3.4   Validity

The issue of validity within qualitative research is problematic (Lichtman, 2013). The notion of proof in any research paradigm requires much philosophical deliberation and as I have already stated the theories of knowledge or of objective truths remain ambiguous. It was within this understanding that stating the validity of a research project becomes challenging as McNiff (2002, p. 98) suggests that in research 'the word 'proof' seldom appears; we can hope only to provide evidence to support a reasonable claim that something is effective'. Instead, Lichtman (2013, p. 303) states that validity can be viewed in a general sense or in more specific ways within qualitative research. A more traditional view of validity is where the researcher employs techniques to check the data such as participant confirmation of what was said or through the triangulation of data gathered as part of a multiple method study. Alternatively, validity can be perceived as 'transformational validity' (Cho & Trent, 2006, p. 324) where the 'value-laden' nature of the research within the context of social and political influences is acknowledged. This view of validity sits well within complexity theory (Haggis 2008) where the context is of paramount importance in understanding phenomena. Transformational validity is not, however, associated with approaches such as triangulation or participant checking (Cho & Trent, 2006), but

achieved as the research itself promotes actions (Lichtman, 2013) which in this instance is in the pedagogical impact of the findings. The notion of transformational validity was of relevance although does not fully explain the rigor of evidence-based action achieved through more traditional approaches to validity of triangulation and participant checking. As such, and in the strife for transparency, I met with the sample in January 2016 to give the learners their individual transcripts for corroboration and to share initial key findings from the data as a whole, as discussed earlier. This provided the opportunity to check their data with them and to share any further thoughts based on these either within the meeting or outside of it with each participant.

3.5   Authenticity

The notions of neutrality and objectivity in qualitative research have been discussed earlier (see page 25-26) and foreground any further discussion concerning the reliability of the data in this study. Cohen et al. (2007) suggest that the validity and reliability of data is reduced when the researcher's attitudes, opinions and expectations are included in an interview as these characteristics introduce bias. In my role as teacher researcher, subjectivity and bias could not be extracted from the research process or from a lens of complexity. My personal interest in the learners' narratives, informed by my hypothesis (see page 106), could indicate that I merely sought to confirm what I already knew in undertaking the research. Whilst acknowledging the bias and particular focus of the study, I strove to actively check and re-check my understandings at each point to extract points of difference. In adopting a lens of complexity that seeks to expose difference, I was able to resist, to some degree, bias. I argue that the value of being the learners' teacher and in understanding the habitus (Bourdieu, 1989) I was afforded an 'insider's view'. As such, this research does not purport to generalise the findings beyond the habitus within which it is located. Conclusions arising from this study are complex adaptive system specific and

stand as a window into the phenomena at that particular time which through the lens of complexity theory cannot be replicated by another researcher at another time. As such, I argue that the authenticity of the data is visible through the acknowledgement of the interrelations between the participants and me as the teacher researcher. I turn now to discuss how complexity theory shaped the analysis of the data.

3.6   Analysis framework

A system's extraction of three contexts was used for the analysis framework, as discussed on page 44. Context 1 was the participant; context 2 was the collective of learner; and context 3 was BGU. The twelve individual cases studies were analysed as twelve contexts respectively, and then when viewed as a whole (context 2) permitted different layers of analysis that captured the heterogeneity and dynamics of the complex systems.

3.6.1   Analysis Framework for Context 1

For each of the twelve participants, analysis was undertaken of the four transcripts from the feedforward tutorials across the two years of data collection. The first tutorial used pre-set semi-structured questions across the sample which focused on investigating the learners' biographical details, their views on writing and exploring the strategies and processes they had used to undertake the first two module written assignments. The pre-set questions were generated from the findings of the pilot study and were informed by the literature. The tutorial data were transcribed and analysed to draw out key individual themes. These have been presented as a discussion (in chapter four) where attention has focused on the individual differences and peculiarities in accordance with a complexity framework and which enables the participants' histories and multiplicities to be foregrounded. For tutorials 2, 3 and 4,

each transcript from the learner's first tutorial were used to formulate largely bespoke questions for each participant for the next tutorial. These focused on drawing out discussion that centered on six key areas; planning, translating, reviewing, evidence of the central executive, professional confidence, academic confidence and assignment grades as discussed in chapter four.

Further to the narrative discussion, a radar graph was constructed for each participant. A radar graph has multiple scales and generally with related variables (Kaczynski, Wood & Harding, 2008) (Appendix E). Six related variables or categories (planning, translating, reviewing, evidence of the central executive, professional confidence, academic confidence) were generated from the literature and were seen as interconnected. Planning, translating, reviewing, and evidence of the central executive are all processes involved in writing as discussed in chapter two. I chose to include assignment grades in the radar graph as an additional influence which could be seen in relation to the other interconnected categories. Professional confidence and academic confidence were categories as enablers/disablers as they strongly influenced the processes from writing. A radar graph represents a graded web and offers a diagrammatic way to observe the shifts and changes from one tutorial to another, to make visible any incidents of emergence. Evidence of transformational learning was observed in all seven categories. The selection and use of a radar graph may be perceived as reductionist of the data which potentially contradicts the epistemology of complexity theory. The presentation of data when using a complexity framework is challenging in terms of capturing all of the multi-variants and dynamic interactions of each CAS. As such the radar graph, for the purposes of this study, serves as an additional layer to the data to visually expose the qualitative changes over time alongside any evident emergence:

> An analysis [within complexity framework] examines histories, traces and emergencies in relation to the multiple contexts within which 'a sense of self' emerges, still, of course, employs various forms of 'reduction' and abstraction' (Haggis, 2008, p. 173).

The radar graph required interpretation of the identified categories where evident within the transcripts against a graded scale of 0 - 8 with 8 being the highest, and 0 where no reference was made during the tutorial to the criteria. It was critical to establish identified criteria in relation to the graded scale for each variable (Appendix F). The scaled criteria were generated from the literature and theoretical perspectives on academic writing and then scoring allocated through listening to the audiotapes and reading the transcripts simultaneously in an iterative way to check and re-check understandings. Qualitative decisions were made and these were underpinned with extracts from the transcripts against the identified variables (Appendix G). A scoring profile across all of the categories was then generated and entered into the radar graph. Each tutorial is represented by different coloured lines in the graph (Appendix E). The visual representation of the coloured lines allowed for shifts and changes to be visible across the two years of the learner's programme for each participant.

The learners were asked, once all four transcripts were collected, to review the data and approve their authenticity. It became increasingly important for the participants to validate the transcripts and they were offered the opportunity to add anything or to remove any of the data as they saw fit. None of the participants chose to amend the transcripts. In seeking confirmation of the data as a true representation of the tutorials was to recognise the close involvement of the participants with the data and their ownership of it.

3.6.2   Analysis Framework for Context 2

Using the radar graph data (Appendix E) from all 48 tutorials, analysis across the participants in the varied categories was undertaken to ascertain whether patterns of self-organisation across the sample were visible. The balance of order and disorder, and the regulation of these was discussed in chapter two. Davis (2005, p. 87) describes the dynamic system of the 'collective learner' as having a coherence and evolving

identity all of its own 'through the 'ongoing process of recursively elaborative adaptation' (Fenwick et al., 2011, p. 26). The analysis of context 2 provided evidence of emergence, self-organisation and regulation. The early sharing of these collective themes with the participant group was undertaken and sought to generate further consent and the rehearsal of the overall arguments from the study.

3.6.3   Analysis Framework for Context 3

The purpose for analysing the final context of BGU was to generate a form of rubric or taxonomy for supporting future practice in academic writing pedagogies within this context. As such an architype tutor has been devised to represent an ideal pedagogue who can manage the CAS learner throughout the states of change that are experienced, along with the collective learner as a whole where constituting parts maintain surprising self-similarity in their patterns. Fenwick et al. (2011, p. 29) make clear that 'human beings are nested within… larger systems that are continuously learning and, as participants in these systems, they bear their characteristics in the ways that a single fern leaf resembles the whole fern plant'. The tensions between order and disorder are determined by emergence and the implications for how a HE institution responds to these new understandings which are discussed in the following chapters of this thesis, is important both at programme and institutional levels.

3.7   Summary

This chapter has provided a transparent account of the research design process. It has discussed the study's framework of complexity as a conceptual and methodological lens for observing and analysing data. A key aspect of this research is the dual role I hold as practitioner and researcher and I have endeavoured to position this relationship with the participant learners as centre stage in order that it was

acknowledged at each stage of the research process. These relationships have, I argue, enriched the data. Drake and Heath (2011, p. 20) state that the fluid position of the practitioner researcher 'is the inevitable trade- off that comes from researching things in situations that one already knows quite a lot about. Being able to take existing knowledge and build theory through research design and analytical explanation characterises successful doctoral practice.'

CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

4.1   Introduction

This study explored the learning of twelve participants on a Foundation Degree in Applied Studies at BGU. The metacognitive strategies and the conditions for learning when undertaking written assignments for the learners on the programme were analysed. Each of the participants in the sample was viewed as a CAS, or unique case study, which enabled discrete, and in many cases, different themes to emerge for each individual. These themes have been identified as points of difference, and cross sectional analysis resisted, using a complexity theory frame of reference as identified in chapter two (see page 43-44). In turn, during the process of the analysis of the transcripts and in keeping with a complexity theory framework, a dynamic systems extraction (Haggis, 2008) of the collective of case studies has been undertaken allowing for patterns to emerge across the sample as a whole. The analysis and discussion of the data from the forty eight feedforward tutorials are presented with three overarching themes and relate specifically to the research questions (see page 24): capturing the struggle towards the transformation of knowledge for the participants; metacognition and the role of the central executive (Galbraith, 2009) in the writing process; and finally, the strategies used for the three key processes of writing; planning, translating and reviewing.

4.2   Capturing the struggle

For the purposes of this study, as identified in chapter two (page 41), the notion of 'struggle' is defined by a disequilibrium or sense of unease experienced by the learner

and is associated with an emotional response. The struggle may be evident across the different sites of identity under investigation in this study; within the workplace, their academic studies or personal lives. The intersecting, nested understandings of these identities allows for the acknowledgement of a dynamic and fluid CAS (context 1 as discussed in chapter two) that is affected by the struggle. The radar graph data (Appendix E) show these 'struggles' or shifts at participant CAS level but also across the twelve participants, revealing a level of self-organisation within the group as a whole (context 2). The findings showed that where a struggle was observed, the CAS sought to resolve the disequilibrium in various ways. These struggles appeared linked to transformation or change within the CAS and represent the concept of emergence. Emergence is central to complexity theory and was identified as a shift change within a CAS; a transformation. The concept of struggle was linked closely with emergence as preceding transformation and explored more specifically for the lens of this study, as transformational learning. Taylor and Jarecke (2009) identify that a key practice for transformative learning lies in teachers 'leading learners to the edge' (p. 283) as a catalyst that triggers unease (see page 40). As such, the notion of leading learners to the edge is associated with struggle as learners experience unease, challenges and disequilibrium. Once unease has been established, the learner seeks to re-establish equilibrium which, I propose, requires further core conditions of transformational learning (Taylor & Jarecke 2009, discussed fully on page 38). The core conditions relevant to the findings are learner's ability to critical reflect, to have a dialogue with self and with others and which contribute to the resolution of the learner's struggles. Metacognition, or thinking about thinking, plays a key role in the process of critical reflection and this is primarily located within the process of the private conversation, or inner dialogue, according to Archer (2003) who links this to agency; the capacity for change. I argue in this chapter that dialogue with self as metacognition is a critical element in transformation learning. The close examination of the struggles that each participant had shared during the tutorials has enabled scrutiny of the shift change, or emergence followed by transformational learning to have taken place where this has

occurred. These struggles are articulated as located in three key domains; personal, professional and academic. These domains are tethered to distinct identities although are acknowledged as dynamically shifting and intersected. The following sections (4.2.1; 4.2.2; 4.2.3) discuss how personal, professional and academic identities interplay and impact on the academic writing strategies of the participants and their perceptions of themselves as writers.

4.2.1   Personal Lives

The lens of complexity theory used for analysing the data acknowledged the multiple realities and identities of the participants. The personal histories of participants, both in the workplace and of formal education, personal dispositions, aspirations and sense of self, family commitments and all other possible influencing factors were evident within the data from the feedforward tutorials. The tutorials formed an essential sharing research tool for these aspects of the participants' lives where personal histories shaped their personal, professional and academic identities. The biographical data and personal histories for the twelve participants are presented in Appendix B. During the two year data collecting phase, I was privileged to hear and share the personal struggles that the learners experienced.

Rose's brother died whilst she was studying the first module and she spoke candidly about the need to keep going with the course. Her work and studies provided her with a much needed distraction from her grief:

> *'And I think I- I needed that definitely, but- but I also needed to have that reason to keep going, which you know that drive of, do you know what, I do need to get to work and I do- I have got an essay to write and, you know, I needed that… I needed that, it was a good- good crutch'*
> (Transcript 1, Rose).

Rose acknowledged that whilst a struggle to continue on the programme, particularly as it was at the start and arguably the most challenging change for her, she was determined to use the emotions of loss purposefully as a motivating factor, as a 'crutch'. Like Rose, Mariea had a life changing event occur when she had a baby in the first few weeks of year two of her studies. The baby was not planned and was her second child. Following a difficult first semester and some low grades, she came to meet with me as her module tutor to discuss her progress. Mariea was distraught following a failed assignment and we spoke at length about her ability to continue with her studies. She acknowledged the demands of caring for a small baby along with her other daughter as a single mother and that it had proved to be challenging to complete assignments. She realised that something needed to change either in her management of her studies or that she would need to intercalate from the programme. I met with Mariea a week later as part of the data gathering process:

> *'So we met last week…about your last lot of marks. How are you feeling about that now?'* (SM)

> *'Much better this week than last…asking to come and see you was by far the best decision really, cos it did put my mind at ease, as I said last week I- I thought I would have to redo the whole thing and…you know that was obviously causing some anxieties because of you know, my situation with the baby and…and getting there, and obviously you giving me a lot of reassurance really for that, so I've kind of, I've done what you've said and I've put it behind me…'*
> (Transcript 3, Mariea).

A critical aspect of the reassurance that I was able to offer Mariea centred around an earlier disclosure (Transcript 1, Mariea) that she faced considerable opposition from her family about undertaking the degree. Mariea was the first person in her family to attend university and she applied to come on the programme without telling any of them. When she eventually did inform her family that she had secured and accepted a place on the FdA, there was initial resistance towards her decision by both parents and her sisters, which continued once the course had commenced when they observed the amount of commitment and devotion of time to her studies that was

required. Mariea's family suggested to her that she was going through a '*mid-life crisis*' by deciding to undertake the degree (Transcript 1, Mariea). Over the course of the first year, her mother began to realise the determination that Mariea had to complete the course, despite being a single parent who was working full time. Mariea acknowledged this as an '*obstacle*':

> '*... *[an]* obstacle was probably parents, not very supportive with the whole further education, um at all. So… mum's on board now, she sees how important it is and… she is trying to be supportive, dad still doesn't get it but… I'm sure he will in the future*' (Transcript 1, Mariea).

This support from her mother waivered once she knew that Mariea was pregnant and it was expected by the family that Mariea would give up her studies and '*throw in the to*wel' (Transcript 2, Mariea). Mariea had needed the additional reassurance that she had the capability to complete the degree, despite the failed grade, and our relationship as learner/tutor felt to be important to her self-belief and confidence. This resonates with one of the six core practices of transformative learning suggested by Taylor and Jarecke (2009, p. 278) as authentic relationships, which represents where there is trust between learner and teacher. The struggle of managing the resistance from her family, her pregnancy and then her baby re-established Mariea's fortitude and determination to complete her studies despite the personal challenges she faced. Her own alignment of her identity with the academy and her studies appeared important where there was a shift to apply for the programme, be accepted and then face considerable challenge to continue. The disequilibrium was resolved with her decision to continue studying on the course having found mechanisms to support her both emotionally and academically. As Taylor (2009) identifies, those who have recently experienced critical incidents are more predisposed to change as Mariea, in this instance, clearly showed. The emotional aspect of both the struggle and the resolution of the challenges illustrated by Rose and Mariea resonates with a core element of transformational learning where in addition to the cognitive domain, transformation is evident in the social and emotional dimensions where learners

change their understandings not only based on 'analyse-think-change' but rather 'see-feel-change' (Taylor, 2009, p. 10). The emotional responses from these learners to the struggles they faced within their personal lives, although challenging and difficult, supported their commitment to continue with their studies.

For two participants, Tom and Laura, their personal histories had an important influence on their studies although in different ways. Both of these learners had siblings who were either completing (Tom), or had undertaken a degree, although not finished it (Laura) before them. This appeared to be an influencing and motivating factor on their expectations of themselves along with their sense of identity within their family. Laura described her brother as the '*intelligent one*' (Transcript 1, Laura) who went straight from school to a law degree. He gave up his degree to play wheelchair basketball for Great Britain and Laura commented on his status within the family:

> '*…so he is like God in our family and I was never particularly good at school, never particularly clever, naturally I had-had to work a lot harder than he did, everything sort of came naturally to him*' (Transcript 2, Laura).

Laura shared with me how when she rang her mother to tell her that she had enrolled at university, how she had felt that this was dismissed because her brother was already studying for a degree:

> '*…and I rang my- I can remember ringing my mum saying, 'going to uni mum, you know, enrolled in uni'- 'oh yeah* [brother's name] *doing a degree too', and I just wanted to growl down the phone at the woman, and I thought 'fine if he's doing it I'm going to do it bloody better', I'm doing it, I don't need him to be better than me again, so there's that, and- and I don't like- I'm not very good at giving up on things, I'm quite stubborn and I won't let myself be beaten*' (Transcript 2, Laura).

Laura's emotional response to her mother's reaction is relevant as this restored her determination to do better than her brother. When her brother did not complete his

studies and the motivational goal to do better than him was removed, Laura altered her goal to completing the FdA rather than achieving specific grades.

Laura's motivation to do well, but most importantly to complete the degree was challenged in the second year. Laura was clear in tutorial 3 that she was not enjoying the programme which was a distinct change from the first year of her studies:

> *'I've not enjoyed it, I've not, but I know it's my- my battle,*
> *and it's how I feel inside as well, it's about last year I was*
> *on a very positive… wave, and at the minute I'm on a bit of*
> *a negative, and it's just- I've just got to get through it'*
> (Transcript 3, Laura).

In the first year, Laura had been clear about how she viewed the FdA as positively supporting her practice. She offered the specific example of how she had felt more confident in an interview for a new role as part of her career aspirations where Laura had been offered the job of manager. However, the demand of taking a leadership role in a new setting and managing her studies and assessments alongside this had meant that Laura took a drop in grades. Her struggle was located where she was '*forcing herse*lf' (Transcript 3, Laura) on to complete the degree despite not getting the grades she aspired to achieve. By the final tutorial, it appeared that Laura had come to terms with the grades she was getting, conversely this acceptance reduced her focus on outcomes and as a consequence, she was achieving higher grades:

> *'Yeah, I could have given it up in the beginning- first two*
> *modules I could have just happily walked away, definitely,*
> *but then the third and fourth I absolutely loved. And I think*
> *it was more- I think I said before about the- I was putting*
> *less pressure on myself. I had to because of work, and then*
> *the less pressure I put on myself, the better I seemed to*
> *do…and sort of, got my stuff worked out and how to set out*
> *my assignments, and how to get myself to work through*
> *them. So yeah it definitely- well it clearly made a difference*
> *to the grades'* (Transcript 4, Laura).

Here the extrinsic motivation to complete the degree, Laura's self -disclosed '*battle*' in the second year to compete the degree, was enabled once she re-established the

intrinsic enjoyment of the modules. The disequilibrium occurred as Laura was managing the expectations of herself with the demands on her time from a new role. The contrary notion of the less pressure she placed on herself the better she did was of significance here. The dynamic interconnection between Laura's personal history within her family relationships, and the demand of a new role established a shift change in approach to realign her expectations of herself and to establish a new goal; to complete the degree. This shift had been supported by Laura's friendship group with her fellow learners on the programme and aligned with a core element of transformative learning where a collective purpose amongst learners is established (Taylor & Jarecke, 2009). She was clear about the support that her friendship group had for each other and how they had become '*like the best of friends, like almost like a little family unit'* (Transcript 3, Laura). The critical connection with this group and their shared goal appeared to replace the declared lack of support from her family (Transcript 1, Laura).

For Tom, the expectations of himself were centred on his competiveness with his sister who completed the FdA at BGU the year before. There was some resonance with the reasons for Laura's expectations of herself with Tom, although for different family reasons. Tom was the oldest in the family and had already completed part of the first year of two different degrees at another university but did not finish either. His decisions to leave each programme were due to the relationships he had formed whilst in his first year (Appendix B). Tom's father had died when he was eighteen and he spoke about assuming the role of '*head of the family*' from then on (Transcript 1, Tom). After leaving university, he was forced at this point to seek employment and secured a role working in a holiday club with children, where a colleague encouraged him to study an early years level 3 programme. He recognised the time that had been lost with not completing a degree from aged eighteen although Tom acknowledged that the practice experience he had gained had been '*invaluable*':

> *'…now obviously I'm at university when I'm twenty six, twenty seven, by the time I finish this degree I'll be thirty,*

> *whereas I could have been twenty one and much further in my field, but then, the actual experience I've got from working and working my way up, I think is invaluable, and I think that's really set me in a good stead to further my career…'* (Transcript 1, Tom).

It was evident that Tom had engaged in a dialogue with self through critical reflection of these changes in circumstances and in doing so he had examined his attitudes, emotions, and values in relation to these to align the changes he had made to his overall goal of achieving a degree. During his time on the programme Tom's sister was completing the second year of the same FdA and had then progressed into a third year of study to complete a BA (Hons). Tom had found this problematic as he had frequently compared himself to her. He commented that his family was competitive and that he thought that this was genetic as he always wanted to do the very best he could in all he did and explained why this had created its own difficulties:

> *'Yeah I think it's because as well* [his sister's name] [is] *younger than me, and obviously through education I've always been the one to get- you know GCSE's first, A-Levels first etc., and now the tables have turned a little bit and it's a new scenario for me and her, it's the first time I've ever asked her for help, and it's just trying to redefine those roles I think a bit, but yeah definitely competitive'* (Transcript 1, Tom).

Tom outlined how helpful his sister had been in her comments on his work. The redefinition of roles where Tom sought support from his younger sister continued throughout the first year although became more difficult when his sister asked for Tom to read her work for a final submission at level 5. Tom reflected on this:

> *'…obviously it was an amazing thing* [his sister's assignment]*, I looked at it and she was pleased for me to give any notes, whatever, and I looked at it and I went 'you know, that is such a high standard- it's higher than what I could do', I think now, but maybe ever, but definitely now, and within- was it four thousand words, I did, I think I put two comments what I thought I would have changed and improved, because I thought it was such a high standard of work, um…and of course she got a bit upset about that'* (Transcript 2, Tom).

When asked why she had got upset, Tom explained that it was because he had not commented enough on her work and his sister had felt he had not given much attention to reading her work hence the limited comments. However, as his explanation of the incident continued, Tom acknowledged that he had not praised his sister enough for the quality of her work. Instead, he had commented on why she had not received a higher grade for the assessment, as he considered it worthy of more:

> *'And I said 'it was that good, why didn't you get a better mark?' and how I phrased it, she thought, well you know, she always thought that I marked her down basically, that um, I thought she could have done a better job with it, whereas it wasn't that at all, the way I meant it was that I thought she deserved a better grade than what it got, but um, so she got upset about that as well. But no, she is helping me so much with my work, it's just- I'm trying to repay the favour and I'm not at that standard yet'* (Transcript 2, Tom).

The role of academic assignments and the grades achieved are powerful indicators of writing as a measurement of perceived success and how these link to notions of self-belief beyond the cognitive. The negotiation of Tom's own competitiveness, alongside his relationship with his sister had been problematic and this was interconnected with his role and position within the family. This perceived role was at odds with his then current role as new learner and Tom declared that:

> *'I mean that I'm the head, but I feel that I should, yeah, not want to be but I feel like I am, but it's just a little bit of power's been taken off- not power, that's the wrong word, but it's more shared out, and….'* (Transcript 1, Tom).

The use of the word '*power'* initially was revealing, which he then self corrects. Haggis (2009, p. 9) suggests that where a person is framed as a complex adaptive system, as in this study, the sense of self is constantly shifting, dynamic and 'continually emerging'. The sense of self that Tom had in relation to the patriarchal role shifted and changed in a response to the beginning of the FdA. The site of the shift or tension is within academic writing and assessments between Tom and his sister. The grades for assessments that he achieved appeared to be representative of more than his perceived competency in the assessment. He talked about how he could not imagine achieving the grades that his sister had achieved, although how he wanted to see if he could beat her or at least '*do as good as her'* (Transcript 2, Tom). Tom's struggle was in the competiveness he held with his sister along with the inter-relationships and dynamic in his sense of self as head of the family, although this becomes more resolved as he moves to the end of the programme. The resolution occurs when he re-reads his sister's work, having completed the same module at the end of the second year and he commented on how he understood the assignment better, and could identify his own development:

> *'Yeah and I don't think you realise the development you're making, while you're in lessons, while you're going through the year, and actually when you look back at the previous work you've done, or my sister's done, you can automatically just see this jump up in standard…and yeah, hopefully that continues next year* [year 3]*'* (Transcript 4, Tom)*.*

For Rose, Mariea and Tom, the intersecting identities of personal and academic were evident. However, for Laura there was evidence that disturbances extended to include her professional identity as well as the personal and academic. A key struggle for these three learners was located in their personal lives and histories that provided an

important context which foregrounded their agency to complete the programme along with self-defining their expectations for their written assessments.

4.2.2   Workplace Setting

Professional identity, self-belief and confidence are critical factors for learners undertaking a work-based degree and these were of specific focus throughout the data collection. Participants shared their perceived competencies within the work-place and where their practice knowledge and understandings were articulated as having changed from undertaking their studies:

> '…[there]*was a light bulb moment, so that's one thing I've learnt here- so if I did nothing else…there's been quite a lot of stuff, you know, a lot of Vygotsky, and a lot of bits and pieces like that, and you think: 'yeah we do that anyway', Skinner oh god yeah, we've conditioned them, you know, and all these things, but there has been a lot of that thinking: 'oh, yeah that's alright, that's what we've always done, well where have you got that from? Cos that's what I've always done, that's what I think we should do', so I've now got theorists that back up why I've done it, but where did I get it from? So they can underpin me you see, if that makes sense. So yeah, no, I've learnt an awful lot, there's been quite a few light bulb moments'* (Transcript 4, Amber).

Here Amber, an experienced practitioner of nineteen years in the sector made clear the impact of her learning on the programme. This was evident from the radar graphs overall (Appendix H) across all the participants where the increase in professional confidence rose over the first year, (5.2 to 5.9), dropped at the beginning of the second year to 5.5, and which then elevated to 6.1 by the end of the programme. The drop at the beginning of the second year in this aspect of the data, which was replicated across many of the categories analysed in the data, was of relevance and is discussed further in this chapter.

Within the domain of the workplace, participants were able to identify different struggles, for example, with dissatisfaction in the workplace resulting in a change of setting or role. This was evident for Zoe, Rachel, Louise, Isobel, Rose, Laura and Mary who had all sought new employment throughout the first year of their studies for a variety of reasons. However, a connecting factor was their increased disconnection with the practices within the setting or with their colleagues. Their increased critical reflection triggered a need to seek new employment where their learning on the programme may be more readily utilised. For example, Mary had secured a new role and she talked about some of her observations of the staff being '*very flat and tired*' (Tutorial 2, Mary) and how she intended to motivate the staff team and enable them to rethink their practice based on her new understandings from her studies on the FdA so far:

> *'…it's almost like they're ticking along…they come in, do it and go, and there's no, they're quite reticent to new things that have been put in place and… I think something, you know, that's one of my things that I want…. To sort of gee them up to, 'yes you're doing a good job', um, 'but the reason you're doing it….', and maybe making them think 'why are you doing it', not just 'well that's cos that's what we do'. Give them a bit of confidence'* (Transcript 2, Mary).

Mary subsequently left this setting within the space of a few weeks to another setting and then left that establishment a few months later to join a fellow learner on the programme (Lucy) in a different setting, who was working as manager of the pre-school. The management of subsequent change in this instance to where a fellow learner was employed was relevant as the circumstances of change supported increased confidence and self-efficacy (Illeris, 2014, p. 10) and I argue, was re-enforced due to the shared experience of undertaking the programme. It was possible that the opportunities for critical reflection in practice were enabled for Mary in this role, along with the possible change within practice underpinned by theoretical frameworks that Mary described, due to Lucy being the manager and in a position to

support change. Mary's equilibrium was restored and she continued in this setting for the remainder of the programme and beyond.

As part of a work-based degree, learners are required to make links between theoretical frameworks learnt as part of their studies with practice evidence within assignments, to establish PPK (Bereiter, 2014). This is a characteristic of FdAs as identified by QAA (2015, p. 4) where 'the learning in one environment is applied to the other' in a symbiotic way and as outlined on page 27. The term symbiotic is specifically used here to reflect the interconnected, mutually advantageous relationship between these two sites of learning. Zoe discussed in tutorial 2 the relationship between theory and practice when undertaking her academic writing and where she engaged deeply with the content of the assignment. She talked about the writing being easier when she wrote from practice experiences:

> *'And obviously you can relate it so much because you do it*
> *every day, that you can say, "I think this has worked for this*
> *reason and this hasn't worked... and you have lived it so it*
> *is easier… you know, to write about it, if it is an experience'*
> (Transcript 2, Zoe).

Lavelle and Guarino (2003, p. 297) outline that learners using a deep-level approach to writing are focussed on what is 'signified by the text, or the implications and intentions'. Her use of the word '*lived*' is significant in terms of ownership and authorship of the writing. She talked about feeling passionate about her writing and what it said about the children and her work setting. The implications and intentions that Lavelle and Guarino (ibid.) refer to for Zoe were clear in the close inter-relationship between her studies and her role with children, within her expression of the desire to explain and justify her perceived practices with children. For Zoe, a tension and struggle emerged and was evident in her authorial voice within academic writing. She spoke about wanting to show and include 'empathy' in her writing (Transcript 1, Zoe). When asked what she meant by this term she commented:

'When I write, if I write the essay and I feel like I have just been a bit, a cold word, but, sort of, you know, prescriptive, so like, that's gonna go there, that's gonna go there and then that is gonna link to that and that's like that, I feel like I'm not, it sounds really silly, not doing it justice because I feel like it should have that, you know, your opinion put into it and I think if you don't look at it from your point of view then you can't have empathy for the situation, or for like… because your writing about your experiences as well aren't you so you obviously have feelings in that moment, that is why you have acted the way you have acted, so I feel like I want to learn how to write that without writing it too not academically. Does that make sense?' (Transcript 2, Zoe).

She appeared to equate a prescriptive academic writing style to not conveying the issue in her assignments fully, or doing her practice justice. Her need for ownership and a sense of her own opinion and voice in the writing was clear and was at odds with the perceived formality and objectivity of an academic writing voice and vocabulary. The need for empathy indicated that Zoe emotionally invested in her writing where she linked experiences with feelings. Zoe saw her writing as a way of confirming what she knew and was evidence of her thinking as a cognitive map (Alamargot & Fayol, 2009) and authorial ownership. Zoe's perception that academic writing was objective and 'cold' at the end of the first year appeared to trouble her, whereas she wanted to learn to write in a way that was 'not too' academic in order to retain the authenticity of her work. The orientation to deep writing evident in her levels of personal investment to make meaning indicated transformational learning and is discussed on page 72. This personal investment is also closely aligned with the sense of purpose for undertaking the degree; a desire to improve her practice.

4.2.3   The Struggle with Academic Reading

The complex relationship between academic reading and academic writing is discussed throughout this thesis and in the context of Badley's notions of the de-

construction (reading) and re-construction (writing) of ideas (2009). Notions of de-constructing and reconstructing are viewed as fundamentally interconnected and this is exemplified as problematic in Zoe's perception of academic writing as limiting her authorial voice as discussed earlier. The types of academic literature that learners read may reinforce, or not, the disconnect between how they feel they want to write and the academic discourse they read. This section of the chapter specifically explores the struggles that the learners articulated as having in the reading of different academic texts used to inform their thinking, and their academic writing. As Badley makes clear:

> We are, I think, reading texts to decide if we can see in
> them things – concepts, ideas, suggestions, values – which
> may be good for us (2009, p. 212).

The process of using academic texts to inform thinking with the 'concepts, ideas, suggestions and values' that Badley outlines (ibid.) and to underpin these in writing was not unproblematic for the participants. As previously argued, for FdA learners who have limited academic heritage, accessing relevant academic literature is challenging. For Mary, when asked whether she found reading as part of the programme challenging, she acknowledged that some academic texts were difficult:

> *'Some of it yeah, but then I've got the books at home, so I*
> *go in, if somebody's not making it clear I'll go and look in*
> *another book… and see if they make it clearer'* (Transcript
> 2, Mary).

In order to manage the demand of accessing a difficult text and concept, Mary outlined the approach of reading a different source to support her understanding of a theoretical concept if one author does not make it sufficiently clear to her. I commended her for this strategy and asked if she then returned to the original source once she had read the second, which she commented that she did. Mary indicated an iterative approach to reading which requires significant motivation and a sense of purpose to manage the difficulties of both the written content and the academic discourse. The challenges with the academic discourse that Mary faced resonates with the learners referred to by Satterthwaite (2003) (on page 73), who discuss how the

words in academia are 'hard work' (p. 108). For successful progression through an academic programme, learners need to find their way through a difficult text; decoding context specific language and theoretical terms in addition to making sense of the particular academic discourse.

To support the learners on the course with academic reading, the Applied Studies programme provides the learners with an indicative reading list at the start of the module which is supplemented with weekly directed reading (Appendix J). For the directed reading, tutors scan relevant chapters, or research articles and post these up onto BGUs Virtual Learning Environment for learners to access electronically and are carefully selected to support the taught session content. The additional purposes are that they can inform learners' thinking for assignments and as a starting point for their own wider research. Attention is also paid to the academic rigour of the texts. Tutors are mindful of the readability of the source for the level of learning and they are selected carefully to be increasingly challenging for learners. When asked about the reading she engages with in the first tutorial, Rachel stated clearly that she viewed the directed texts as '*good for bedtime reading*' (Tutorial 1, Rachel). However, by tutorial 2, she disclosed that she did *'not like reading'*. I was unsure as to whether this referred to all reading per se, or specifically to academic texts. However, this was an interesting insight into the distinct difference in Rachel's perceptions about reading between Tutorial 1 and 2, a timeframe of five months which may be attributed to the increased cognitive demand in accessing and reading the literature as she progressed through the first year. Rachel's disclosed dyslexia, which is discussed further on page 143, may have contributed to the increasing levels of challenge that Rachel faced.

One of the specific pedagogical strategies for supporting learners' access to academic texts on the programme is within the first module where I teach a session on de-constructing an academic text to explore the features of academic writing conventions. The learners are given this piece of directed reading (Appendix J) prior to the first week of their programme, along with some focussed questions to think

about. The objectives for the session are to expose and make more transparent the aspects of academic writing that are, perhaps, different from other writing in the learners' professional and personal lives. The features of the academic text under scrutiny and discussion covers two distinct aspects: the content, and the presentation. The presentation includes referencing, writing style and phrasing. I make clear to the learners that the reading is relatively challenging with some technical language and part of the session is to unpick this, offering strategies for tackling difficult vocabulary, for example. I have argued (on page 12) that the conventions of academic writing represent a particular discourse associated with the academy and this taught session provides a starting point to discuss these with the learners. Further focused sessions, specifically in the first year of the course, build on this initial introduction as opportunities to develop critical reading, academic and digital literacy skills. In tutorial 3, Philippa, showed her developing understanding of the interrelationships and complexities between reading and her writing:

> *'I do have more confidence in myself too, because I feel I have more…evidence in a way, it's not just me, my opinion, my view, and I suppose that's what's really good- you're reading things, you think 'yeah this is how I feel, but actually somebody who's incredibly clever is actually thinking the same thing'* (Tutorial 3, Philippa).

The validating function of Philippa's reading to her ideas and practice as evidence is worthy of note here. Philippa's comment suggests the purpose of academic reading as more than de-constructing; it serves as 're-constructing' and affirming Philippa's principles of practice. In turn, Philippa's perception of the concepts and ideas from her reading being written by those who are '*incredibly clever'* is of relevance and exemplifies Bourdieu's (1989) notions of the dominant, uncontested discourse of the academy (see p. 74). Philippa makes an assumption that the academic literature she accessed is deemed as worthy academic literature, which may or may not be the case in this instance. However, it exposes the symbolic power that the learners afford the academy. As such, as part of the programme, there is real value and purpose in

allowing for further support for learners' critical evaluation of academic sources as a 'de-constructing' and 're-constructing' process (Badley, 2009, p. 209) through focused exercises such as that described here. This is particularly so in terms of the use of authorial academic voice exemplified in published texts. Further discussion regarding the learners' academic writing voice is included later in this chapter.

The process of selecting 'quality' academic sources is an essential skill for the successful completion of any academic qualification and the FdA is no exception. For the FdA learners as part of this study the pragmatics of searching for texts both electronically and physically through navigating the library systems and in discerning the quality of the sources, is challenging. In particular, in having the academic confidence to critique a published text is difficult given their emerging academic identity. The high risk stakes of academic reading and writing, is often related to assessment outcomes and in particular the learners' assignment grades.

4.2.4   Grades

The participants' grade profile was an important aspect of the data analysis as they offered a tool to show learning as discussed in chapter three. It is important to reiterate that whilst the marking of an assessment in HE is not an exact science and has the potential to be subjective to the marker's judgement on the quality of the work. The processes for marking are established through learning outcomes for the module, assessment criteria across all grade boundaries and moderation of markers' decisions. These are rigorously employed during marking and intended to mitigate subjectivity. Within this context of processes for marking, assessment grades provided a tool for analysing where the participants had achieved different grades at varied points on the programme. There was an assumption that higher graded written assignments showed greater levels of analysis, evaluation and synthesis and that this was incrementally so through the relevant grade boundaries. As increased levels of

analysis, evaluation and synthesis were associated with cognitive development, therefore a learner's grade profile showed whether learning had occurred. With this understanding, the analysis of the grades from the radar graph data, showed that, interestingly, the average grade scores across the sample for tutorials 1 -4 was relatively static for all assessments (Appendix H) for the two years with a minimal overall difference of 1.3% at the largest differential (T1= 60.1%; T2= 59.1%; T3= 59.2%; T4= 60.4%), for all assessments, both oral assessments and written assignments. The decision to exclude Isobel from the grade average data was made because of her non-submission of some assignments across the data collection phase and when she did re-submit; her assignments were frequently capped at 40% and therefore skewed the data. Due to the relative consistency in the data for all assessment grades across the sample, a more granular analysis of the grades for written assessments only was undertaken, again with Isobel's grade results removed from the data set (n=11). This showed greater variation in grades (T1= 60.9%; T2= 58.8%; T3= 55.2%; T4= 58%) (Appendix H). A fall in grades at tutorial 3 show the largest point of differential at 5.7% (tutorials 1 and 3), this drop correlates with the other categories of planning and reviewing. The drop in grades for written assessments at tutorial 3, the beginning of year two, represents a struggle in terms of grades and academic confidence across the sample.

Figure 3: Average assessment grades for the sample
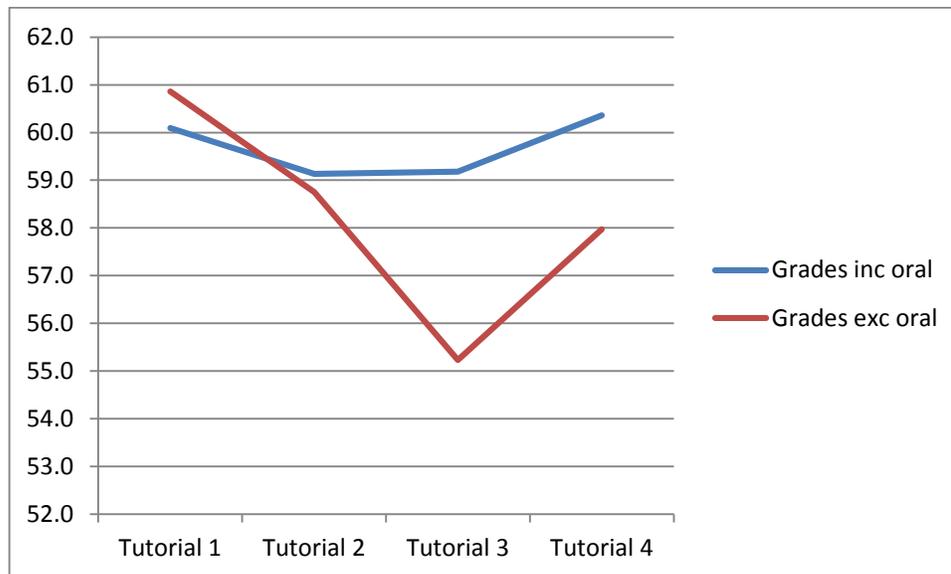
The pattern of average grades across the sample as a whole is not unsurprising when observed through a complexity theory lens. It reveals the capacity for consistency of the collective of complex adaptive systems or, as Davis (2005, p. 87) describes the classroom community, as a '*collective learner* – with a coherence and evolving identity all of its own' as discussed in chapter two. The pattern for consistency in their grades for written assignments where there is a marked drop in grades may be due to the increased level of expectation by the academy of level 5 studies. Learners are prepared for this at the beginning of the Level 5 based on anecdotal evidence, however, the confirmation of this hypothesis was important to note as it suggests that this point in the two year programme is related to a struggle. The rise in grades when analysed with and without the oral assessments showed emergence and as such transformational learning in response to the struggle as a whole sample. The emergence does not extend beyond the grades evidenced at the first tutorial, however, the sample returned to the average grade profile achieved at tutorial 2 (end of year two). As the level of expectation is elevated by a whole grade boundary,

essentially the 50% grade boundary at level 4 becomes the 40% grade boundary at level 5, and their return to the level at the end of year two (58%) learners have indeed shown transformed knowledge as at level 5 this represents 68% at level 4. Those learners who scored the highest (1 – 4) remained static (Tom, Amber, Zoe and Philippa) with minimal reordering of rank. Equally those who scored in the lowest three also remained the same irrespective of oral and written grade average or written assignment grade average.

The external marker, or judgement, on the participants' written assignments contributed to a sense of unease and frequently unsettled the learners where grades received were a fail (below 40%) or perceived as lower than the learner expected or had hoped for. The data from participants have been discussed earlier within this chapter where the interconnectedness with other sites of struggle was evident in relation to assignment grades. The illustrations from the findings discussed in this section are no different and continue to show the dynamic, nested identities and realities for the participants particularly where one site of struggle influences others. However, the data discussed here show examples of where grades have been the leading catalyst for transformation within the CAS.

When a failing grade was received by Rachel at the beginning of her second year of study, this provided the catalyst for her to seek further support for her dyslexia from a specialist tutor. Prior to the receipt of this grade, Rachel was content that the strategies she was using for her written assignments were sufficiently effective. During the first tutorial Rachel disclosed that she had previously taken a test for dyslexia at school and was diagnosed with '*proportion dyslexia*' (Transcript 1, Rachel). This appears to be a self-generated term in the use of '*proportion*' and indicated that Rachel's perception was that she had aspects of dyslexia which affected her reading and writing competencies. I spoke to Rachel about seeking additional support in the

first two tutorials in year one for her assignments due to her dyslexia and she seemed hesitant to access this:

> *'Um… I don't know I just kind of forget they're there I think, rather than, I just sit and do it myself and then get to the lecturer rather than the student support that I don't really know… obviously if I start then I'd start to get to know them, but it's that- first meeting that you go and say hello and you don't really know who they are'* (Transcript 1, Rachel).

Rachel's reluctance appeared to be centred on the challenge of establishing and undertaking the initial meeting and in not knowing the dyslexia tutor. I suggested that we go to see the Dyslexia Support Tutor together in order that Rachel could be introduced to her. Rachel stated that this *'would be good'* so following the tutorial, I took her. On following this up at the next tutorial, Rachel had gone to see the Dyslexia Support Tutor after the initial introduction although she was clear that it had not been useful as she had felt that the tutor had been trying to teach her at a level below where she felt she was:

> *'I saw her… at the minute I just don't think it was for me. The way she approached things, I didn't quite think was for me. I was …I thought I was a level above how she was trying to teach me…'* (Transcript 2, Rachel).

Rachel appeared embarrassed sharing this and when I suggested that she might prefer to see a different tutor, she stated that *'No, she* [the dyslexia tutor] [was] *absolutely lovely, it's just the teaching style was just a bit unusual for me'* (Transcript 2, Rachel). In order to access this support more fully at HE, Rachel needed to undertake a detailed assessment which, if she was confirmed as a dyslexic, allowed her to access funding for specialist IT equipment and one-to-one tutor support for assignments. Rachel did not want to do the dyslexia assessment unless she felt that her grades at level 5 were affected and that while she was studying at level 4, she felt that she was managing this where she had *'tried to just kind of push it out and do it* [the writing] *without thinking about it* [her dyslexia]' (Transcript 1, Rachel). During the third tutorial

Rachel had been very distressed at receiving a fail for a written assessment and I had felt unable to continue with the tutorial. We had returned to the discussion about her needing to seek specialist support for her assignments and Rachel had conceded that she felt that this was required. At the fourth tutorial, Rachel appeared more confident and relaxed about her studies. In the final module in the second year, Rachel had sought help from a BGU Learning Development tutor who had supported Rachel in structuring her written assignment in terms of content but also in task management for completing the work. The support that she had received had therefore been reflected in the grade where Rachel had achieved a 54% which was the highest grade for a written assignment that she had achieved across the second year of study. She acknowledged that it had been difficult to recognise the need for support:

> '*It took me a lot to go to it* [assessment for dyslexia]*, but I*
> *think now I've got it and I know that I can get the support*
> *just for the little things next year, then I can hopefully do it*
> *with success*' (Transcript 4, Rachel)*.*

The struggle for Rachel was in recognising her dyslexia and the failing grade at the end of semester two in year two was the point of realisation that she needed to seek further help for her academic writing. Her equilibrium returned once she realised the impact of the support on her written work, evident in the grade achieved. For Rachel the challenge was in managing the 'transition from present circumstances to circumstances of change – that offers growth of experience for learners and increases their confidence that important changes are possible' (Illeris, 2014, p. 10) for transformational learning to take place.

Amber had high expectations of herself and she cried in every tutorial we had. In the tutorials, she declared that she liked there to be a process, system and structure to what she did for assignments. The physical response of a red rash followed by an emotional episode that she experienced suggested the depth of anxiety that Amber felt about her studies:

'…through the week I didn't understand the question to the essay, it was explained in class and I still didn't understand it. And all of a sudden I came home and there was this bright red rash and I found I'd got a headache, I didn't feel well… so I said to [tutor's name] *'will you come and explain', so she did, she came and explained it fully, which made it an awful lot clearer. But all of a sudden I just burst into tears, I know, it's because I couldn't see- I couldn't see the end, and if I can't see the end, I can't do it. So it wasn't simplistic enough for me, there was too much… too many words in brackets'* (Transcript 1, Amber).

Here, Amber's feelings are indicative of the uncertainty she felt which is at odds with her competency in practice (Appendix I). The external recognition of her effectiveness as a practitioner and manager, her Nursery World Award (Appendix B), was evidence that she was able to function at a high level of competence in this domain. Amber felt a strong emotional response to a task perceived to be outside of her practice although was essentially related. Once the assignment task had been linked and located within her practice through talking with the module tutor, it became clearer for Amber. The disequilibrium that Amber physically and emotionally experienced was centred on *'a fear of failure'* (Transcript 1, Amber). Her fear of failing was overwhelming and when I asked her if she had ever failed, she commented that she had not. She acknowledged that she was unsure of where this feeling had arisen and that she felt *'…stupid really, cos I know I can do it'* (Transcript 2, Amber). Amber is in mature adulthood which aligns with having a more stable identity particularly in her professional life. As discussed on page 36, Illeris (2014, p. 105) suggests that 'people do not change elements of their identity if they do not have good reasons to do so' and for Amber the strong emotions associated with her studies indicated a 'personal libidinal motivation' (ibid., p. 90) to undertake the programme. A recurring theme across all the tutorials was Amber's dissatisfaction with the grades she had achieved. She frequently commented that although she knew that they were good, that she *'wanted more- I wanted more'* (Transcript 2, Amber). Through the high expectations of herself,

Amber became anxious and this was evident in her emotional and physical responses. In the final tutorial, Amber was upset with the final grade for the module (55%) which reflected an average overall between two assessment components. She was clear about her feelings:

> *'I did the crappiest piece of work I've ever done, got thirties in one of them, crap, absolutely rubbish'* (Transcript 4, Amber).

Amber used the word '*rubbish*' five times during the tutorial, repeating that it was the worst she had ever done. She stated that she had wanted a distinction for the final degree classification overall which had not been achieved. In our discussion, I commented that she would have needed to have achieved a module grade of over 85% in the final module to have achieved a distinction grade classification (over 70% module average) which, given her grade profile, was a difficult task. Amber was clearly struggling to see a perspective beyond the grade and the purpose of the task she had undertaken, she stated that the research project, the final module assessment, was *'a pointless exercise'* (Transcript 4, Amber). She commented that she would not be progressing into the third year progression programme despite having secured a place. Amber also shared in our tutorial that she felt that she needed to talk the assignment through with someone although when she dropped by my office some weeks later, she told me that she had burnt the assignment. Over the period of the next weeks and months I encouraged Amber to resume her studies, and she did return to complete the third year. Her aspiration for high grades became Amber's struggle or more specifically the validation of her work by an external marker was an important factor within the learning process for her as Illeris (2014, p. 9) states, the dialogue between the tutor, or literacy broker (Lillis & Curry, 2006), and the learner which must go 'far beyond the analytical discourse and involve the attention of the attitudes, emotions, personalities and values of the participants'. For work-based, mature learners returning to learning at HE level is a high stakes endeavour (Illeris, 2014, p. 105), especially for those who are experienced and well respected in their chosen field

of practice as it represents a potential professional risk for them where there is a disconnection between the evident competency in one domain (professional) which was not perceived as replicated in another (academic). For an experienced practitioner and manager such as Amber, her perceptions of her 'success' on the programme, determined by the grades she achieved was overwhelming to the overall experience where her academic confidence was consistently low (Appendix I), and was second lowest across the sample.

Other learners, such as Lucy, Laura and Mary, all had critical incidents on the programme where their confidence was shaken by a low, or perceived low, grade. For example, Lucy received 54% for an essay in the second module of the first year; it was the lowest grade in her friendship group on the programme. Although a secure pass, she was distressed at the time of receiving her work back and when I spoke to her in the classroom, she explained her perception of this as a low grade. This may be due to the expectations of herself in relation to both her family's degree classifications and with her friendship group on the course. The low grade appeared to have impacted on Lucy's confidence although when we meet for the first tutorial a few weeks later, she was more positive about her studies and talked about enjoying the programme. She reflected on the challenges she had experienced in the first semester:

> *Well I think the first bump was in the first term when um,*
> *I'd, I didn't think I could actually do any writing and I*
> *struggled, cos I've not done it for so long, but I got there*
> *eventually, and then obviously I passed the second*
> *assignment, but I'm a little bit worried about the score on*
> *that, that brought me down a bit, but, doing the last essay*
> *and the report boosted my confidence a bit more I think'*
> (Transcript 1, Lucy).

When we discussed why she had found the first few modules challenging, Lucy outlined that she thought it was because it had been so long since she had been in education and completed any formal assignments. This occurred again in the last module of the second year where Lucy received a grade of 45% and she commented in the final tutorial how she managed her feelings for this grade:

'So I knew what I did wrong, I knew how I could show that I did know what I was talking about…but I just got on with it I think, I thought: 'I can't sulk when I have a loan', I mean I suppose we all do- it can't just be me, but I can't keep sulking, I need to get on' (Transcript 4, Lucy).

Prior to meeting for the final tutorial, I had been made aware by the module tutor that Lucy had been upset and I e-mailed her to reassure her that the assignment was only worth 20% of the module average. She responded to me via e-mail and referred back to how she had felt in year one and acknowledged that she could manage this emotion to try hard to achieve a better grade in the second assessment component of the module. Lucy's determination to do well in this was realised and she secured her highest grade for a written assessment. The struggle that Lucy encountered in managing her confidence and emotions regarding the low grade she received, on both occasions, supported her self-efficacy and agency overall. As Lavelle (2009, p. 415) states 'self-efficacy changes as a result of learning, experiences, and feedback' and is discussed further in this chapter. The higher grade also demonstrates increased evidence of analysis, evaluation and synthesis and therefore cognition which indicates transformational learning.

I have evidenced in this discussion that professional, personal, and academic identities and the different types of knowledge associated within these domains, affect learners' overall confidence and self-belief in any one of these domains. In turn, identities in these domains cross over, or intersect, into each other in multiply dynamic ways which are shown, in different ways, within the participants' academic writing. It is, therefore, important to now examine the strategies for writing that were used by the participant learners. The metacognitive awareness of the strategies in undertaking a written assessment is also discussed.

4.3 Metacognition and the role of the central executive

A central focus of this study has been to examine the metacognitive awareness of the participants as individuals, and also across the sample as a whole to seek to answer the research questions. Metacognitive awareness is central to the learning process and therefore to transformational learning, as discussed in chapter two. Successful learners in HE are required to reflect on the strategies they use to write across different domains of declarative, procedural and conditional knowledge (Negretti, 2012), (see page 50). I argue that transformational learning can occur across these domains and was evidenced in the data. Metacognitive regulation supports the application of the appropriate strategy within any one, or all of these aspects of knowledge for the rhetorical task. Regulation or monitoring, and the application of strategies relies on the writer's awareness of the rhetorical demands of the task, in addition to managing their ideas and the translation of these in relation to the specific task. The monitor (Hayes & Flower, 1980) or central executive (Galbraith, 2009), is responsible for deciding what task in the writing process is required at each point in the process of text production and acts as a regulator. The decisions made by the central executive are critical and informed by the knowledge and awareness of the possible strategies to undertake at any one time, and in line with the perceived rhetorical goal of the task itself. Therefore, metacognitive awareness and the central executive are required to resolve the problem of writing together, not necessarily simultaneously, but through bi-feedback that is mutually re-enforcing. Therefore, the central executive has a complex role to play in the writing process and for this study, the central executive was viewed as the problem solver and decision maker within each CAS, or learner, during all stages of completion of the writing task; planning, translating and reviewing. The stages to completion of writing will be discussed further in this chapter, although it is important to address first the participants' metacognitive awareness of the strategies that they used and the order in which these were undertaken, in line with the particular demands of the written task. During each

tutorial I asked the learners what strategies they had used when writing and a response was captured from each at all four phases of data collection.

Philippa and Tom scored the highest for metacognitive awareness (Appendix K) and there was a direct correlation between this and their overall grade outcomes (written and oral) as Tom scored the joint highest grade average across the two year data collection phase (66%) out of the twelve participants and Philippa scored second (65%) for all assessments. The highest grade average, shared with Tom, is Zoe (66%) and she was ranked third in showing metacognitive awareness of the strategies she used (Appendix K). The correlation between metacognitive awareness and high grade profiles in the top four across both categories in the sample supports the original hypothesis that metacognitive awareness supports the central executive in meeting the demands of the rhetorical task to achieve a high grade. In doing so, the learner had shown higher cognitive skills in levels of analysis, evaluation and synthesis to be awarded the higher grade. The subsequent critical question is whether the learners' knowledge has been transformed in the process of undertaking the written assignment. This is captured more readily in the qualitative, narrative data.

Tom's prior experience of being at university had allowed him to understand more fully the expectations for assessments (Appendix B). In the first tutorial, he was confident and reflective on the aspects of his writing on which he needed to focus:

> *'…what I need to refine on my actual writing style, is just to make it a bit more concise and to the point, but no I think I'm in a really good place with my writing and I already see a little development happening from the last time I was at university to here, it seems to be much more flowing easily, I know what I'm doing with it, obviously make your point then back it up and make alternative arguments, I'm very much more confident with what's actually asked of me and what's needed of me…'* (Transcript 1, Tom).

In the second tutorial, Tom talked about wanting to be more '*critical with the sources*' (Transcript 2, Tom) demonstrating understanding of the key elements of academic

writing. Tom was clear in what was expected of him to achieve higher grades. By the third tutorial in the second year, Tom shared:

> *'I think it's evolving, but I think it's- I can kind of see aspects where I wouldn't do before, but I'm still using the same kind of template that I've always done: very rough drafts of ideas on a piece of paper that kind of merge together in some form of essay, which I don't kind of know how it happens but I get there, and...but I'm kind of thinking in the back of my mind when I hear on essays, theorists that I know who it would be strong on that subject, or different areas of my work that actually fit in with that, and it's kind of an evolving process, but I couldn't kind of identify the steps that I'm taking to do it really as such'* (Transcript 3, Tom).

The word '*evolving*' shows the organic nature of writing that the skills for undertaking it were developing the more that the task of writing was undertaken. Tom acknowledged the shifting nature of the strategies that he used and indicated that there was not a set pattern to his approach; that either practice examples or theoretical perspectives lead the process. This reinforced the iterative, messy writing process suggested by Cameron et al. (2009, p.207) and evidenced metacognitive awareness of the various ways to approach a writing assessment task. In using a range of tools from a toolkit of approaches Tom was able to select from these where relevant. The limited planning, with just some '*rough drafts of ideas*' as a starting point, was relevant to his processes and will be discussed further in this chapter in relation to the work of Galbraith (2009). In the fourth and final tutorial, it was evident that Tom was aware that to begin to include abstract concepts and new ways of using the literature would achieve higher grades. He reflected on the assessments for the third module and how he had linked two theoretical concepts:

> *'...I was a bit lucky actually, cos it just suddenly in my brain went: light bulb moment, that I thought 'actually, these two really go together', I've never had that before or since, but I thought- I've looked at two models and gone 'actually they all fit really well together, and I can see where I can put them together'* (Transcript 4, Tom).

Tom clearly showed an increase in metacognitive awareness about the demands of the task, what he needed to do to show his understandings in writing to achieve the increase in grades. Metacognitive awareness also aligned with transformative learning through critical reflection of the declarative, procedural and conditional knowledge; the knowing what, when and how (Negretti, 2012). An identified critical moment was distinctly visible in Tom's assessment grades, and then subsequently in his writing, at year two when he undertook an assessed presentation and achieved 80%. Whilst not part of the data collection which focused on written assessments; in my role as Academic Coordinator, I was privileged to observe the learners beyond the tutorials. This anecdotal evidence is worthy of note because it qualitatively felt to be a point of emergence for Tom where he was brave and took a risk with the content, making bold links between theoretical frameworks, for an oral assessment and he was rewarded with a high grade. The risk was in going beyond the literature showing some original thinking. He commented on this:

> *'I just found, you know cos I think the hard thing is you suddenly find this pot of gold when you're researching and it's what you do with that, and you know it could be some very small point, I might not get many grades for it, but I think ...cos I suddenly realise that that's quite an important aspect of my presentation...that's where I got my marks, and I... I think yeah, I think it was just judgement, maybe lucky judgement'* (Transcript 3, Tom).

During this tutorial, I was able to reassure Tom that the *'pot of gold'* he referred to was not due to luck or a lucky judgement, rather it evidenced high levels of analysis and I encouraged him to continue to be brave with his thinking in written assignments. In the following written assessment, Tom achieved the highest grade he had achieved. My role as his tutor, in supporting Tom's confidence to take risks with his ideas, felt to be a contributing factor to the shift in his confidence and competence in academic literacies. Tom's self-efficacy and agency was reinforced by the grade achieved to show transformational learning through creative ways of exploring abstract ideas as illustrated here.

Philippa ranked joint first for metacognitive awareness in the radar graph data with Tom and second in grade average for the two years in grades (Appendix K). The minor discrepancy between her metacognitive awareness and the grades she had achieved, which was specifically observed in the first year of study (62% compared to Tom's 65%), was evidenced in her narrative of knowing what she needed to do but being unable to fully take action in her academic work:

> *'I need to read critically, and quicker in that way, that sort of speed up, you know speed that up, and make notes quickly, because you do forget and you forget where you've seen it, um… probably spend too much time on the internet as well, researching and looking, where actually the books, when you open it up, you realise it's all there in front of you, you know which is um… so, yeah I've got piles and piles of things sort of sat there, but again, giving myself more time to do it as well'* (Transcript 1, Philippa).

Philippa recognised that she needed to work more efficiently in the planning phase of writing, to be more focused in her reading. This was evident by the second tutorial where she explained how she had organised the books that she would be referring to in her assignment with '*big post-it notes'* (Transcript 2, Philippa) identifying exactly where in the essay the sections from the texts would be referred to. She also shared that she was completing the referencing as she went along rather than at the end. Whilst this was a metacognitive awareness of knowing how (procedural knowledge) to undertake the task and there was a qualitative change in her approach (conditional knowledge), the complexities of completing the writing to show analysis, or Philippa's perceptions of this, does not become evident until the second year in the third tutorial:

> *'I realise that- as I'm reading more I'm realising how you can, as you're writing something you like, think of a criticality, so that connection is happening. Again you'd have liked it to happen before, but you just realise it's a slow process, it's not something that comes…you know, and I think it is slow with me'* (Transcript 3, Philippa).

Philippa shows here metacognitive awareness of the declarative and conditional knowledge; knowing what and where to apply the strategies. A struggle that Philippa had was in managing her work commitments with her studies. She recognised that her time was limited and that she was not able to dedicate as much to her studies if she allowed for her work to encroach into her time too much. In this respect, the challenges of managing the varied demands on their time are a struggle for adult work-based learners as discussed on page 22. By tutorial 3, Philippa had had a similar success in a group presentation as Tom, although for Philippa the most powerful learning had been located in the group working collectively. Philippa observed how her fellow learners organised their presentation content, for example, one member of Philippa's group showed them how to do prompt cards, to have notes under the powerpoint slide and another used a spider gram to map out ideas. Philippa talked in tutorial 3 how she had watched the others' strategies and used some of them herself, demonstrating an adaptive response in how to approach writing. Taylor and Jarecke (2009) state that a practice for transformative learning is modelling from the teacher and based on the evidence from Philippa's narrative, modelling from others extends beyond the teacher. The other important aspect of the oral assessment task was that Philippa achieved a high grade. This, like Tom, appeared to have given her confidence. In tutorial 4, Philippa declared that her studies had taken more of a priority and she had adopted the strategy of getting away from her home to study, frequently coming into the library at BGU. Although second in the overall ranking for grades due to the data reflecting both academic years, it was important to note that Philippa achieved the highest average grade across the sample during the second year and therefore gained a distinction classification for the FdA. The elevated grades at level 5 show an increased awareness of the strategies for writing over time with a difference of 5.5% between year one and year two.

Isobel struggled throughout the two years of the programme and failed to submit all but one assignment in the second year, and two written assessments in the first year.

She was required to undertake a series of resubmissions in the summer months following year one and again in the summer after year two in order to complete the programme. She was unable to submit the final level 5 assignment during that period and it remained outstanding until December 2015 when it was submitted. Isobel was typically self-deprecating and scored the lowest for academic confidence across the sample. She frequently commented about how she was still learning to manage the writing for her assessments, particularly in how she perceived the organisation of her time and in the structuring of writing. In the first tutorial, Isobel shared the challenges she had:

> *'But um- I'm still struggling to find a balance between, I love reading anyway, so I love reading about all the things, you know, like- having the list of the things that I'm supposed to work through to um- on the recommended reading list, but then I'm not as good at actually getting down what my ideas are, so I struggle with my time management basically'* (Transcript 1, Isobel).

She found that she frequently got '*lost in the moment'* with her reading and spent significant time getting immersed in the literature which left her then overwhelmed with the volume of content she felt that she had to bring to the assignment. This resulted in her feeling disorganised and with a perception that she did not have a '*logical mind set'* (Transcript 1, Isobel) when it came to structuring ideas. This has resonance with the work of Lea and Jones (2011) who outline the complexities of organising multiple texts to form a coherent argument in an academic assignment as discussed on pages 93-94. In tutorial 1, Isobel identified that she wrote without a plan however by tutorial 2, disclosed that she used a basic plan which for one of the assignment components had not helped her. The translation of her ideas into a first draft was demanding and the organisation of the draft into a coherent structure was where her struggles began:

'It just takes me so long to…I can get down all my ideas and then to reduce it down to something and then…. I have to re-order or restructure it massively because…structure is something I really struggle with' (Transcript 2, Isobel).

When reassured that this was quite commonplace for some writers, Isobel was quick to state '*No I honestly think I must have a problem*' (Transcript 2, Isobel)*. For the final assignments at the end of year one, whilst she managed to meet the deadline, it was not without complications of the printer not working, leaving her having:

'…a repeat performance of me coming here hyperventilating…can't believe I'm doing this again, what am I doing this for. And just got in on the boundary thinking, I have to sort my life out, I can't continue being like this, I should be completely white haired by the amount of stress I have given myself by not having good time management' (Transcript 2, Isobel).

Time management issues, along with Isobel's lack of satisfaction with her writing had generated challenge for her. At the beginning of year two, and another incident of non-submission of the first module written assignment, Isobel came to see me as her module tutor to discuss a way forward for her studies and we continued to talk this through in tutorial 3. Isobel focused on what she believed might be the problem for her:

'That's probably the thing that would…I don't know…looking back I think that's probably the root of where I think is it, you know I've said to you before, I'm not sure, am I dyslexic? Is it that, you know, it's that whole- just the structuring- I found it quite difficult' (Transcript 3, Isobel).

The struggle she had with committing her ideas onto paper, she described as a '*very painful process*' and that she would rather give birth than write (Transcript 3, Isobel). Isobel was unable to move beyond this stage of writing on many occasions to meet the deadlines imposed on her by the programme. The paralysis that Isobel felt in the translating phase of writing suggested an over loading of memory, she commented that she spent too much time in the reading phase of preparing for the assignment

and that she enjoyed reading however, moving to writing the draft became too challenging. Galbraith (2009) states that the central executive's function is to coordinate the task environment; everything that is outside of the writer that influences the production of the text, including the writer's memory. It appeared for Isobel, the struggle was in connecting the task environment with memory to enable the creation of a draft of text. The monitor not only provides this connecting function, but also plays a role in deciding what to do next in the writing process. Isobel, in tutorial 2, discussed how she had tried to adopt a more free writing approach (Elbow, 1981) that had been introduced to her during a taught session in a module as part of a study skills programme. This involves writing a first full draft where the writer, Isobel, frees themselves from needing to regulate the technical aspects of the writing such as spelling and grammar and focuses on the composition of the writer's ideas into text, much like the low-self monitor's approach as discussed on page 86. She outlined that she found this approach useful although this generated far too much text and the rhetorical demand of restricting her draft to the allocated word count then became the problem. Isobel's inability to organise her ideas and to self-regulate could be attributed to her dyslexia which was diagnosed in the summer following year two. In turn, Isobel could be described as experiencing cognitive overload where she could not simultaneously combine all the components of writing, such as spelling, grammar, structure and phrasing, awareness of the audience for example, which results in paralysis. As Lavelle (2009, p. 415) identifies:

> …writing imposes tremendous constraints on working memory involving a full range of demands: intentionality, theme, genre, paragraph, sentence and lexical and grammar dimensions.

The free writing that Isobel described relieved the cognitive overload however this created a further problem with the rhetorical demand of the task to write within a designated word count. It is not surprising that Isobel becomes stressed and frustrated. Her heightened awareness of the demands of the task although being unable to respond to these accordingly becomes Isobel's struggle which affects her

self-efficacy and agency to complete the task, and consequently her ability to transform knowledge through writing itself.

The largest discrepancy between the grade profile average and metacognitive awareness was Mariea who ranked at bottom of the grade profile although was rated as second across the sample for metacognitive awareness. The grade drop (-7.8%) can be attributed to her having had a baby within the first few weeks of the second year. Mariea showed awareness of what was required to complete the written assignment and the strategies she needed to employ, however, the act of completing these was challenged by the demands of having a young baby to care for. Out of the seven learners who dropped grades between year one and year two, the reduction between the grade averages is relatively minimal between 1.8% and 0.8% overall for Amber, Mary, Laura and Lucy. The exceptions were Isobel, Rachel and Mariea whose circumstances provide an explanation for the more significant drop (Appendix K).

The role of the central executive was important in supporting the writing process in conjunction with the rhetorical goal through self-regulation. Increased metacognitive awareness was indicative of higher grades and evident across declarative, procedural and conditional knowledge domains. As I have argued, metacognitive awareness and monitoring allows for transformational learning to take place within academic writing as evidenced by the successful grading of learners' assignments; where the participants showed heightened awareness of the strategies they were required to use against the demands of the writing task and were able to apply these, the more proficient academic writers they were. A key element for these work-based learners, as already identified, was the symbiotic application of practice knowledge within theoretical frameworks which Bereiter (2014, p. 4) describes as PPK. PPK is both declarative and procedural; it is knowledge of how to 'achieve practical objectives but it is also knowledge that can be communicated symbolically, argued about, combined with other propositions to form larger structures' (Bereiter, 2014, p. 5). As such, PPK is

explicit knowledge that guides practice. The role of reflection, specifically critical professional reflection supports the development of PPK and involves, I argue, transformational learning. The transformation of inexplicit, tacit knowledge to explicit PPK required closer examination in relation to the data evidence.

4.4   Tacit knowledge

As discussed in chapter two, tacit knowledge is a critical aspect of professional formation and where intuitive practice is transformed through the process of critical reflection to PKK. Tacit knowledge represents assumptions and practice 'know how' that forms values, beliefs and actions (Mezirow, 2009). Mezirow (2009, p. 19) identifies the need for self-examination following a disorientating dilemma as part of a transformational learning process where practice or theory becomes challenged then changed as a result of the participants' learning. Change was evident in the participants from the longitudinal data. The notion of self-examination, as a dialogue with self, was key as it was through this undertaking that practice assumptions were challenged and aligned, or not, with theoretical understandings. Where alignment was not achieved, disequilibrium occurred and the learner was required to reinstate equilibrium. Self-examination required the learner to 'step outside themselves' and to look at the issue in hand. Scrutiny of self is challenging, however, I argue that the act of transforming tacit knowledge to explicit knowledge requires the catalyst provided by new understandings. The academy may be one site where new understandings in terms of theoretical frameworks were introduced. A work-based programme supports the opportunity for critical reflection and scrutiny of self where learners are outside of day to day practice roles and amongst a community of fellow practitioners, alongside assessment demands. Academic writing had the potential to transform learning where critical reflection and focused links were made between theory and practice, and where the initial, primary purpose for undertaking this process was academic assignments for the FdA programme.

For Louise, objectivity about her practice within her academic work was challenging. In examining Louise's assignment feedback during tutorial 2, commentary from the marker focused on her academic writing style being too '*chatty*', that her use of quotes was not explored sufficiently and that she made bold statements that were unsubstantiated. Louise expressed her frustration at not getting it right despite her endeavours:

> '*I mean I- I um, cos I- I am too opinionated in my work, and I talk about- cos I love talking about my practice, and I love talking about my interactions with parents and things like that, but I perhaps don't take it, cos I know last time we talked about a critical point that I'd made, and I- I thought I'd made some in my work but I obviously hadn't, but… I've been trying to make that, so if I've written something that's like sort of about a positive point, I'll make sure I put 'however…' and then say how it's negative, and then I'll quote it, try and get that critical point in…*' (Transcript 2, Louise).

Louise's writing voice was, at this point, concerned with exploring her own views on the issues she explored in assessments, located around her practice. It became evident that Louise knew that she needed to include other viewpoints in her writing that created a discussion and argument and she perceived that she has done this. However, the marker's commentary suggested the overriding voice expressed Louise's opinions on the subject. Her sense of herself and discovering her own views gained prominence in her writing. Here Louise illustrated reflections on her practice although not critical self-scrutiny and as such she was knowledge telling in her writing, rather than knowledge transforming. This may be attributed to Louise's stage in her career where she continued to learn the craft of working with children and her patterns of practice were not yet fully established on which to be critical, unlike experienced practitioners such as Amber. Comparatively, her more limited practice experiences (Appendix B) were then intertwined with her academic confidence and identity. I argue that Louise had used writing for assignments to explore her own opinions, rather than de-constructing those of others in any

meaningful way to transform her thinking in relation to these. Louise's need to establish her own professional and academic identities were clear and located in her exploration of self which was evident in the dominance of her 'voice' in her writing, or 'discoursal self' (Clark & Ivanič, 1997, p. 142) as discussed on page 61. This qualitatively felt to be an important stage in Louise's academic writing development and in her professional and academic identity. Lillis advocates hearing the learner's voice in HE whereas the individual learner has to 'edit out their own views and self: the institution loses potentially new meanings and new identities' (2001, p. 104). The challenge for the academy, represented in Louise's writing, is whether academic writing identified as dominated by argumentation and characterised by an exploration of 'interlinked claims' (Wingate, 2012, p. 146), should remain the dominant method for assessing learner's understandings. However, the wealth of evidence that points to the power of writing as a means of transforming knowledge as discussed in chapter two, does not necessarily depict **academic** writing within this. The additional cognitive demand of processing and exploring the views of others and in accessing them through academic reading, along with writing in a way to 'please the academy', has the potential to suppress the learner's academic identity and for work-based learners, their professional identity also. Alternatively, the exploration of other viewpoints, which may develop or contrast with the learner's own opinion, allows for deeper understandings beyond subjective conjecture, affording what Gramsci (1971) terms as 'good sense' (see page 31). Good sense refers to understandings that are evidence based and underpinned by theoretical frameworks such as PPK (Bereiter, 2014), whereas views that are 'common sense' are those which have become socially agreed. I argue that Louise was clarifying her own knowledge of practice which were understood as common sense and that Louise was located at that point, in a distinct stage of exploration in the change from common to good sense representing a liminal space. This explorative phase, or assimilation of self of what she believed, was critical for her ability to then acknowledge the views of others. In the frame of reference of

complexity theory and that of Piaget (1980), the complex adaptive system (Louise), was adjusting to the intersecting complex systems of the work setting and her studies. The interactions and new understandings between these two dynamics required Louise to establish, and voice, where her own views about issues explored in assignments are located. Louise's acknowledgement that she needed to explore more perspectives beyond her own was a sustained theme throughout the second year and she continued to find literature that aligned with her ideas rather than allowing for the literature to drive her thinking. However, there was a qualitative rise in Louise's professional and academic confidence over the duration of the third and fourth tutorial.

Rachel's views on the impact of the course on her practice had resonance with that of Louise. Rachel was the youngest participant in the sample and like Louise had the least experience in practice. When asked whether her learning on the programme has changed the way she worked with children, she stated '*Not really.* [Pause] *I don't know'* (Transcript 2, CT). She did continue to respond to this question and stated:

> *'I think overall I have changed within the year as well. So I*
> *have gone on other courses that have kind of put things*
> *together...I think I have learnt... from the knowledge side,*
> *so I suppose I have in a way'* (Transcript 2, Rachel).

Rachel identified that the other courses that she had attended over the year as part of continued professional development had allowed her to make links, or '*put things together'* although was not specific about the role of her FdA studies as part of this. The phrase '*knowledge side'* may refer to wider literature and theoretical concepts. The more limited connections that Rachel was able to make between practice and theoretical knowledge could, in part, be due to the difficulties she experienced with reading and writing for assignments. Alternatively, it may represent an emerging professional identity where Rachel did not yet feel able to challenge her thinking about her practice due to being a relative novice within the early years sector and her overall self-confidence, evident in her response '*I don't know'* (Transcript 2, Rachel).

Rachel's professional and academic confidence was low across the sample where she ranked as second lowest in both. The lowest for professional and academic confidence was seen at the beginning of the second year and was attributed to her dyslexia as discussed earlier, along with her being ill with tonsillitis. A module that looked at the rights of young children in practice in the second semester appeared to have triggered some critical reflection on practice for Rachel:

> '…from what we [her presentation group] saw in practice was quite interesting, cos a lot of us did change what we did according to the circle time…and I think I just listen to- give children more time now…to have chance to talk back, whereas before if they…someone else was- they all talk at the same time, and then you just trying to work out an order for them to talk and…definitely seems to work rather than them all shouting and…listening individually' (Transcript 3, Rachel).

There was some evidence here that Rachel had **reflected** on her approach to listening to children as a result of her learning on the programme although **critical reflection** was not evident. By the final tutorial and when Rachel had undertaken a research project, she commented that she had been able to see the links between her studies and practice more clearly, in that *'while I was at nursery, I could kind of keep my mind on it as well, and keep thinking of new ideas to put in my assignment while I was at work'* (Transcript 4, Rachel). Taylor (2009) makes clear that critical reflection, rather than reflection alone, is an essential component for transformational learning. He argues that habits of mind, or 'schemata' (Taylor, 2009, p. 8), can only be transformed and changed through critical reflection which is linked to increased amounts of practice experience. Rachel showed some changes in her thinking about practice and tacit knowledge, the examination of 'this is just what we do' as outlined here, however there was no evidence of **critical reflection** where she linked practice to theory in the tutorials. Rachel appeared to stay at a level of reflection that emphasised 'technical rationality' (ibid.) rather than critical reflection. This also correlates with her grade profile where she was eleventh in ranking across the sample.

Alternatively to Rachel, in tutorial 1 Mary stated her confidence with academic writing, she knew that she had *'got to have backing for everything I say, because it's no point, there's no point me drawing on my experience and my training and not backing it up'* (Transcript 1, Mary). Mary recognised the need for her to make the links between practice and theory *'to back up'* what she wrote. This links to Bereiter's (2014) concept of PPK as discussed earlier and he is clear to state that this linked knowledge may not contribute to a more 'testable theory', however it does 'meet standards of explanatory coherence – internal consistency as well as consistency with evidence and coherence with other explanatory propositions within the field' (ibid., p. 5). PPK is created through problem solving and is formed through an active process where the practitioner makes sense of the problem through seeking explanation, although this is not its primary purpose. The key purpose of PPK, is to provide sufficient explanation that advances practice (Bereiter, 2014). The notion of advancing practice allows for professional formation of the practitioner which are not stimulated solely by the application of theory into practice, but rather a more multi-directional process of different triggers and starting points. The acknowledgement of Mary's considerable professional knowledge and the need to 'back up' the know -how, with know-why suggests a different starting point for PPK in this instance:

> *And it's- it's not just taught me things, it's made me open up to what I do know, and realise 'oh yeah… that's why… that comes from', you know, instead of just thinking 'well it's what to do. You're consciously… you know things are sort of more conscious now'* (Transcript 1, Mary).

The phrase *'made me open up to what I do know'* pointed to prior, tacit knowledge transformed into explicit understandings that were linked to theoretical frameworks. However, when asked whether she questioned her practice since undertaking her studies, she stated *'Um… not so much. But then, I don't know, because maybe being in childcare so long…'* (Transcript 1, Mary). For Mary, the learning about theoretical perspectives was viewed as a validation of her practice, and how other viewpoints on issues were able to support this:

'...it's also it's getting you to see both sides, you can have your opinion but it's seeing why other people think what they think, or they don't agree with you know, a theory, or a way of thinking, do you see what I mean? The critiquing now is more, it's not a case of 'ohh yes I like this way... why?' And can I understand that actually he was disagreed with by so and so because, yeah I can see that as well, but actually... I think that that- that's very good' (Transcript 1, Mary).

This was reiterated in the second tutorial:

'[It is] more seeing theories in- identifying theories in children, and seeing 'oh yeah that's why they tick like that', so yeah it's been more observational, and me realising 'right well this child is, you know, something's happened here, and that's why they're....it's being more conscious of why their....development is where it is' (Tutorial 2, Mary).

In tutorial 3, Mary showed that she continued to make critical links to the literature and actively sought out alternative perspectives that did not necessarily fit with her practice to establish opposing arguments in her writing. This continued into the final tutorial:

'And if I'm gonna say 'I feel this', I'll back it with it, or I will say, I will back it but I will also counter-balance it with something that...disproves it' (Tutorial 4, Mary).

Her understanding that an academic essay requires argumentation was evident, and the term '*feel this'* points to her distinct authorial voice within this and the sense of ownership beyond the cognitive to include an emotional investment in her writing, as discussed on page 71. The access that Mary made to the practice tacit knowledge and understandings that she had linked with theories explored whilst on the programme indicated her capacity for critical reflection and I argue, is a distinct capacity for an experienced practitioner learning on an FdA. Where critical reflections on practice were undertaken, transformational learning took place. Deep approaches to learning were embedded within writing where writing was for knowledge transforming, as with Mary and others as discussed earlier. Surface learning approaches were evident for

participants such as Rachel, whose reflections indicated a knowledge telling approach. As a teacher I remain committed to the purpose of a work-based programme being, at its core, to support deep learning and knowledge transformation. However, the complexity of engaging in this level of learning is dependent on many interconnected factors as illustrated by the participants where professional and personal identities and confidence are interwoven with the academic domain, and performance.

4.5   Deep learning and surface learning

A core component for deep, transformational learning was critical reflection and undertaking the writing process strengthened reflection through the tangible externalisation of ideas onto the page, providing a map of cognition (Alamargot & Fayol, 2009). The exploration of ideas externally through writing supported the manipulation and linking of these without the sustained demand of recall from memory as the ideas and reflections of the writing were literally, there in front of the learners. Taylor (2009, p. 9) argues that this is particularly so for tacit knowledge, where phenomena can be recorded in writing and then shared with self and others and returned to through the process of continued reflection. For FdA learners, there is evidence that these particular learners show more evidence of deep learning than traditional students (Nzekwe-Excel, 2012). This may be attributed to their experience in practice as illustrated with some of the participants in this study where connections between theory and practice have been made along with the continued application of these within their role in the setting. As such, FdA learners are able to reflect in the symbiotic way discussed earlier in this chapter and throughout the thesis, to become increasingly more critical in their reflections in a self-reinforcing, reflexive process. This must also be so in relation to their academic writing where the process of continued, critical reflection not only on **what** they are writing but also in terms of **how** they are writing.

A critical path when mining and analysing data is in the answering of the research questions. This next section of the chapter builds on the previous discussion regarding metacognitive awareness and investigates the data specifically in relation to the two research questions of whether the participants' awareness of metacognitive strategies developed over time and the learners' capacity to evaluate their own academic writing over the duration of the two year programme. Data from the radar graph analysis of the central executive category, where the participant demonstrated their awareness of the processes they used, showed no change in average score after tutorial 1 where for the final three tutorials, the average remained static at 5.5 which was surprisingly consistent across the sample (Appendix H). There was a slight elevation in the average between tutorial 1 and 2 (5.0 to 5.5) which was, to some extent, expected following the first module assignments and a shift in understanding of the demands of academic writing. Irrespective of the static average score across the sample, there were some variations that were worthy of note. Tutorial 3 showed the highest proportion of learners whose metacognitive awareness dropped (n= 5). This was due to the perceived increase in challenge between years one and two as discussed previously. Mariea was the only participant to drop in terms of awareness of metacognitive strategies between tutorials 2 and 3 and to have had a correlated drop (lower than 0.5%) in grades at this point in her studies. As discussed earlier, Mariea had just had a baby and her mental and physical energies were taken up with caring for her. The only other learner whose grades dropped between tutorial 2 and 3 and whose awareness of the strategies used rose at this time, was Laura. Like Mariea, Laura had had other pressures on her during this phase as she had begun a new job as a manager in a setting. The drop in grades at tutorial 3, triggered an elevation in grades, the highest across the two years for Laura evident at tutorial 4. She talked about the challenge of settling into the new academic year at level 5 and when I asked if she was doing anything differently from her approach to the assignments in year one, she stated:

*'Not that I've particularly noticed, I'd just say I'm a bit more
organised with stuff now…I was a lot more laid back before.
I start now by going through the marking criteria and look
at what the- the sort of fifty to sixty per cent is, I think- I
don't wanna look at the sixties and above cos I'm not even
bothered, so I look in the fifties and then look at tweaking
to get it in the sixties then great but…so I guess that's
something slightly different that I do now'* (Transcript 3,
Laura).

In tutorial 4, Laura elaborated further to share her understanding that the less

pressure to do well that she put on herself, the better she did. The acknowledgement

in tutorial 3 that she had shifted the expectations of herself in terms of the grades she

wanted to achieve had the overall effect of an elevated performance, this is discussed

later in this chapter. Laura's awareness of metacognitive strategies continued to

elevate in the second year from the lowest score at the end of the first year showing a

qualitative evaluation of performance linked to awareness of metacognitive

strategies.

Amber had struggled to evaluate her own performance throughout the two years on

the programme and she discussed the feedback from various markers in the tutorials

in terms of whether the marker 'liked' her work, or not:

*'…they said it read well, but there's obviously some of the
things that er- you know, obviously they don't like'*
(Transcript 2, Amber).

Discussion focused on how Amber had sent her work to the module tutor, prior to

final submission, who had said the work was in line with the assessment task, and the

marker (not the module tutor) had made a negative comment against this section in

Amber's work. Amber expressed her frustration at this inconsistency and she

commented that other learners on the programme '*moan* [ed]' about it too

(Transcript 2, Amber). This commentary from Amber exemplified the perceived

variations between markers of learners' work and her use of the word '*like*' is

replicated in research by Lillis (2001, p. 61) whose participants' perceptions, like

Amber, was that their success or failure in an assessment was dependent on the

individual tutors' 'quirks' (ibid.) which were far from transparent (see page 70). The assignment that Amber thought she had done well in was the one, out of the two, that she did the least well in and vice versa. The ambiguity and perceived, uncommunicated expectations between the markers' expectations was problematic for Amber. On the other hand, this may be attributed to personal differences in academic writing as all writers have their own histories and cultural contexts for their writing style (Fairclough, 1989). Amber's unease about this perceived inconsistency was evidence of how learners are at the liberties of individual markers and the gatekeeping role that the academy collectively holds. Bourdieu (1991, p. 5), as discussed on page 73, argues that such pedagogical action represents symbolic power in so far as it is 'the imposition of a cultural arbitrary by an arbitrary power'. However, whilst symbolic power is acknowledged in the role of gatekeeper, the challenge for the academy, and possibly its strength, is that it represents different academic discourses, different voices, in a heterogeneous way that embraces the multiple realities through the writing of those within it. Although the power of the thinking, evident in writing, is restricted by the different rhetoric of academic writing and the multiplicities of what that is or represents. For Amber, the ambiguities from the different expectations by academic professionals of the demands of the task were frustrating and she acknowledged that it was challenging for her to know when she had done well. By tutorial 3, Amber was able to state that an assignment that was graded at 70% was the '*best thing*' she had ever written, although when asked why, she was unable to say and she asked me what was the best thing in it. In our discussion, she commented that it was the '*wrapping it*' (Transcript 3, Amber) that had made her work 'good'. When I asked what she meant, she said:

> *'...it is about wrapping it, sometimes what I do is write something, put it away for a few days, then get it out, cos I end up with like whole boxes of information, then it's about putting them into each other, so I've sort of got that skill, I won't say it's perfect cos it's not'* (Transcript 3, Amber).

In using the term 'wrapping it', Amber referred to the linking of theoretical frameworks and she offered an example of comparing and contrasting two different concepts. She was clear that this was not easy and the concepts she was exploring had to be interesting to her for her to make those connections. This resonates with the links between purpose and transformational learning (Mezirow, 2009; Illeris, 2014). Amber stated that when working on developing her work that she did not 'know what else you need to put in them really' to improve the grade (Transcript 3, Amber). As discussed earlier in this chapter, Amber was upset in the final tutorial due to a drop in grade and she had no real sense of where she went wrong other than that she should have taken ownership of her ideas for her assignment and not listened to a tutor. She felt the tutor muddled her original plan and then that caused her to not perform as well in the assignment. Her perception of the audience, the tutor who she perceived would mark the work, overrode her decision of what to write to incorporate the tutor's suggestions. Her desire to please her 'audience' had compromised her authorship. There was an uncorrelated relationship between Amber's understandings of what needed to be in her work, the 'wrapping it' where she was analysing theoretical frameworks and her confidence to continue to use this approach was compromised by her need 'to please the teacher'. For Amber, who was ranked at third lowest for academic confidence, this became her struggle. In the final tutorial, she acknowledged this:

> 'I honestly think I listened to- I listened to a tutor, and I
> should have listened to myself' (Transcript 4, Amber).

Deep learning was evident in the strategies that Amber applied in tutorial 3; firstly through the understanding of analysis as an aspect of academic writing, and secondly, retrospectively when Amber shows awareness of what she should have done in terms of having authorial control over her work which is linked to her self-efficacy and agency. As Lavelle (1997, p. 476) makes clear that 'true' coherence in writing, 'involves not just making a logical or well organised meaning (cohesion), rather it involves making meaning in relation to oneself and in relation to one's

audience'. Amber was unable to make meaning for herself in the final assessment, her understandings were compromised and she received the lowest grade over the two year programme.

To summarise the discussion in this section of the chapter, it was expected that the findings would show development of metacognitive awareness over the two year study which was not evident across the sample as a whole. Despite the limited changes in metacognitive strategies across the sample, there was surprising variation in the evidence of metacognitive awareness within each individual. This, I argue, was due to the dynamic, intersecting and nested worlds of professional, academic and personal that were multiply influencing each other. Using a complexity theory lens to analyse and discuss the data, where cross sectional analysis has been resisted, has enabled a richer view of the world of the participants. Where transformational learning has been most visible, and arguably does indicate increased metacognitive awareness overall, has been in the grade profiles of the learners where their written assignment grades have been analysed.

The data collection focused on specific aspects of the writing process of planning, translating and reviewing in order to examine closely the different strategies and stages that the learners in the sample used at different points during their academic programme.

4.6   Planning Phase

The planning phase for academic writing involves a range of processes that provide the ground work for the translating stage. Planning requires ideas to be generated from 'probes' from the long term memory and, as discussed in chapter two (page 88), these generate three retrievals before the associative chains are broken (Hayes & Flower, 1980). Researchers such as Galbraith (2009, p. 60) have argued that the process of idea generation is more complex than Hayes and Flower (1980) suggest

where he proposes that it is the strength between the 'units' of knowledge, that allows for connections to be made, much like the links between practice and theory, for knowledge transformation to occur in the development of writing. Whilst these concepts have provided a conceptual backdrop for the analysis process, the focus of this study was on whether the participants undertook planning as an early stage of mapping their cognition into a page of text, and if they did, how this was captured. For academic writing, the writer cannot rely solely on their memory to generate ideas for their work and there is a need for the writer to seek out further information from a variety of sources, which for work-based learners may include practice illustrations and wider literature. Epting et al. (2013) make clear that there are correlated connections between writers who are proficient, experienced readers and the competency of the writer. It would therefore be reasonable, based on the work of Epting et al., to assume that a proficient reader is one who accesses a wide range of texts. As such, the link between a proficient reader and a competent writer is due, I argue, to the increase in connections with prior knowledge, which may include practice knowledge, with the ideas generated from reading which affords the deepening of understandings; the extending of knowledge of what is already known. Engagement with the literature supports the writer through the modelling of writing styles, phrases and vocabulary allowing for a wider bank of resources to be drawn upon when undertaking writing for planning, translating and reviewing. To some degree, it supports the notion of a 'future' text (Chanquoy, 2009); a point of reference for what the text may look like, as discussed on page 39. The increased access to ideas from the reading of sources, for some writers, may minimise the need for detailed planning in a formalised, externalised way prior to text production, as the retrieval of ideas is essentially easier. On the other hand, for some writers the volume of ideas may be overloading and requires different skills of making decisions to what is required for the text in response to the rhetorical goal, as previously illustrated with Isobel. Writers who adopt the approach of less planning time **prior** to text production require the undertaking of more conceptual planning **during** the composition process

(Epting et al., 2013, p. 253), resulting in more transformational learning during the writing process. Galbraith (2009) (see page 88) makes a correlation between writers who do not plan in any depth being low self-monitors and who generate more ideas for the written task with the potential for knowledge transformation in undertaking the writing. High self-monitors are more likely to be hindered by their awareness of the rhetorical goal and can be restricted in knowledge transformation. In Galbraith's research, the coherence of drafts was more evident for low self-monitors than high self-monitors (2009). As such the writer has to be continually mindful of the assignment task and the required outcomes. The characteristic of an academic assignment is that it includes analysis, evaluation and synthesis together within an argument about the given topic under discussion as part of the task. The challenge for the learner is to incorporate all of these elements, including practice illustrations and evidence from the literature, which makes for a demanding cognitive task.

For those writers who engage in planning prior to text production, the planning phase represents the first stage in externalising these ideas into diagrams or notes. The notes may be made up of single words or whole paragraphs of text dependent on the writer's approach, which are then followed by the ordering and structuring of these to respond to the assignment task. Each of the participants utilised a highly individualised approach and these often changed throughout the course of their studies in terms of volume and method of planning; with some learners using very minimal planning at the beginning, involving an approach of recursively conceptually planning, translating and reviewing at each section, as described earlier, and were termed as low planners. The writers who plan for a whole assignment prior to composition were referred to as high planners. The radar graph data show the extent of the differences between the low planners and the high planners (20 point difference) across the sample. For the final tutorial the radar graph shows that the three lowest planners (Tom, Zoe, Amber) scored zero for planning which was categorised as not having commented on planning in that tutorial. This negative data may be interpreted that the learners did not view planning as a core aspect of their writing processes which correlates with the low

scores for the other tutorials. The learners who scored the lowest for planning also scored the highest for grades overall. This correlates with the findings from Galbraith (2009) where those achieving higher grades must, therefore, be able to show analysis, evaluation and synthesis in their work and which represent higher cognitive skills. As such, the higher level cognitive skills indicate transformational learning in line with the rhetorical goal of the assignment.

Tom planned the least, scoring five in the radar graph. He commented that:

> *'I think you can spend too long planning something and it gets lost in the essay, so I kind of think now I just try and start writing or…and see what evolves from it, and then actually look up if- if, cos my essay might take me a whole different direction than it would do if I was planning it'* (Transcript 3, Tom).

Tom acknowledged here the role of knowledge transformation in the writing process, rather than knowledge telling. His need for the writing to '*evolve*' points to the organic nature of the writing process for him and was significant to the deep learning approach that he demonstrated. This organic approach to text production means that a plan was purposeless where he can spend too much time in creating one that then became surplus to requirement as the composition gets underway. Likewise, Zoe's perception of the role of the plan was one that in tutorial 2 had become a constraint rather than a supporting process:

> *'That worked for me* [previously having a plan], *but then I feel like I have cheated a bit, that's why I am really pleased with the mark, because I didn't really have a plan as such, I just sort of jumped ship and left it, if that makes sense on that one'* (Transcript 2, Zoe).

Zoe's feeling of '*jumping ship'* or moving away from having a plan outlined her sense that planning was part of the process and that she needed to continue to do it, using the word '*cheated*' as an expression of this. Her sense of not following the plan caused her to feel she had 'cheated', especially as she got 72% for the assignment referred to.

The notion of 'cheating' is interesting and may be attributed to the pedagogy within the academy and formal schooling which points to using a detailed plan to write. Here Zoe indicates that because she had not undertaken this, that she had not followed the identified practice to writing and had therefore 'cheated'. Zoe's perception of having 'cheated' was underpinned by her belief about the processes of writing (Lavelle & Guarino, 2003, p. 296). This may be a powerful insight into how pedagogical approaches in formal education may constrain rather than support early academic writers which was evident in Zoe's commentary. On the other hand, Zoe's response was different to Tom's approach which was more accepting of the pragmatics of time alongside his understanding of the way he worked most effectively to produce text. I used the opportunity of the tutorial to reassure Zoe that a plan was only necessary if it was supportive of the writing process. At this stage of the programme, I felt that Zoe was unsure of what was a successful strategy, irrespective of the high grade achieved for an assignment where she had not stuck to her plan. Zoe declared the need to have everything organised in her head before she started the writing process, *'I wanna like understand it myself in my head before I try to write it'* (Transcript 3, Zoe). She had a need *'to sort of think I know it before I go for it'* (Transcript 2, Zoe). The time spent thinking about the ideas she had along with the reading she had undertaken was often captured through the use of an audiotape. Zoe is a single mother who has a young son who had been ill (Appendix B) who demanded much of her time, her physical and mental energy. She talked to me about a strategy where she used an audio tape to capture the ideas she had so that she did not forget them. The externalising of ideas using a verbal means is a form of planning, or thinking through the ideas under scrutiny. Zoe frequently did this when she returned home from BGU taught sessions and her mind was full of ideas. In tutorial 2, she recalled:

'When I have my uni night, because you are so busy thinking of planning for work or what's in my [her son's name] *routine kind of thing, as so as you come back it sort of refreshes you a bit when you're sat and you hear the input of everyone else* [in class]*, you have all these ideas start going off, and I know that I will get home, start thinking about uniforms and forget, sort of thing. So I do go to my dad, 'this is what I've done, this is what', and he's like, why aren't you recording it, so I record my conversation with my dad and it's him going 'yep, mmmm', and not really saying anything, but it's just getting it all out'* (Transcript 2, Zoe).

'And I can just keep playing it through and think, that's what I was thinking, that's what I wanted to go down and its clearer than… because you can write notes and look back and think, well what was the point of me… do you know what I mean? What was the point of that? When you say it, I think it…' (Transcript 2, Zoe).

The demand on Zoe's memory was assisted through the use of an audiotape to enable the recall of ideas and prevented cognitive overload. She expressed some concern that even despite having the audio recording that she still '*lost focus'* when composing the text and did not stick to her original ideas. Like Tom, she showed evidence of organically creating writing from ideas generated from practice, the literature and taught sessions on the programme where her thinking was changed through the process of writing. Although unlike Tom, she was less confident to relinquish prior planning altogether despite its diminishing purpose for her.

Rose, Lucy and Mary showed a decrease in planning overall. Rose was the second highest for planning across the sample and seventh for grades overall which again showed correlation between levels of prior planning and grade outcome. In the second tutorial, there appeared to be a recognisable change in the way that Rose approached her writing where there were two written assignments as part of the module. She discussed how when there was more than one written assignment piece

to be undertaken, how she had had to approach them differently to other module assessments in the respect of having more limited use of planning. For the first assignment in this module, Rose just wrote a first draft without a plan. However, on re-reading it, she was close to deleting the whole draft and thought it was '*tosh*' (Transcript 2, Rose) but due to time pressures of nearing the submission date, she decided to seek support from a tutor to assist her in editing it. This proved successful and after some revision of the draft and the inclusion of some further additions, the work achieved 57%. Rose talked about how she felt relieved that she had not discarded the first draft to start again. In the second assignment for this module, Rose had again abandoned the usual strategy of a big poster plan that would take many weeks to generate, and used a 'brainstormy plan' instead that she commented she was '*not immersed in*', or busy highlighting as previously was her strategy. However, she remained dissatisfied with this is an effective writing approach as, to her, the writing lacked focus:

> '*So I'd done my planning, so I knew you know, which bits were going to go in which sections, blah blah blah, and I had written, I don't know how many words, and I just thought, I'm just going a bit waffle –y again, so I just sat down and just thought, no just on another complete sheet of paper, just write down what it is you want to say and that, kind of, focused me a little bit more, but it didn't necessarily cut out all of the waffle like I wanted it to, which is why I think I keep coming back to thinking, get it done a week before so I…so somebody can look at it and go 'yeah just cut out that waffle-y section', cut out that and focus, you know, because I feel like for this report I'd focussed well. And I managed to cut out the waffle-ness, but maybe that will just come with practice*' (Transcript 2, Rose).

Rose's perception of a lack of focus resonated with Zoe and suggested discomfort with the organic nature of the writing process despite the success of the overall grade. The time spent in the revision stage was significant and will be discussed further in subsequent sections of this chapter. Despite her unease of moving away from a detailed plan, Rose did show evidence of reducing the amount of planning that was

undertaken overall, reducing from a large A3 detailed plan to more of a list as evidenced in the final tutorial:

> *'I have my plan- and I have my… my kind of list of things that I know I've got to include, and I'll lots of little quotes and things that I know I've got to pull in'* (Transcript 4, Rose).

Mary scored highly for planning at the first tutorial (score=7), and scored zero for tutorials 2 and 3 which skews the data for this category overall, however this offers an interesting insight where the final score for planning in tutorial 4 (score= 4) which showed a decrease in planning between first and final tutorials. She declared in the first tutorial that she used her practice as a starting point for her writing and the generation of ideas where she could. She used academic reading, particularly the identified directed reading for taught sessions, and the internet to generate a rough plan. Mary commented that at this stage which aspects of the literature would be included at each section of the assignment within the plan, ensuring that she offered a range of perspectives where possible. Mary explained that she used a range of books to think about a concept, especially if she found one challenging to understand and sought out this in another text to see if she could comprehend the concept better written by another author. Mary's approach to planning drew in a range of sources in the idea generation phase that supported her understandings and a map of these provided the template for the translation phase. Mary did not discuss whether her ideas changed in the process of prior planning to text production, or in the composition phase itself, unlike Tom and Zoe, although she ranks fifth for grades which indicated that she was able to demonstrate analysis, evaluation and synthesis in her writing overall. The negative data is relevant here and requires acknowledgment as what was not stated in a tutorial, does not necessarily mean that this approach to writing was not undertaken.

Rachel scored the highest for planning, the lowest for academic confidence and eleventh for grade average across the sample. Her dyslexia made the structuring of her ideas more challenging. The structural aspects of her writing may be attributed to her planning strategy:

> *'…um, but if I do a plan and then start writing, and then do another bit of a plan, and then write again, it seems to work, um…'* (Transcript 1, Rachel).

This approach meant that Rachel planned for and wrote a small section, reviewed it the following day and then repeated this process for the next section. She explained that this strategy had been due to the differences of writing between Further Education (FE) College and HE:

> *'… cos these, this, words count is um, bigger obviously than when I was at college, and there was like different little bits in college rather than at uni it's just one big… um, so I kinda just thought if I do the introduction, right that out, and then different one…, I find it easier that way'* (Transcript 1, Rachel).

In order to manage the larger word count in assignments from when she was at FE College to an HE programme, Rachel segmented the whole essay structure into smaller sections that were seen as stand-alone units of writing. This strategy was in some aspects similar to the organic and recursive strategy used by Tom and Zoe although given Rachel's grade profile by comparison required closer scrutiny. Whilst supporting the generation of writing, through sectioning the content, Rachel's approach inhibited a holistic structure within the assignment task. It also became clear that the sections of writing were not necessarily undertaken in any linear, cohesive way such as introduction, central points, conclusion etc. as evidenced in the final tutorial where she stated '*I just kind of did it a little bit here and there'* (Transcript 4, Rachel).

Rachel's approach to embedding sources from wider reading into assignments was that she would often centralise a point around a quote that she had found:

'I know there's um, there's a bit in a certain book so I'll look at that when I have time to look at the book, and then add my quote in. Um, or sometimes I'll see the quote first and then write around the quote' (Transcript 1, Rachel).

She commented that she felt that she knew what she wanted to say overall when she started an assignment:

'I think I know in my head what I am trying to say overall, so that I stay on the same line. And then at the conclusion if I've written it and think, I can change that bit so it agrees with that bit then I'll change it round a bit. But yeah, I tend to have a …when I read the question of the assignment, I tend to think 'actually yeah, if this is my overall thought, my conclusion, I'd write it from there' (Transcript 2, Rachel).

In contrast to Zoe and Tom whose strategies were more organic to planning, composing and reviewing, Rachel's approach frequently centred on specific quotes which her writing was built around and with a fixed end point identified by her overall idea from the start, or 'future' text (Chanquoy, 2009). She did state that she would change her conclusion if needed at the end pointing to some idea generation away from her original plan. In tutorial 3, Rachel commented that she used the Guidance Leaflets obtained from Learning Development tutors related to writing introductions and conclusions which she had found helpful in getting the '*right information in*' and not '*going off on a tangent*' (Transcript 3, Rachel). In the last tutorial, Rachel was receiving support each week for written assignments and the Learning Development tutor was structuring the workload into sections where Rachel was tasked with completing these on a week by week basis. She commented on how this had helped her organise herself:

'I think that's what I needed as well to be fair [to have support]*, cos otherwise- I just kind of did it a little bit here and there, I was like 'oh I don't really, no one's gonna see it until the end so I can just leave that little bit, I've started it but don't need to finish it'* (Transcript 4, Rachel).

The external demand of the tutor, or general academic literacy broker (Lillis & Curry, 2006, p. 14) (see page 53), created the structure for Rachel in terms of organising her time as well as the content of the writing, building this in a linear, cohesive way. A further challenge for Rachel driven by her dyslexia was reading as Epting et al. (2013) make clear of the links between proficient readers and competent writers. As previously discussed Rachel found reading difficult and wore pink tinted glasses to support her. Her difficulties with reading would not enable further ideas to emerge beyond her direct understandings and this inhibited the potential for transformational writing and learning as she was restricted to knowledge telling.

The participants who demonstrated the highest for planning across the sample who were ranked in the top five in this category, correlated with those who achieved the lower grades, with the exception of Laura who was positioned at mid-point in the ranking, at sixth. Laura discussed with me that she made copious notes during taught sessions which she used for writing assignments and became anxious when she was distracted from doing this by others talking in the class:

> *'If I write them in enough detail they're useful, if I just write brief notes I haven't got a clue what I've written it for, um, so I have to be quite thorough with what I write, so if anyone distracts me in a lecture it drives me…up the wall, because I know if I don't get enough information down it's gone'* (Transcript 2, Laura).

She claimed that not only was the information '*gone*' but it was '*lost forever*' (Transcript 2, Laura) if she did not write detailed notes. This awareness of self and the need to achieve optimal engagement with the task showed distinct strategies to supporting the goal of undertaking assessments. In the first tutorial, she declared a change in strategy where she had written a lot of notes that would '*not make any sense to anyone*' (Transcript 1, Laura) and then spent time linking theoretical frameworks to these. By the second tutorial, this strategy had altered to exploring the literature to link with her practice rather than her notes. In the third and final tutorial, Laura stated that she used a combination of her notes from sessions, her reading and

also the assessment criteria to shape the plans she made. The progressive changes in strategies at the planning stage prior to text production demonstrated increased understanding of the rhetorical goal, in using the assessment criteria, academic literature and practice as linked drivers for idea generation typical of the planning stage. At the composition phase, Laura commented that she used the plan, although that there remained an element of there being an organic fluidity to the text production stage especially when faced with difficulties in accurately referencing sources:

> *'I get- I get… my ideas from reading…I kind of set out with an idea in mind, and then I get my ideas, but there's been some stuff where…I completely lost the reference for it, so I've just taken the section out, I can't stress myself about it, I can't think 'I've got to rewrite this whole section because that bit doesn't quite fit, I'll just take it out', I just…I can't do the pressure on myself to think: 'well that's what I wanted to do and I've got to do it, and I've got to find a way', cos I've been there and I've done it, and it didn't work, so just as I go…'* (Transcript 4, Laura).

Like Tom and Zoe, Laura retained some flexibility away from her plan in the composition phase, although for different reasons. Her goal was to write her first draft all out in one without much editing as she went along. She claimed that this allowed for reflection of the whole draft rather than doing it '*bit by bit'* (Transcript 4, Laura) and Laura made clear that this allowed the ideas to flow and that she could achieve the prescribed word count, if not more, relatively easily. Laura's strategy of undertaking a detailed approach to the prior planning before the composition stage indicated a high planner and the grade profile she achieved presents an anomaly in the data in some ways. The organic changes triggered through the loss of a reference points more to a focus on the technical aspect of the writing process rather than transformational learning. Like Mary, Laura may have not disclosed the transformational learning in the tutorials which was evident from her grade profile; she may not have had an awareness of this; or alternatively, the transformation learning may have taken place in the planning phase where she had made new links

and connections through the creation of the '*copious notes'* that she described rather than in the translation phase.

The approaches to planning were varied across the sample, however there were some patterns that have emerged and correlate, in the main, with Galbraith's (2009) proposition that more limited prior planning to the translating stage allows for a greater transformation of knowledge in the process of writing and which has implications for future pedagogical strategies.

4.7   Translation Phase

All of the participants generated some sort of pre-writing structure either in their heads, in brief words on a page, a diagram or copious notes. The quantity and mode of capturing these ideas varied from learner to learner. The translation of ideas from a plan into a first draft requires the formation of these into writing and this, according to Badley (2009, p. 212) is a 'constructive and creative process of learning and transforming what we know'. Dam–Jensen and Heine (2013, p. 91) describe the composition of a text as a 'design activity' where the 'text producer's level of competence, memory, knowledge and logical and creative skills' are conditions for a successful draft of text. I have previously discussed levels of competence, memory and knowledge and, to some degree, argued that writing is a 'messy, iterative process' (Cameron et al., 2009, p. 207) (see page 59). For those that were more successful writers, as defined by assignment grades for this study, there was more evidence that the process involved recursive 'loops' (Dam- Jensen & Heine, 2013, p. 93) of planning, composing, reviewing of cognition into a structured, cohesive text. These feedback loops have resonance with concepts in complexity theory as discussed on page 49. The loops that Dam-Jensen & Heine describe are not undertaken in a linear way, rather the central executive decides on which process at which point in the writing is required. In the process of enacting these loops, Epting et al. (2013, p. 247) suggest

that writers show evidence in their research of having what they term as 'pause associated edits' where the writer literally takes a pause to undertake 'psychologically relevant activities like covert planning and editing'. The pauses are more prevalent in those writers who are composing on the computer. Pauses, according to Epting et al. (2013), when the writer is word-processing on a computer are shorter than those for a handwriter, but that there are more of them than for those writers using pen and paper to handwrite. Pauses in the translation of ideas into text are relevant to the participants who were all required to submit their written assignments in an electronically, word-processed format.

In the first tutorial Mary, Philippa, Isobel and Amber discussed how they had had a steep learning curve to start writing their assignments straight onto the computer. Word processing skills are an important aspect of learning at HE and for these learners, who are also the oldest participants within the sample, changing from writing by hand, had been a difficult transition. Amber hand wrote the first assignment in the first year and then typed the first draft onto the computer. She realised that this approach was unsustainable due to time and she acknowledged that typing straight onto the computer had been easier for subsequent assignments. She had learnt to cut and paste references that she had used before, that she used again into a reference list. Amber was aware that she was '*not very computer literate really*' (Transcript 1, Amber). Word processing can relieve the demands for the secretarial aspects of writing; handwriting, spelling and grammar and supports the reviewing phase of the text with the cut and paste facilities as Amber described. Mary stated that she did things '*old school*' (Transcript 1, Mary) and handwrote the first full draft, like Amber, before transferring this onto the computer. However, unlike Amber, Mary did not alter this process until the final assessments in year one:

> '*Instead of* [handwriting], *it was just like, instead of down the pen it was- yeah- I thought 'no', move on girl, that's how I did those two*' (Transcript 2, Mary)*.*

She acknowledged that she had *'moved on'* and in year two discussed the purchase of a devise which could scan quotations from a text and then be imported into her work which she felt saved her more time as she was relieved from having to type the quotation out herself.

In contrast to Mary and Amber, for Isobel the difficulty of writing on the computer had interrupted the flow of the translating process and she had to force herself to write directly onto the computer:

> *'That is how it flows naturally* [writing by hand] *and I have struggled to do it straight on to the computer but that is something I have forced myself to do so it had slowed me down initially, definitely, but it was worth insisting with myself that I do because I would never have go to the point where…because I can now sit and just think it straight onto the keyboard, which I couldn't before'* (Transcript 2, Isobel).

Isobel's persistence had been worthwhile as she identified here although she had been resistant in this change:

> *'…it's been a really big battle for me',* because I love handwriting, you know, for me it's quite a cathartic sort of feeling, you know, and you look at the page and 'oh isn't it nice'…so that detachment was quite a difficult transition…and I feel much more comfortable to be able to sit and type, like whereas I think of before, that sense of any flow, I didn't have originally with sitting at the computer…I, you know, it is there to some degree'* (Transcript 3, Isobel).

The notion of *'a really big battle'* was deeply connected to the emotional aspects of writing for Isobel where she declared a *'cathartic'* pleasure in seeing her handwriting on a page. The physical connection of undertaking handwriting rather than typing was interesting for a dyslexic learner such as Isobel as much of the support offered at BGU lies in the form of the provision of a laptop and often with software that is voice activated to relinquish the demands of typing, or handwriting. This was at odds with Isobel's declared pleasure in undertaking handwriting. This may be linked to the visual

pleasure of seeing a personalised representation of hand written text on a page, and also where technical errors in handwriting are less prevalent according to Mangen et al. (2015, p. 229) than on the keyboard. The mechanics of resolving errors in spelling and grammar may limit the aesthetic pleasure of writing that Isobel enjoys. The visual demand of watching the keyboard for more novice typists rather than the creation of the text on screen where the visibility of the writing is immediately affected is a potential difficulty for some writers (Galbraith, 1992). For Isobel, her dyslexia may have affected the ability to move between the keyboard and the screen and therefore the translation of her ideas into text which supports her preference for handwritten text.

The pauses in writing described by Mangen et al. (2015) are relevant to other learners as, for some participants these pauses became prolonged and can be termed as writer's blocks in the translating stage. In the tutorial 1 Mariea spoke about staying inside all day just trying to find a way to write the first assessment. She ended up stopping working on the assignment with the hope that a change of environment and activity would allow her the space to be able to return to do the task. She talked about going out in her car and then driving back, very fast, with music blaring and the windows down and how this helped her to refocus herself:

> *'...but I needed that, I needed to get the cobwebs off, but I kind of got to the roundabout and thought 'right I'm going home now, I've got an essay to write', and I felt like a completely different person, as opposed to getting up and looking at it and staring at it and thinking, I just put it down now, I'd go 'right, if I write 100 words, I can have a malteser'* (Transcript 1, Mariea).

The breaking down of the task into smaller steps in writing one hundred words which was followed by a reward is an important aspect of her management of the task of translation of her ideas into text. Mariea was clear that the strategy of leaving the assignment and doing something else was successful as she achieved a high grade for this work:

> *'So yeah, it definitely worked for me, that did. And like you say, you know I've got* [her daughter] *and I work five days a week, and I got 67%, I'm like 'come on'* (Transcript 1, Mariea).

The struggle that Mariea disclosed with the first assessment was significant as it allowed for her to realise that she needed to adapt her strategy to writing the assignment into small sections at a time. Mariea ranked at second from the bottom in the radar graph data for the translating category, although this was somewhat misrepresentative due to a score of zero in the third tutorial where she did not disclose her strategies for translating at this stage. The other three tutorials, she was graded at five which indicated that she knew what she wanted to say but could not write (Appendix F) it exactly as in her head. She managed to write, but she was not content it was as she wanted it to be. As with the other marks of zero, if it was assumed that translating was not worthy of note by the participant, then Mariea would also score a five, placing her at third in the ranking overall. Third would indicate that Mariea found translating relatively easy beyond the first tutorial when she changed her approach.

Philippa also shared the demands of the written task at the composition stage and of having writer's block. In the first tutorial, she commented on the distress she felt at not being able to translate her ideas into text and she talked about this being a recurring issue where she had been returning to taught session notes and tutors' PowerPoint presentations to try to trigger some starting points:

> *'I've found again, because I've just had this block I've been looking at, on my iPad, um, actually from the first one, um… the constructivist theories, just to sort of go through the PowerPoint's, just to see if anything, just to try and get something working, because I've just, yeah it's um… yeah I think at the weekend I did nearly cry, I just thought… just purely because I thought 'I know it's there but I just can't'…'* (Transcript 1, Philippa).

Her frustration was tangible at being unable to organise her ideas into a written format. Philippa stated that she had been looking at academic sources to see how

introductions were framed so that she could mirror these as a starting point. I shared with Philippa that this was an effective strategy of using the literature as a model for an academic writing style and as a way into beginning writing. This 'pause' (Epting et al., 2013, p. 242) that Philippa described generated a powerful emotional response as it becomes her struggle. She also stated some sense in the pleasure of these sorts of challenges as she acknowledged the power of them in forcing her to make sense of them:

> *'And, again, it sounds really silly, but I'm liking to have that experience, it probably sounds really silly because it's how you work through it sort of thing'* (Transcript 1, Philippa).

The capacity to remain motivated and work through to resolving a challenge is a key aspect of transformational learning (Taylor & Jarecke, 2009, p. 283) where learners are led to the edge and in doing so learners are most susceptible to new learning. The programme demands of certain timeframes for work to complete assignments at a particular level of competency may be perceived as setting the 'edge'. Philippa showed two key elements in transformational learning in fortitude and 'agency' (Archer, 2003). She demonstrated fortitude and motivation to continue to seek out strategies to support her writing, and also agency where she felt emotionally rewarded from managing the challenge that she faced where these were mutually reinforcing. The notion of agency is linked to self-efficacy as previously discussed on page 50 and forms a key concept in the data. The task environment that surrounds the context for the writing is bound within the motivation that Philippa felt to continue to find approaches to her writing which I argue was intrinsically interconnected with her feelings of self as an academic and also as a professional.

Philippa showed commitment to her role as a practitioner, evident in her narrative during the tutorials, and what she did to support the children in her care, as with Zoe. She used practice as her starting point for assignments and declared that she provided too much emotional commentary:

'so there is a lot of emotion because it's what you believe in, and you're trying to sort of say 'look this is…', and then your sort of doubts, so obviously when you're trying to write that and take emotion out, that is quite difficult' (Transcript 2, Philippa).

'I think with a work based degree, you're sort of putting a lot of your experience in, you know the emotion, like the tutors keep saying 'take the emotion out', and I get that now, you just need that little bit of information, and then it's what you build around it with all the theorists and actually, that is actually very interesting' (Transcript 2, Philippa).

The rhetorical goal, for Philippa, was to exclude the emotion. The demand for an objective academic discussion was initially difficult when she felt she wrote about what she '*believes in*'. This had some resonance with Zoe's notion of 'cold' words as discussed earlier and a professional commitment to reflecting on practice in an authentic way in assignments. The impact of the rhetorical demands of the task, in this case objectivity, established in HE to support deep thinking may indeed, for some writers, inhibit the capacity for writing to be transformational. However, this can be approached through a different process of writing where the writer is encouraged to just write the first draft in an uninhibited way to 'release' the ideas without hindrance or monitoring against the rhetorical goal such as Elbow (1981) describes. The crafting to meet the rhetorical goal can then become evident in the editing and revision process.

'Pausing' (Epting et al., 2013) during the writing process allowed for learners such as Zoe to plan, compose and review recursively throughout the process of text production. The pauses may be used to read and return to literature to support links and ideas under focus. Zoe commented that her strategy of continuing to read allowed her ideas to develop in the process of writing although it tended to slow down the drafting stage, and left her with little time to review the work as a whole. She found that she rushed her work at the end:

> *'I just find it really interesting that I do all this reading, find other sources for it, and I've just gone so into it that it's just gone totally away from the point and I've just sat there and thought 'oh my god what a waste of time'* (Transcript 1, Zoe).

She used the word '*focus*' eight times in the first tutorial and she perceived this more organic, potentially transformative approach to writing as lacking in focus. This has resonance with the lack of transparency about purposeful writing processes for knowledge transformation, where Zoe's perceptions about successful writing approaches were at odds with those of more proficient academic writers (Cameron et al., 2009). The process of allowing writing to emerge meant that Zoe generated a lot of text, some of which she was concerned was not always in line with the assessment task, which she then had the challenge of revising and editing to meet the word count constraints of the assignment task and this took time. The rhetorical demand of the word count provided some restriction at the end of the process of completing a full draft in order to reduce the text. Zoe was ranked as sixth out of the sample of twelve participants for translating, although her score was relatively static (5, 6, 5, 5) across the four tutorials indicating that for Zoe her strategy towards translating her ideas did not change despite her concerns with her approach, as she reiterated in tutorial 3:

> *'I find it difficult to write things and piece it together, I kind of just have to start and write the whole thing, if that makes sense, I can't just put things in so I sort of build it up and then just go for it…'* (Transcript 3, Zoe).

At the last tutorial, Zoe shared with me that time pressures still presented the most challenge to organising her thinking:

> *'That's kind of what- I hate that feeling, and I hate like that kind of: 'ah piecing it together, panicky', and it gets done- I've always done it- even if I stay up all night, it's always done. But it's not the point, it's not kind of how you do your best writing, is it?'* (Transcript 4, Zoe).

Time was a constraint for Zoe and she spoke, in the first year and then again in tutorial 4 with being '*panicky*' and of the anxiety she felt when under time pressures. She

acknowledged that trying to get the assignment completed was not productive when she was feeling constrained. Time was clearly a challenge for work-based learners, many of whom are also managing their families, like Zoe, alongside their studies. In managing her time to make it the most productive that she could Zoe had, over the course of the two years, tried various strategies to find ways to undertake the assignment such as coming into University with her son, although she felt it was not fair to have him with her for six hours while she studied (Transcript 3, Zoe). As a way around this, she had tried to separate her studies from her home life and came into the library alone to study:

> *'It sounds really selfish doesn't it, but I do really enjoy- I do just like sitting and studying, and it is that time to just…yeah I really like that'* (Transcript 4, Zoe)*.*

The task environment was critical for Zoe to undertake the assignment and to have the space, both mentally and physically, to write. Zoe did, however, acknowledge that at the end of the first year when she only had a week to complete an assignment she got the highest grade. Conversely, her disclosed anxiety at completing written assignments under pressure, in this instance, had been purposeful in terms of the grade she received. Leading Zoe 'to the edge' (Taylor & Jarecke, 2009, p. 283) was indeed a core component for transformational learning.

The radar graph data show that Tom scored the highest in the sample in the translating criteria where he was able to complete the first draft with relative ease, and showed evidence that the quality of the first drafts he produced improved in the second year. He discussed how the process of writing allowed for new ideas to emerge and, in the final tutorial, that he was more organised to leave a week between the first draft and returning to read it through:

> *'…and a lot of different ideas came out of it, giving it the time and putting it down for a week or so…and coming back to it and thinking 'oh I may have missed that out'…and I thought it was much better'* (Transcript 4, Tom).

Having a gap between text production and reviewing the draft had enabled a freshness of insight to edit his work to improve the quality of the ideas that he was representing and resonates with Chanquoy (2009) as discussed on page 97. Isobel and Rachel score the lowest across the sample for translating and this may be attributed to their disclosed dyslexia.

The process of translating ideas and composing these into a coherent, objective, well evidenced discussion that includes argumentation through the use of analysis, evaluation and synthesis is a complex, demanding cognitive task. The multiple contexts and environments that the writer is sited within effects the text production as evidenced by the participants. The remaining process for consideration and discussion is the reviewing stage. Whilst the final draft is frequently reviewed, the process of editing, revising and reviewing text may occur at any stage.

4.8   Review, Revision and Editing

The processes of reviewing, as I have defined this stage (see page 96), are multiple and 'cognitively complex' (Chanquoy, 2009, p. 80). It was also defined, for the purposes of this study, as the reviewing, or evaluation, of the text itself. However, I am mindful that reviewing of ideas prior to text generation could also be included in this definition although has not been considered as part of the analysis of the data. Examining text that has already been produced involves multiple layers of scrutiny in relation to the compositional and secretarial aspects of the writing where the text and the meaning are changed, added to and transformed to better reflect the writer's perceived 'future' text (Chanquoy, 2009, p. 87). These aspects may be multiply undertaken and at varied points during the text production and can be termed as local or global dependent on the stage undertaken (ibid.). Local refers to the revision being undertaken at paragraph or section levels and global indicates the revision of the text as a whole. Word processing can assist the reviewing of the secretarial aspects of the text through the

tools of spell and grammar check for example. The reviewing process requires critical reflection and evaluation of the text itself as it stands alongside the 'future' text of what is aspired to and aligned with the rhetorical goal of the assignment. Many writers draw on the assistance of literacy brokers (Lillis & Curry, 2006) (see page 53) to review all or specific aspects of the text defined by their perceived expertise and availability. The seeking out of a literacy broker by the participants was of interest as it marked an acknowledgement by the writer that mediation at this stage was worthwhile. Although this was balanced, for the writer, against the exposure of sharing an unfinished, by definition if it is prior to submission, draft. Likewise, the diagnosis of the need for support was also relevant where the writer was able to detect that revision was required alongside recognising that the use of a literacy broker might be purposeful. The use of literacy brokers was a key criterion in the analysis of the data and where multiple brokers were used by learners, a high score was given (6 and 7) determined by the criteria from the data for this category. All of the learners used at least one literacy broker at some stage in the two years of the programme, some with regularity and others such as Tom, used them infrequently and diminishingly. Across the sample, literacy brokers were largely drawn from family members such as parents (Rachel, Lucy, Laura, Zoe), siblings (Tom, Louise), their children (Isobel, Amber, Philippa), friends (Mary, Mariea), partners or neighbours (Lucy, Rose). Lillis and Curry (2006, p. 14) term these as nonprofessionals as literacy brokers due to writers' personal relationship with their reviewer and along with perceived knowledge, of the reviewer by the writer, of the technical aspects of writing; spelling, grammar etc. The role of this category of literacy broker used by the participants was more as proof reader than editor for many as the nonprofessional lacks the discipline knowledge to support a review of the content of the essay, and some of the participants reported this, for example Amber and Mariea. Mariea was the first member in her family to attend University and faced some resistance from them towards her studies as discussed earlier. A challenge for her was in seeking wider support beyond BGU for assistance with her academic writing. For Mariea, the final draft was sent to various

literacy brokers; a woodwork teacher from her secondary school who Mariea was still in contact with, and a friend who was doing a Masters degree. Her former teacher proof read her work to see that it made 'sense' and the friend checked that the references were accurate. Occasionally Mariea's friend, who was doing a social work Masters degree would identify further reading or theoretical concepts for further exploration. The available help from these two people offered Mariea reassurance and provided important emotional and practical support. She commented towards the end of the first year in tutorial 2 that she thought that she did not now need so much of the support from her friend, whose Masters programme was coming to an end. However, she felt the need for her former teacher, who had a daughter two years younger than Mariea, to remain involved with her writing:

> *'Yeah as long as he is happy to, because sometimes you do*
> *feel like you are putting on him, it's ultimately not his but I*
> *trust him, he saved me really when I was at school, I would*
> *have got no GCSE's if it wasn't for that man and I owe him*
> *a lot'* (Transcript 2, Mariea).

Significant others, or literacy brokers, are a critical aspect to all writers although particularly for novice writers in the academy. Mariea used these specifically for different aspects of her work, acknowledging their limitations in contributing to the content of the text; rather their focus was largely on textual and mechanical aspects of writing such as referencing. A key aspect of the support provided by Mariea's former teacher was emotional and Mariea commented that:

> *'…he is the one that will say, 'come on,* [Mariea's surname]
> *you can do it' you know'* (Transcript 2, Mariea).

Where in other aspects of her life Mariea was lacking that sustained support for her studies, this literacy broker felt to be a significant other. In the second year, Mariea discussed feeling embarrassed to ask for help with proof reading from her woodwork teacher as she felt it was an imposition when he was busy:

'I- I'm really conscious that I'm wasting people's time and that, like you just said, life's really busy and you're on the go all the time, you know, like I don't want to be a burden to anyone' (Transcript 3, Mariea).

She acknowledged that the last assignment she had submitted had not been proof read by him and which had received a failed grade, as such Mariea was clear that she needed to re-establish this support. The barriers to accessing literacy brokers are many; availability both in terms of suitability and physically; having the time management to send a draft out early enough for the work to be reviewed; and having the confidence to send early drafts to reviewers.

Tom scored the highest out of the sample for reviewing, as with many of the categories in the data, although interestingly, he did not consistently use a literacy broker throughout the two years. In the first year, Tom's sister who was a year ahead of him on the programme read his work. In the second year Tom asked his manager who completed the programme in 2013, with a first class honours degree and who is currently doing a Masters degree, to review one of his essays. Both literacy brokers became problematic as Tom declared that it was the first time that he had *'asked for help'* (Transcript 2, Tom) from his sister. When the roles reversed at the end of his first year of study and his sister asked Tom to read her work, Tom was less comfortable with this dynamic between them and opted for not using a literacy broker until the second module of the second year. In asking his manager to read his work, Tom was risking a judgement on his academic work that may have spilled over into his professional role due to the power dynamic in this relationship. For this particular essay, he had not left enough time and three days prior to the final submission deadline, he sent the work to his sister for the first time in the second year, and then when she had not got the time to review it given the timeframe, he sent it to his manager:

'I sent it to my sister, I send- I send pretty much everything I send to my sister, although I didn't my first one [first assignment in the second year]- *I felt confident in my first one and I thought 'you know what, I'm gonna stand on my own feet, I don't need* [sister's name]*', and got a pretty good grade for it which I felt….and this one just because with the time constraint I wasn't feeling confident, I sent it to my sister…who I didn't…she had* [her partner] *over at the time so she said 'I don't think I can look at it', so I sent it to* [manager's name]*, and I wish I didn't, she pulled it apart and…made me feel even worse about what it was, but then she was right, I got a bad grade for it'* (Transcript 3, Tom).

Tom was not specific about whether the '*pulling apart'* was related to the composition of the essay and the conceptual content, or the more technical aspects of his work. His response later outlined that the commentary from his manager related to the content:

'I think it made me less confident because [manager's name] *was going 'well how do you think about this?', I wish…aspects I'd never even thought about…and it- it, yeah, knocked my confidence, because obviously she's operating at such a high level, you know master's degree, with…yeah, it's past me'* (Transcript 3, Tom).

Tom's comments indicated his frustration that he had not considered the aspects of the essay that his manager had raised and that he did not have the time to do anything about developing these within his essay:

'[Tom's manager] *said it basically was missing loads of bits and it got to about eleven o'clock* [at night] *and I thought 'you know what, I can't do anymore', I said 'it's, you know, it's what it is'* (Transcript 3, Tom)*.

The use of literacy brokers for Tom was not sufficiently successful for him to continue and for the remaining time on the programme, he reviewed his own work independently and felt a sense of ownership of this in tutorial 4:

'I tried to do it myself- I tried to do it all myself. I thought, I was confident in it but I didn't feel like I needed someone- because I thought my research project was very much my own work and it was all mine', and I was sort of nurturing this little- this idea into something- I didn't want anyone else's blueprint on it, or them to change things, so I just thought 'we'll see how it goes and do it all myself' (Transcript 4, Tom).

Tom's sense of authorship and wanting his work to be his own makes clear, in many ways, his academic confidence. He declared that he spent the longest time in the reviewing stage for the final assignment where he achieved the highest grade for a written assignment overall (72%). For this piece of writing he had written a section, reviewed it and then had a pause for a few hours before returning to review it again before continuing with the text production. The recursive nature of plan, write, review between pauses allowed for critical reflection of the text at intervals and therefore at local level. Tom scored highly in the radar graph due to his approach overall of iteratively planning, writing and reviewing, along with increased independence to the reviewing process. This linked to his understanding of the rhetorical goal which guided the strategies utilised. As previously discussed, Tom was well aware of the demands of him in academic writing and was, therefore, able to review his writing against these. In turn, I argue that Tom's access to his sister who worked in the early years sector and who had achieved a high level of academic success on the same course, along with his manager, enabled the review of his work beyond the technical features of spelling, referencing etc. and offered a further category of literacy broker beyond that of the nonprofessional identified by Lillis and Curry (2006). Whilst Tom did not feel comfortable with the support he received in the review of his work, the expertise in reviewing his work from literacy brokers who were, indeed, professionals in the sector supported his overall development where discussion with and modelling from his literacy brokers provided the conditions for the transformational learning (Taylor, 2009; Taylor & Jarecke, 2009) seen in his grade profile. There is evidence too that this modelling from the literacy brokers and the subsequent discomfort that Tom felt in

these relationships resulting from this, supported his increased independence in the second year to undertaking this himself.

Lucy achieved the second highest score for the reviewing of her work although she was seventh across the sample for grades. The relationship between grades and the seeking of support was worthy of note as there could be an assumed correlation between the amount of reviewers and the quality of the text generated. Lucy's literacy brokers were typical of the sample in that they were nonprofessionals (Lillis & Curry, 2006) and provided the role of proof reader:

> *'...my husband reads it, cos he's good with grammar cos I can… once you've been looking at it so many times you don't see the commas and the full-stops, so he does that side and I've got my mum, who er… is really good at proof-reading, and she won't tell me what to do, but she goes 'maybe you should just have a look at that bit, and just re-word it, and use er- more academic words, so um… I'm looking at more, I get my thesaurus and I get my books out and I see how people word it, and I try and word it, you know, a bit better'* (Transcript 1, Lucy)*.*

Lucy's approach to assessments did not change over the course of the two years regarding this literacy broker support for reviewing the final draft. She discussed doing her own editing prior to sharing her work with them as once she had the full first draft written, she began to edit and revise, or '*chop and change'* as she described it. Lucy talked about re-reading her work numerous times before giving it to her husband and mother to review. An aspect of Lucy's work in the first year that was continually targeted for development in her feedback was her use of conclusions as she frequently introduced new ideas or theorists in this or did not pull the threads of her argument together sufficiently to conclude the work. She acknowledged this and had been proactive in seeking study skills books to support her with this aspect of writing which suggests a level of agency to problem solve and assume more of the role of reviewer of her own work.

The narratives from the learners revealed how little use was made of the literacy brokers available within the academy for example, Learning Development tutors and module tutors. This may be due to time constraints in that these learners found it challenging to access support given their work commitments and the limited times on campus. There may also be a resistance to 'expose' themselves to academic tutors who ultimately would assess their final submission which was indicative of the perceived power dynamic between learner and tutor. I use the word 'expose' specifically to emphasise the vulnerability that many writers, especially academic writers feel when their work is reviewed by others and is particularly so when by a another who is considered to be the knowledgeable other when the text is not yet the writer's 'future' text in its iteration of early drafts. This is consistent with the notion of academic writing being an 'intellectual striptease' as Caffarella and Barnett (2000, p. 46), as discussed on page 59. Access to a tutor for a fine grain, textual and compositional review of drafts is ironically less likely at undergraduate level than at postgraduate level and this is due, I propose based on anecdotal evidence in my role within the academy, to the increase in student numbers and the time available to offer this guidance. I argue that supporting the development of early drafts is a worthy investment for the writing development of the learner. However, it is not without its challenges for the academy in terms of resources as outlined and is also reliant on the cooperation and willingness of the learner to firstly want to submit a draft text for the reasons discussed and secondly for the learner to be able to submit this in a timely fashion for the feedback discussion to have direct impact, as in Tom's case.

In contrast to Lucy, Louise ranks fourth for academic confidence although ranks ninth for grades and when we discussed her grade profile, triggered by disappointment for the grades for individual assessments, I suggest that she seeks support from module tutors and Learning Development tutors to assist her with this. She pointed out that it was difficult to find the time to meet with them although acknowledged that when she had used module tutors in the past, it had helped her. When we discussed in tutorial 2 what constituted a higher grade for a

written assignment, she commented on being unable to predict her success in assignments prior to submission and then of being surprised or disappointed with the final mark. Her inability to know what qualified as a 'good' piece of academic writing was significant in relation to a high grade. Lillis (2001, p. 54) refers to the metaphors of secrecy that learners in HE are required to negotiate. This secrecy is bound up within assignment briefs, assessment criteria and the overall discourse associated with HE where there is a gap between the learners' and the academy's understandings of academic literacies and this is profoundly evident in the way that Louise uses other sources within her writing. Louise understands that her writing should contain references to reading and in the particular essay she referred to, she told me how hard she had worked on it and that she had put '*double the references'* (Transcript 2, Louise) into this assessment than any other but had received her lowest grade of the year. Louise's desire to do well on the programme without fully understanding quite how this may be achieved is complex and did indeed suggest a gap between the learner's understandings of academic literacies and that of the academy as Lillis (2001) outlines and is discussed on page 13. Where learners did not know, for whatever reason, the demands of the rhetorical task it was challenging for them to review their own writing against this, as for those with a limited academic heritage, a 'future' text (Chanquoy, 2009, p. 83) does not necessarily exist. There is, then, as previously suggested, a case that assignment exemplars offered to students to support their expectations of the assessment would support the development of the 'future' text that Chanquoy (2009) describes despite institutional concerns about plagiarism.

 Cameron et al. (2009) develop the notion of sharing assignment exemplars further in outlining the value of seeing early, messy drafts of their peers and academic staff to show the difference between the re-writes at varied stages. This is necessary to illustrate to the novice academic writer how the text develops over time through the process of review. This, Cameron et al. (2009, p. 272) argue, will allow for

comparisons to the learner's own writing and support the dispelling of the myth that expert writers 'get it right' in the first draft.

The availability of exemplars may have assisted Isobel whose inertia within the translating and reviewing stage prevented her from submitting her assignments as previously illustrated. She acknowledged in tutorial 2 that the structure of her work presented the difficulties where she produced a text that was in excess of the word count allocated for the assignment, as with Laura. The reviewing phase required her to reduce the size of the text and effectively re-structure her work:

> *'I just cut and paste and organise it and I didn't feel that I had even got to the point where I had got even the basis of what I was really wanting to try and say with the case study'* (Transcript 2, Isobel)*.*

The comment about not getting to the '*basis*' of what she wanted to say was relevant and reiterated a previous comment of reviewing a text of 4000 words that should have been 2000 words and she stated *'I'm thinking 'oh it just isn't what I'm expecting it to be'* (Transcript 2, Isobel). The impact of undertaking the text production and it not being near to her perceived or 'future' text, evidenced through her commentary meant that she could not accept the work as it was and failed to submit. In tutorial 3, Isobel showed self-reflection where she acknowledged that in allowing sufficient time to review her writing, particularly once a full draft had been written was critical to her success as a writer:

> *'So I can recognise now, like when I look back at the piece of work I can see really clearly the things like, you know, the last piece of work, after I know that it's finished I can then read it back in the cold light of day and think 'why could I not see at the time?', you know, that certain things needed to have been slotted in that I've missed, or you know, how I could have edited it better, so I know that I've got to learn to adjust my time scale so that- so that I can benefit from that sort of cold analysis after it's, you know, done and dusted'* (Transcript 3, Isobel)*.*

The *'cold light of day'* that Isobel eluded to, suggested the need for a 'pause' (Epting et al., 2013) between the completion of a draft and the reviewing process, supported also by Tom. Where Isobel found this difficult was in the management of time to allow for this alongside her feelings of self-doubt and anxiety that prevent an objective and critical view of her own text. For Isobel her ability to complete the task in the timeframe allocated suggested a low self-efficacy and agency.

The efficacy of the planning, translating and reviewing for the writer is dependent on many critical factors as illustrated by the participants. An over-riding factor is centred on their writing beliefs, self-efficacy and agency.

4.9   Self-Efficacy and Agency

Throughout this chapter, I have discussed where learner's self-efficacy has been influenced by any one of the intersected identities of their professional, personal, and academic selves. The relationship between self-efficacy and transformational learning was clear where a key practice of 'leading learners to the edge' was observed (Taylor & Jarecke, 2009, p. 283). This notion of creating discomfort or disequilibrium was closely aligned with that of 'struggle' that formed a central concept within this study. I argue that there is a correlation between leading learners to the edge and that an emotional response is required from the learner and more specifically a negative emotion. Where a negative emotion was created and a discomfort established within the writer then the process of resolving the associated challenge, in whatever site it resided, was where the learning was created. This process of resolution involved critical reflection and, I argue the equilibrium was re-established through metacognition; thinking about thinking and the internal conversation. The agency to undertake critical reflection through the internal conversation is closely linked to self-efficacy.

The role of self-efficacy in relation to transformational learning was that it was the 'buoy that support[ed] writers as they navigate[d] a potentially treacherous sea' (Lavelle, 2009, p. 417). The relationship and interplay between struggle and self-efficacy was finely balanced and there were extraordinary times during the tutorials when I was compelled to ask the participants, during the tutorials and outside of these, 'What on earth keeps you still here on the programme, why do you keep coming back?' when the disappointment of a grade, the challenge of completing written assignments, the demands on their time, for example, did indeed lead them to the edge. As already illustrated, there were many tears from the learners during the two years and Cameron et al. (2009, p. 271) comment that the 'emotional pitfalls of writing' for novice writers are rarely acknowledged within the academy, where 'writing can fill novices with feelings of dread and self-doubt' which impact on the writer's confidence to undertake the task demanded of them. This study, I argue, was able to provide the space to express and explore the emotions that surrounded writing for the twelve participants. Multiple metaphors to express these emotions were included in the learners' narratives along with the physical responses of being upset (Appendix L). This was especially so from Amber who cried every time we met which she identified as due to her fear of failure. For Amber, she was led to the edge of her learning about this fear and this long held assumption was challenged. What is worthy of note is that her fear was not ever realised over the course of the programme and she achieved the second highest grade profile across the two years for the sample. I qualitatively felt that Amber was employing all strategies, emotionally, cognitively, socially and physically available to her to continue to study on the programme that was foregrounded with a deep seated fear. This fear appeared to be overridden by a powerful 'libidinal' motivation (Illeris, 2014, p. 90) that sustained this adult work-based learner through the 'treacherous sea' that Lavelle (2009, p. 417) describes. Amber's disequilibrium was disturbed with regards to her sense of self and for work-based learners, such as those in this study, where multiple identities were disturbed simultaneously across many 'sites' as illustrated in this

chapter these disturbances are an important pedagogical consideration for the programme, the institution and the academy as a whole. The dynamic disturbances have led to emergence, or transformational learning, evidenced not only in the learners' academic writing, but qualitatively across their lives. As Badley states:

> Writing is a form of dis-closing and dis-covering our ideas
> and judgements and even about ourselves (2009, p. 217).

In the undertaking of this study and, in particular through the analysis of the narratives, I have been struck by the powerful motivation of the participants to metaphorically pick themselves up, dust themselves down and continue with their studies despite the struggles they have encountered. It is worthy of note that I recruited twelve in the sample and that remained unchanged for the two years of the study which indicated that a shared characteristic for the participants in this study was self-efficacy and agency to achieve their goal of the FdA.

In the following chapter, the data presented here are used to directly address the research questions shown on page 24 and to make recommendations on how academic writing and indeed, broader academic literacies, can be taught and supported on the FdA and within the wider context of the academy.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This study investigated the metacognitive strategies used by twelve adult, work-based learners during academic writing and the struggles they experienced in writing assignments for their two year FdA programme using a framework of complexity theory. The research has been concerned with learning and specifically, transformational learning. In this concluding chapter I return to the research questions and discuss my own learning as practitioner researcher to explore recommendations for practice. My doctoral studies have provided the opportunity for me to engage with and investigate my struggles in undertaking this project in personal, professional and academic domains. I have experienced similar unease and disequilibrium, followed by a qualitative shift in my thinking which is visible in my writing. The study has provided a unique opportunity for the intersecting of nested realities and identities between my roles as researcher and teacher with those of the participants in rich and meaningful ways. There is some irony that this thesis, a substantial piece of academic writing, should stand as testament and evidence of my transformational learning.

The notion of struggle has formed a central concept for the study and has been able to validate the hypothesis that transformation is preceded by a disequilibrium within the learner. In observing the struggles that the learners have had over the course of the two year project, I have been able to closely examine the conditions that were evident at the point of struggle. In identifying the conditions and catalysts for struggle that subsequently lead to change, indicators for pedagogical approaches have become evident. A key finding was in recognising the role that the struggle had in these adults'

learning, as a critical element for transformative learning. Through a more comprehensive understanding of when and how struggles emerge, a pedagogy of transparency can be considered that can also adapt and simultaneously emerge alongside learners. It is important to note that the following conclusions are not hard, objective truths or generalisations beyond the twelve participant learners at BGU, rather they stand as 'rigorous subjectivity' (Badley, 2009, p. 211) and the process of writing this thesis has helped me to make sense of my understanding of the world to 'reshape' myself as a critical participant in 'both academic and social life' (ibid., p. 215). In being a critical participant researcher, I have been privileged to hear the struggles of the learners, to have examined them closely and to use my understandings to challenge my thinking about what could be. A deliberate focus for the conclusions has been from an academic literacies approach (Lea & Street, 1998) where BGU is viewed as the active agent for change that supports the diverse learner such as those studying for an FdA, particularly regarding recommendations for practice. The following four main conclusions are interwoven with recommendations for pedagogical change and answer the two research questions. These are articulated as; the power of the struggle; 'the golden age of adulthood' (Illeris, 2014, p. 89); the value of difference; and the re-positioning of power. At each point in the discussion the relationship with the research questions are made clear. The sections 5.2 and 5.3 address the conclusions related to research question one (see page 24) and discusses recommendations for practice in response to these (5.4; 5.5). The remaining sections of this chapter address how the findings respond to research question two and the pedagogical implications arising from these.

5.2   The Power of the Struggle

The synthesis of complexity with transformational learning theory has provided a unique lens to examine closely the struggles that twelve work-based learners experienced when undertaking academic writing. The qualitative data gathered from the 48 feedforward tutorials have enabled different layers of analysis using the radar graphs to be more consistently undertaken for each learner and compared across the sample to reveal patterns. The adopting of a system's extraction (Haggis, 2009) to examine the whole sample (context 2) made it possible to identify collective shifts and change. The key finding from the data extracted at context 2 was that there was a visible collective drop in average scores in the radar graph data which occurred at the beginning of year two (tutorial 3) across four of the seven categories; planning, reviewing, academic confidence and grades for written assignments (Appendix H). The learners reduced engagement with pre-writing planning could be viewed positively in this instance through the acceptance of Galbraith's (2009) proposition that less pre-writing planning for low self- monitors allows for a greater transformation of ideas, as discussed in the previous chapter. However, the simultaneous drop in average grades for written assignments at this point (tutorial 3) did not correlate with Galbraith's (2009) research for the sample overall (Appendix H). The reduction in planning at the beginning of the second year of study was largely unexplained as a changed strategy by the sample. It may have been attributed to less academic confidence as evidenced in the radar graph data at this same point; however, this feels counter intuitive as learners who do not pre-plan their writing may have felt more confident to begin composing the text. Alternatively, learners' uncertainty regarding the rhetorical goal may have contributed due to the increase in expectation for assignment learning outcomes at level 5; increased analysis, criticality and use of wider sources to support argumentation (QAA, 2008). A further contributing factor may have been that the learners had just returned to their studies after a four month summer break and habits of study were likely to have been disturbed.

These factors also provide an explanation for the reduced scores in the radar graph data in the other three categories of reviewing, academic confidence, and grades. In these three categories, following the drop in tutorial 3, an elevated average score in tutorial 4 was evident and identified a collective emergence (Appendix H). It is worthy of note that in the reviewing category, some learners were graded at zero and as discussed on page 179 this skewed the data and as such I am unable to confidently draw conclusions that there was a qualitative shift in this category. However, for the categories of academic confidence and grades, patterns of emergence were evident. This was a compelling and important finding; a collective struggle at the beginning of year two (tutorial 3) followed by shift change at tutorial 4 indicated transformational learning across the sample in academic confidence and grades. The link between the elevated grades and increased awareness of the metacognitive strategies that informed the quality of their writing over time was evident. Academic confidence scored the highest differential increase overall (+1.1%) and was at the highest at this point (tutorial 4) compared to tutorial 3. Overall patterns across the sample (context 2) between tutorials 3 and 4 point to the notion of self-organisation in complexity theory where the sample, showed an unexpected level of similarity as Haggis (2009) suggests which is only visible in a longitudinal study such as this where 'order is created out of disorder' (Fenwick et al., 2011, p. 27). In the data, order was represented by transformational learning at CAS (context 1) and sample (context 2) levels of the system's extraction. The lens of complexity theory enabled disturbance and subsequent emergence to be visible to show transformational learning. Learners' struggles appear to be a critical part of the process of learning and have important implications for practice; for work-based learners; for the academic tutors teaching on the FdA programme; and for BGU as an institution.

The understanding that a struggle was a fundamental and necessary part of learning for the twelve adult learners presents a challenge for BGU (context 3). In the current context of HE where learners are fee paying and acquiring loans to undertake their

studies, it is a difficult selling point to persuade anyone to embrace a cognitively and **emotionally** challenging experience. Indeed, current marketing practices portray a very different learning experience through multi-media and prospectuses from one that is difficult. In response to a climate of a more free market (Morgan, 2013) where the government has lifted the cap on student numbers for all HE institutions, over recent years the annual BGU prospectus has adopted a marketing stance that shows images of learners smiling in groups, throwing their mortar boards in the air at graduation and case studies where students advocate their positive experiences of learning at the institution. These do not depict the necessary struggle that, I argue, is an essential element of learning and specifically for transformational learning. A tension therefore emerges between transparency in what learning entails and the pragmatic needs to market courses. The path of learning is not smooth rather it is rough, problematic and difficult. However, depicting this reality may not attract practitioners to FdA courses, particularly when they must manage the multiple demands on them such as those from their employment and families. Contrastingly, current retention and progression rate figures for the Applied Studies course are surprisingly high, with 95% for 2015. One explanation for these rates, therefore, may reside in the age of the learner where adulthood and mature adulthood are the most receptive periods for transformational learning as Illeris (2014) suggests and in motivational factors.

5.3   The Golden Age of Adulthood

Adulthood and mature adulthood provide the conditions for transformational learning (Illeris, 2014, p. 89). The participants were adults, with three defined as mature adults (Amber, Philippa and Mary) who scored in the top half of the overall grade average for written assignments. Amber, the oldest participant in the sample who was aged 51 when starting the programme, scored the highest average grade profile for written assignments (65.4%). Philippa, a mature adult, showed the greatest development

between year one and year two in grades, and achieved the highest degree classification in the sample for the FdA.

Similarly, these three learners (Amber, Philippa and Mary) were the most experienced in the early years sector. The learners in the bottom two across the sample for average grades for written assignments were Louise and Rachel who were the two youngest learners (n=11) and the least experienced. These results are tentative with a small sample however they do indicate that mature adulthood for Amber and Philippa, through the evidence of grades scores for written assignments, was a condition for transformational learning. The correlation between mature adults with transformational learning is important and interrelated with increased practice experience. Whilst this would appear to be a more obvious correlation, I was mindful prior to commencing the research that this aspect of the sample demographic would not influence the findings overall. However, there was a tentative link between levels of practice experience and transformational learning specifically evidenced at the polarised ends of grades averages.

5.3.1   Summary of Findings for Research Question One

More broadly, the twelve adult learners in this study showed learning in many of the categories under investigation and analysing the sample's grades along with individual grade profiles was an important indicator of competency in academic writing. Whilst allowing for the relatively subjective art of the marking and grading process, as discussed on page 114, the average grade across the sample showed a differential of +0.3% (n=11) between the first and fourth tutorial for all assignments and -2.9% difference for written assignments. These data captured both year one and year two as an overall. These differentials are relatively small and although for all assignments was marginally elevated, it did not necessarily show evidence of transformed learning or cognitive development. However, the average grade score does not factor for the

elevated expectations at level 5 as discussed earlier (see page 140). Therefore, a 10% difference in grade to reflect this, when a 40% pass at level 4 is represented as 30% at level 5 and a recalibration of the average percentages shows elevated average grade profiles +10.3% and +7.1% respectively in both assignment categories. In this way, there was a more convincing indication of learning having occurred across the sample. Furthermore, an elevation in the radar graph scores in five other categories (planning, translating, central executive, academic confidence and professional confidence) was also evident (Appendix H). Reviewing was the only category that dropped between the first and fourth tutorial (-0.1%) and I discuss the implications of this finding later in this concluding chapter in relation to research question two. These findings overall do answer research question one; that learners were metacognitively aware of the strategies (planning, translating, central executive) they used for academic writing and that this awareness did develop over time. The greatest development, evident in the radar graph data was for academic confidence (+0.9%) and professional confidence (+0.9%) which was a key finding of the study. Confidence and self-belief are key conditions for self-efficacy and subsequent agency, and supports motivation, persistence and resilience to achieve a goal (Zimmerman, 2000). These conditions also underpin identities and have a positive reinforcing capacity in feedback loops; where the learner is able to achieve a goal, feels increasingly confident to tackle a new challenge, and so on. In both the academic and professional domains, where the learner feels increasing self-belief these two continue to symbiotically reinforce each other. Feedback loops are a concept closely associated with complexity theory.

In adulthood, more stable and coherent identities are established and provide a basis for transformative learning, as Illeris argues, there has to be something to change (2014). This appears counter intuitive as less formed and more malleable identities would indicate a greater propensity for change. However, Mezirow (2009, p. 18) makes clear that it is in adulthood where learners are able:

...to recognise, reassess and modify the structures of assumptions and expectations that frame our tacit points of view and influence out thinking, beliefs, attitudes, and actions.

Transformational learning is therefore unique to adulthood and on this premise there is scope to re-examine the traditional age of learning in HE. Based on the theories of transformational learning, there is currency in re-framing and re-examining when learners attend university. To study at 18 is too young to experience transformational learning as before mid to late twenties, identities remain fluid (Illeris, 2014). The undertaking of a formal qualification within HE at a later age may provide the opportunity for adult learners to critically reflect and re-position themselves in the world. To delay attending university for a further ten years is not unproblematic and presents different challenges, however, a work-based degree such as the FdA, allows for the added dimension of professional learning and formation and validates these degrees as part of BGU's portfolio. In this way, FdA learners are a highly motivated and committed student group and universities should continue to examine pedagogical approaches that acknowledge the unique differences of adult, work-based learners.

In summary, it was evident in the data that the participants were metacognitively aware of the strategies they used, and needed to use for academic writing and this awareness developed over time (planning, translating, central executive). The following discussion focusses on recommendations for practice in relation to the findings in response to research question one.

5.4   Valuing Difference

In adopting a complexity theory lens, I have examined the differences between the learners, particularly the unique personal, academic and professional histories that

individually shaped them. The heterogeneous composite of this group of learners has been observable through a complexity frame of reference. There were many instances where similar circumstances and experiences were discovered that on initial investigation appeared to be emergent themes across participants. However, when these were resisted in accordance with complexity theory and allowed to unravel over the longitudinal phase of data collection, different outcomes and conditions for transformation emerged as discussed throughout chapter four. Alternatively, themes emerged *within* the narratives of each of the participants and as Haggis states that:

> ...the nature of individual engagement with the 'learning processes' of higher education is not at all mysterious...[it is] logical and consistent within their [the learner's] own terms of reference as they [narrate] their positions at the centre of their own unique constellation of 'multiple presents' (other dynamic systems) and in the context of their own histories and attempts to continually act upon their own lives (2009, p. 20).

The advantage of adopting a complexity lens was that it enabled the 'unique constellations' of the learner to become evident. In terms of practice, Haggis (2006a, p. 521) states that 'the reality of difference [in non-traditional learners]...is often assumed to indicate a need to find out about individual learning approaches or styles, in order to diagnose deficits, and to offer support where deemed necessary'. Like Haggis (2006a) I contest the deficit model of the learner and have resisted the use of the term student when referring to the participants throughout this thesis in order to re-position the respondents as learning professionals. The learning professional may enter the academy without academic heritage however; this is unrelated to their capacity to undertake the programme.

Notions of difference also emerged from the sample, representative of adult work-based learners as a whole and these can inform practice, particularly when examining the conditions for learning. The conditions for transformational learning for work-based, FdA learners are established by an archetype tutor. I have chosen the term

architype as it embodies an ideal; an original model. This model tutor is a discipline, practice and academic writing pedagogue who understands theory in relation to practice along with the processes for academic writing. The overarching 'container' that holds these three, nested elements (discipline, practice, writing) are the authentic, trusting relationships between the archetype tutor and learners. The term container depicts a permeable, translucent way of holding the three elements together in order to manage the learner's struggles. It is permeable because flexibility is required to move organically with the learners in a responsive way; both at collective learner (context 2) and at CAS (context 1) levels. The tutor who is a discipline and practice pedagogue currently exists on the programme as discussed on page 16, however, the tutor who also understands academic writing is a more novel concept. Being an academic writer as a discipline specific tutor in HE does not necessarily qualify someone to be a tutor of academic writing. I argue that adding the dimension of the academic writing pedagogue to the other two (discipline and practice) presents a unique academic literacy broker able to deconstruct and model terms such as analysis, evaluation and synthesis and to communicate in a skilled way the conventions of writing in the academy. The proposal of an archetype tutor may not be realistic, although with the increased focus on teaching within the academy, as discussed on page 11, opportunities for tutors to engage in professional development for the teaching of academic writing might be presented. Likewise, the increased pressure for academic tutors to be Fellows as part of the Higher Education Academy based on the United Kingdom Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF) (Higher Education Academy, 2016) may also provide opportunities for change regarding the teaching of academic writing. Currently the Professional Standards associated with the Fellowship do not currently include references to academic writing, or more widely, academic literacies (Higher Education Academy, 2011). However, as discussed a critical aspect of the archetype tutor is that they are able to establish trusting relationships with the adult learners that they work with and, I argue, that it is through these that all six pedagogical practices of transformational learning (Taylor &

Jarecke, 2009; discussed on page 38) are met and a re-positioning of the adult, work-based learner can be established that acknowledges the differences of personal histories and professional knowledge.

5.5   Re-Positioning the Power

Throughout this thesis, I have explored the cognitive, social, emotional and professional positioning of the work-based, mature learner in relation to academic writing. I have argued that the academy holds a symbolic power over the learner through the conventions, discourse, and the particular type of knowledge that holds currency. The architype tutor seeks to re-align this symbolic power explicitly through valuing PPK (Bereiter, 2014). Practice knowledge is already at the heart of the programme and positioned centrally within teaching and assessments, however where practice knowledge is analysed, evaluated and synthesised with theoretical understandings to become PPK (Bereiter, 2014, p. 4), I argue, it becomes a more worthy and powerful form of knowledge. It is powerful because it goes beyond any abstract knowledge held and retained within the academy, to having the potential to affect the outcomes of young children through the practitioners in this study and in this way; it has intrinsic and extrinsic purpose. PPK is more than applied knowledge as it represents a more dynamic and complex form of understandings. Here, the concept of symbiosis is extended beyond the learner and practice to include the academic tutor and, indeed the university as a whole in creating PPK (Bereiter, 2014). Professional formation relies on theoretical understandings from the academy, and the academy relies on current practice knowledge from practitioners to create PPK, or as I argue, PPPK; purposeful, principled, practice knowledge. This symbiotic relationship is mutually reliant and as such, the power balance is changed. The changed positioning of the adult learner within the academy that I suggest goes beyond the diagnosis of deficits that Haggis (2006a) describes and is not unproblematic. One difficulty is that the architype tutor is required to negotiate their

own prejudices and value systems in order to continue to challenge the habitus of the academy as they may encounter resistance. This resistance may be a 'collective defence mechanism' through which academics find a way to 'avoid harsh questioning' (Bourdieu, 1984, p. 19) that exposes limited understandings beyond the scholastic model of learning (Atkinson & Claxton, 2000, p. 2). Anecdotally, I have experienced commentary from colleagues who are resistant to teaching FdA learners because they are viewed as more feisty and challenging than traditional learners. This is a contrary illustration from within an institution where analysis and critique are privileged and perhaps in this instance, the deficits do not lie with the learner. A further problem in re-positioning the work-based learner is in the notion of the academy as gatekeeper.

In re-framing or removing the gatekeeper, the goal and purpose for the learner is altered. As purpose is a key aspect of transformational learning this changes the dynamic of the process itself as without a goal that is perceived as valued, the purpose is diminished. In this way the symbolic power of the academy has been endorsed by the learner in undertaking the programme. In order to reach the goal, the learner must, I argue, meet the 'agreed milestone' of academic writing. Writing is a unique form of communication that transcends time and has the power to transform thinking (Clark & Ivanič, 1997). The power of academic writing extends beyond writing as it embodies reading and writing in the de-construction and re-construction (Badley, 2009) of argument, which is a highly complex cognitive process. As such I do not advocate a shift away from academic writing or a dumbing down of this intellectual process, rather a shift to a pedagogy of transparency.

The academic literacies approach (Lea & Street, 1998; Lillis, 2001; Ganobcsik-Williams, 2010) identifies the need for the university to act as an active agent in using new technologies and new forms of writing which can re-position the learner away from being viewed as a deficit model. For example, in the increased use of first person voice in undergraduate and post-graduate work in the social sciences which is a relatively

small, although significant shifting of power and voice to the learner. Where writing is viewed at a level of epistemology and identity it allows for a wider examination of pedagogy that extends beyond the cognitive domain to the emotional and social in order to manage the struggles that learners have. At an epistemological level, greater transparency is needed where learners' struggles are acknowledged and the emotions that surround writing are more visible; that the process of writing as messy, iterative and highly individualised is not hidden. This is not intended to be a panacea for all learners; however, it can help to manage the struggles that learners have and to support their self-belief, self-efficacy and ultimately their agency. The archetype tutor needs to not present the view of an overly simplistic, linear process to writing through a study skills approach. Instead, they allow for a more tailored approach that affords the modelling of writing which is surrounded by rich, honest and trusted dialogue. Again, this is not unproblematic as this approach is time dependent and with increasingly larger groups of learners it would be both challenging and demanding for the tutor. I argue, that the time modelling this support would be well spent as in addition to close work with the archetype academic literacy broker, where a culture of trust and respect is created, learners can be encouraged to share their emotions that surround writing along with their personal writing strategies both formally and informally as part of the programme. In this way, the collective learner becomes its own literacy broker (Lillis & Curry, 2006) who acts as 'knowledgeable insiders' (Harris, 1992) to each other, much in the way that Philippa benefitted when working within a group where she was able to hear the strategies of others to support the development of her own. As knowledgeable insider, the adult FdA learner is re-positioned.

The establishing of a further category of literacy broker is a recommendation for practice. A key omission from the categories of literacy brokers outlined by Lillis and Curry (2006) is one who explicitly provides emotional support. In many ways the academic tutor, the language professional or nonprofessional in acting as mediators, by default may support the emotional dimensions related to writing. However, where

learners felt emotionally supported, they were more able to manage their feelings more productively and with agency. I have used the term the *affective* literacy broker to describe this particular mediation role. This may be a family member, a friend or any other confident and needs to be recognised as providing essential support. Fellow learners can also be included as an affective literacy broker along with providing other mediation roles of professional and academic brokers and are therefore, an essential source of support. As such, the multiple roles of fellow learners can provide a valuable network of literacy brokers that simultaneously and symbiotically mediate the processes of academic writing for increased transparency. The architype tutor can also provide the institutional space and opportunity for this learning collective support to be realised by modelling honesty about the challenges of academic writing.

5.6   Research Question Two

Transparency in what academic writing looks like for FdA adult learners is a key finding in relation to the second research question (see page 24); whether the learners were able to evaluate their performance in their academic writing and whether this developed qualitatively over time. This section includes recommendations for practice in relation to research question two.

Overall, the learners struggled to know when and why they had done well, or not, and were frequently surprised by the grades they were awarded which was evidenced in the data (for example see page 148). As discussed throughout this thesis, the learner's understanding of the future or intended text (Chanquoy, 2009) was pivotal in this and the fall in average score overall in the radar graph data for the reviewing category supported this finding (Appendix H). This may be attributed to the more limited commentary regarding this category in the interviews overall as discussed earlier in this chapter. However, where a writer has limited knowledge of what the writing needs to be modelled on and worked towards, there is not a benchmarked, mental

image of the perceived text. This makes reviewing, editing and revising texts problematic as this process is equally reliant on firstly the detection of errors or points for amendment of composition and secretarial levels, which is a complex process. Secondly, there is a reliance on the writer having the knowledge of what to apply to those aspects of the text warranting revision and how to remedy these. I argue that this was a factor in the more limited attention to strategies for reviewing that the participants utilised, or not, in the tutorials overall.

Further evidence of the inability to evaluate their performance was articulated by Louise in the second tutorial:

> *'I am gutted, cos- when I first started, and I did my first assignment in 101, I thought I hadn't done very well and I did really well for what I thought I'd done. These last two I thought I'd done really well, I'd really worked hard, I put double the references what I put in last time, and I got the lowest marks I've got since I started* (Transcript, 2, Louise).

Louise's perception that hard work and the inclusion of '*double the references'* would elevate the quality of her writing and increase the grade awarded is shown. As discussed on page 51, the not knowing what to do and how to do it means that many hours are misspent by learners (Haggis, 2006a). For work-based, adult learners who are managing many competing demands on their time, this is frustrating and potentially demotivating for them as learners and academic writers when they are not rewarded for their efforts.

The reviewing phases of writing are critical to the overall quality of the writing (Chanquoy, 2009) and there was direct correlation between those who reviewed more, evidenced in the data, and a higher grade profile. Therefore, a recommendation for practice is in the sharing of completed assignments to support learners' formation of an intended text which provides a goal to work towards. Providing exemplars of assignments alongside opportunities to discuss the elements of a well written text will

support greater transparency for the learner in analysis, synthesis, evaluation how academic sources can be effectively used to demonstrate these. In addition to showing finished texts to learners prior to them starting work on their assignments, it is critical to share different draft versions that underpin the finished text so that learners can see the messy, iterative process of writing. The architype tutor can, by way of establishing a sharing, trusted and collegial environment, share their own written work as examples and in particular where they have had commentary from supervisors on their work, or feedback from editors on peer-reviewed articles (Cameron et al., 2009). In openly sharing drafts as a collegial community, learners can understand that writing is difficult and that most academic writers feel self-doubt, anxiety and fear (ibid.) whatever level of learning, where being a writer and becoming a better writer is on a long continuum. In confronting and talking about the difficult emotions associated with writing rather than ignoring them affords insight for learners of the struggles that all writers face (Cameron et al., 2009, p. 281) and helps to manage their expectations of themselves as writers. Also in adopting this approach, opportunities are provided for learners to discuss the strategies they have used through describing and modelling of these. This collaborative approach is beneficial as experiences of writing can be shared and made more transparent. Sharing written drafts can, however, present as a struggle or as an intellectual striptease (Caffarella & Barnett, 2000, p. 46) although, I argue, is a worthy endeavour where constructive feedback and trusted dialogue can provide a purposeful platform for learning.

The architype tutor can capture commentary and develop the understandings of the different processes of writing with learners and where their time in undertaking these can be effectively spent. Since completing the data collection phase and reflecting on the narratives of the learners, I have endeavoured, with support from a Learning Development tutor, to create a model to express these to learners and have articulated these as Graft, Draft, Craft. The Graft and Craft stages represent where the most time is spent as these involve engaging with the literature, the mapping of ideas

(Graft) and the reviewing, editing and revision phases (Craft). The drafting stage can be relatively short as the first text is produced. I am clear to learners that these are broadly defined rather than set as linear processes and offer a loose framework within which to work. The success, or not, of this was not captured in the data for this study, however, it provides an illustration of the continued examination of the pedagogy of writing and forms recommendations for practice as part of the discourse of transparency as discussed. The strategies of sharing drafts and discussing the processes of writing that different learners adopt can aid metacognitive awareness and regulation. In deploying a range of literacy brokers can assist in the management and mediation of the struggles that learners face. In adopting these strategies, the architype tutor can engage with learners' cognitive and emotional dimensions of writing assignments which can form a more transparent pedagogy for academic writing where learners have a better understanding of how to assess their own performance against the rhetorical demands of the academy. The architype tutor, when seen as a CAS through the lens of complexity theory can become 'their own unique constellation of 'multiple presents' (other dynamic systems)' (Haggis, 2009, p. 20) that becomes a dynamic, nested system of interactions.

Cohen et al. (2007, p. 34) suggest that complexity theory validates and celebrates practitioner research through the importance of 'educational research to catch the deliberate, unintentional, agentic actions of participants and to adopt interactionist and constructivist perspectives'. In adopting the principle of self-organisation, the practitioner as researcher forms part of the dynamic change and could extend beyond the internal to external researchers and partnerships. In continuing beyond this study to engage with research with other tutors and learners on FdA programmes, there is greater richness to be explored that seeks difference along with self-organisation which includes other satellites and dynamic systems.

5.6.1   Summary of Findings for Research Question Two

It was clear that overall, the work-based learners in this study were unable to consistently evaluate their own academic writing performance and this did not qualitatively develop over time. This was attributed to a more limited understanding of the expected text aligned with the rhetorical goal. Similarly, the inconsistent use of academic professionals as literacy brokers (Lillis & Curry, 2006) hindered the ability of the participants to engage fully in the reviewing process and in the evaluation of their academic performance in conjunction with the learning outcomes, assessment criteria, and overall conventions of academic writing.

5.7   Concluding Reflections

As part of any research, the researcher should iteratively question the design, data and analysis at every stage. This is particularly relevant towards the end of the process to reflect on what could have been done differently. I have acknowledged the challenge of researching my own practice, of seeking the views of the learners that I work with; however, I have argued that the insider's view has been one of the strengths of this study. There is currency and purpose to build on the findings where further research replicates this research design with a sample of mature FdA learners working in the early years and studying in a different institution. This will allow for a rich comparison with the data discussed here to afford cross case study analysis at context 1 (the learners) and at context 2 (the sample) with a view to validating, or not the findings established as part of this project. This could also be extended to include multiple sites, or 'constellations' (Haggis, 2009), as comparative cases. Fenwick et al. (2011, p. 55) suggest that complexity theory 'offers much greater analytical power, and more challenging strategies and languages for analysis, than educational research is currently accessing', although, they argue that considerations of responsibility might occur 'out of the entanglement in volatile processes, and what forms of novelty and

surprise might arise out of response and responsibility in emergent processes' (2011, p. 54). Notions of responsibility for change and leadership within an ever changing dynamic system that is nested within others is indeed complex when causes and effects cannot be disentangled. Fenwick et al.'s perspective holds some currency however, post-modern perspectives identify constant flux and change (Gibbons et al., 1994) and the strength of complexity theory, I argue, captures and acknowledges this in a theoretical and methodological way as with this study. Similarly, a complexity lens has the potential to reveal 'a far greater range of triggers and amplifiers of emergence than are currently appreciated when the focus remains on the human and social elements of education' (Fenwick et al., 2011, p. 55). The human and social elements of this study have taken centre stage and have enabled critical reflection of pedagogical approaches to meet the distinct needs of adult, work-based learners. The most significant strength of adopting a lens of complexity for research is in allowing for the particular *conditions* that surround emergence to become visible, as with this study, and, as such offer the potential for pedagogical insight.

To conclude, this qualitative, small scale study has been rooted in my practice as a tutor for an FdA. In parallel to the learners in this study, I represent the category of adult, work-based learner. In truth, I am a mature adult learner and in my endeavours have experienced a 'libidinal motivation' to become a better teacher of work-based learners (Illeris, 2014, p. 90). This has provided me with the distinct goal and purpose to continue to engage with the difficult task of writing, and indeed of researching in the under researched area of FdA learners. The motivating purpose of this engagement is in order that work-based learners continue to be visible in the academy and not subsumed within a perceived homogenous group of 'students'. This study adds to those in the landscape of literature about non-traditional learners and more specifically to the more limited body of research that is concerned with the emotional and social aspects of learning, particularly of those learners studying for an FdA. The value of having undertaken this practitioner research in this particular way has

allowed me to investigate a hypothesis derived from several years of observing the struggles of FdA learners with academic writing. In uncovering their experiences, I am humbled by the tenacity and bravery that these adult learners have shown in leading **themselves** to the edge and metaphorically throwing themselves into the relative unknown.

In summary, my recommendations for practice are two-fold. Firstly, I advocate the normalisation and acknowledgement of the emotional struggles that adult learners experience in undertaking academic programmes such as an FdA. This will require greater transparency from BGU and the programme team that represents formal learning differently from the outset to manage learners' expectations of what lies ahead. The focus should now be on the *purpose* and *value* of the learning which is imperative to adult learning rather than the glossy, smiling experiences currently portrayed in prospectuses as previously discussed. This may be captured as individual purpose, programme and institutional purposes in order for a shared understanding that learning is indeed difficult and complex, and is highly emotive. For many learners fear, doubt and anxiety surrounds academic writing as identified in this study. As Freire suggests:

> The fear itself is concrete. The issue is not allowing the fear to paralyse us, not allowing that fear to persuade us to quit, to face a challenging situation without effort, without a fight (2005, p. 50).

The issue that Freire (2005) identifies is in using the struggle purposefully in an agentic way, whether the fear is real or imagined such as with Amber, as a catalyst for change; emergence. Learners need to be supported in accepting and expecting their struggles as part of the process of learning. As Mariea shared with me:

> *'I never ever thought I would get on the course, let alone complete the first year, so, it has been quite a whirlwind journey really. And it's funny, because when we first started, somebody said, 'you'll laugh, you'll cry, you'll get angry', and I said 'really?', but yeah you do don't you?'* (Transcript 2, Mariea).

Learners' emotions, I advocate, should be welcomed and nurtured as they frequently precede the business and purpose of an FdA; that of transformational learning. The fear that Freire (2005) suggests may also be evident in the academy through a resistance to reflexivity and transparency (Bourdieu et al., 1994) and would require institutionally wide reform, its own emergence, to acknowledge equity and notions of power between the university and learners. Maclaren discusses pedagogy through Friere's concept of lovingness as characteristics of the progressive teacher, which include:

> ...those of humility, courage, tolerance, decisiveness, security, the tension between patience and impatience, joy of living (2005, p. xxxi).

These are important characteristics for the transparent pedagogy that I advocate. The architype tutor is not a 'coddling parent' (Mclaren, 2005, p. xxxvi) rather one that challenges and assumes the role of critical friend in an adult, horizontal relationship (Rogers, 2003, p. 60) where trust and respect are reciprocal.

My second key recommendation is for a more transparent pedagogy that seeks to expose and uncover the possible strategies for writing that learners may use from the point of receiving an assignment brief to submitting the final text. In creating an architype tutor, I have provided a template for change in a model that can embody the complexity of transformational learning and champion the re-positioning of power within the academy of the FdA learner. Through the investigation of this study and in my new found understandings, I seek to continue my professional formation towards becoming the architype tutor I describe; a teacher who embraces the problems and

challenges that have been identified and in those that lie beyond, in the constant, iterative striving for purposeful, principled, practice knowledge.

CHAPTER SIX: REFERENCES

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Appendix A: Data Collection Phases

Pilot study –Academic Year 2012 - 2013	
Participants	*Timeframe*
8 (one withdrew n=7)	July 2013
Main Study – Two Years	
Tutorial 1– Academic Year 2013 – 2014: Semester 1	
Participants	*Timeframe*
n=12	February 2014
Tutorial 2 – Academic Year 2013 – 2014: Semester 2	
n=12	July 2014
Tutorial 3– Academic Year 2014 – 2015: Semester 1	
n=12	February 2015
Tutorial 4 – Academic Year 2014 – 2015: Semester 2	
n=12	July 2015

Appendix B: Participant Biographies and Histories

Name	Age at start of the course	Gender	Overall Experience in the sector	Roles during the data collection	First to attend University from direct family	Histories
Tom	26	male	7 years	Practitioner then gained role as room leader in the second year.	no Sister completed the FdA in 2014	Tom's father died when he was 18. He is the eldest of four. Applied at 18 to do a QTS course at BGU but did not get the grades. Went to another University to study Games Computing. Transferred midway through the first year to study history. Became engaged to be married and left the course.
Zoe	24	female	8 years	Practitioner in one setting, changed to another and within 18 months becomes the Manager.	no Father completed the FdA in 2013	Single mother of a four year old son who is unwell and that require medical interventions.
Amber	52	female	19 years	Manager Worked in same setting for 19 years.	no Daughter is a graduate	Married. A grown-up son and daughter. Won two national awards for her practice 'Manager of the Year' Nursery World 2014.
Philippa	47	female	8 years	Practitioner. Took on additional responsibility of SENCO.	no	Single mother of three grown-up children.

Name	Age at start of the course	Gender	Overall Experience in the sector	Roles during the data collection	First to attend University from direct family	Histories
Mary	46	female	30 years	Manager of pre-school, changed to be manager of another setting and left within a month. Moved to be baby room leader of another setting and then changed again to be a practitioner at a village pre-school.	yes	Married. One son.
Lucy	34	female	13 years	Works at local village pre-school. Moved from being practitioner to Deputy Manager after the first year on the programme.	no mother and sister – both got firsts	Had applied to a QTS programme but fell ill with cancer so could not take the place. Once recovered she decided to do a work-based degree instead. Married and has one son.

Name	Age at start of the course	Gender	Overall Experience in the sector	Roles during the data collection	First to attend University from direct family	Histories
Isobel	40	female	10 years	Worked in pre-school. Shared role of acting manager for some of first year. Left setting and worked at mums and tots for the local church.	yes	Married with three grown-up children.
Mariea	28	female	2 years	Manager of setting.	yes	Single mother of two girls. She became pregnant with second child during first year.
Louise	21	female	1 year	Started in new setting shortly after beginning programme. Moved at end of first year into a school foundation unit.	no Brother attended university.	Engaged to be married. Lives at home with her parents.
Laura	27	female	10 years	Room leader then moved to become the manager of a different setting. Then returned to original nursery as manager.	no Brother and mother currently at University.	Engaged to be married. Lives with partner. Has a dog who died in the second year.

Name	Age at start of the course	Gender	Overall Experience in the sector	Roles during the data collection	First to attend University from direct family	Histories
Rose	38	female	11 years	Practitioner	yes	Had wanted to be a teacher. Did not believe that she would achieve the A level grades to do this so did not complete these. Started an FdA in Art and Design but did not complete this. Married and has one daughter.
Rachel	20	female	1 year	Practitioner. Moved settings to cover a maternity leave in room leader role.	no Sister is a doctor	Lives at home with her parents. Bought a house with her partner at the end of the second year. Works in the service industry in spare time to supplement income. Was student Union representative for the first year.

Appendix C: Assessment Grading Criteria – Level Four

| Marking Criteria	0-29%	30-39%	40-49%	50-59%	60-69%	70-79%	80-100%
Knowledge and Under-standing	Significant weaknesses and gaps in understanding of the subject matter, ideas and issues. No evidence of relevant reading. Possible misunderstanding of question No awareness of ethical issues evident.	A weak understanding of subject matter. Little evidence of background reading. Poor identification of issues. Possible inaccuracies in evidence. Limited awareness of ethical issues	Basic understanding of subject matter, ideas and issues. Limited consistency of depth and accuracy of detail. Restricted reading and reference to sources. Limited awareness of ethical issues discussed in relation to personal beliefs and values.	Satisfactory level of understanding of subject matter, ideas and issues. Basic knowledge is sound but may be patchy. Reasonable range of reading with some ability to respond to text. Adequate awareness of ethical issues discussed in relation to personal beliefs and values.	A good understanding of subject matter, theory, issues and debate. Accurate, relevant in detail and example. Wide range of core and background reading effectively used. Clear awareness of ethical issues discussed in relation to personal beliefs and values.	Excellent understanding of the complexities of key theoretical models, concepts and arguments. Extensive use of reading. Focussed use of details & examples. Very good awareness of ethical issues discussed in relation to personal beliefs and values.	Outstanding understanding and insight in to theory with a range of academic sources. Develops new or novel perspective beyond the literature. Exemplary awareness of ethical issues discussed in relation to personal beliefs and values.
Analysis and Evaluation	Purely descriptive. Confused, illogical or incomplete structure. Little or no attempt at evaluation. Lack of evidence or incorrect use of material. Views are erroneous and unsubstantiated.	Little attempt to interpret material – mainly descriptive. Poorly structured with little logic. Minimal appraisal or evaluation. Evidence is generalised Muddled expression of views and ideas.	Interpretation is evident but largely descriptive. Basic structure but lacks clarity or conviction. Limited evaluation and independence of thought. Views are expressed but not significantly critical or substantiated.	Some attempt at analysis; limited by factual explanations. A sound structure but may lack some cohesion. Reasonable evaluation with some personal insight. Attempt made to argue logically and critically, but limited.	Perceptive and thoughtful interpretation. Logically structured, coherent argument with synthesis of a range of views. Freshness of insight with some creative thinking and well-supported reflections	Sophisticated perception, critical insight and interpretation. Clear, logical and coherent structure. Convincing ability to synthesise views and integrate references. High quality evaluation and personal analysis	Outstanding level of original analysis, argument and evaluation. Authoritative and persuasive argument involving innovative synthesis of ideas and referenced to produce a rigorous evaluation.

Marking Criteria	0-29%	30-39%	40-49%	50-59%	60-69%	70-79%	80-100%
Transferable Skills Emphasis on Communi-cation	Very poor expression; style inappropriate, terminology inadequate. Many presentation errors in spelling, punctuation and syntax. No attention given to sources. Slight, if any, reflection or reference to personal or professional issues	Meaning is unclear with inaccurate or unprofessional use of terminology/language. Presentation errors in spelling, punctuation and syntax. Referencing incomplete. Thin discussion of personal and professional issues	Expression, vocabulary and style clear but lack sophistication. Some minor inaccuracies in spelling and syntax which do not interfere with meaning. References evident but not always cited correctly Limited reflection on professional issues.	Clearly written, coherent expression; reasonable range of vocabulary and style. Overall competence in spelling and syntax with very minor errors. Sound presentation with mainly accurate referencing. Sound personal reflection on professional issues	Fluent, confident expression with appropriate style and vocabulary. High standards of accuracy in spelling and syntax Good presentation. Good awareness of implications for personal/professional development. Good citation of sources.	Very clear, confident and stylish expression Highly effective vocabulary with near perfect spelling. High standard of presentation with meticulous attention to detail. Thorough appreciation of learning and lessons for practice.	Exceptional clarity and coherence. Extremely well written with accuracy and flair. Highly autonomous, with maturity in presentation and independence or innovative thought relating to personal / professional practice.
Practical Skills Emphasis on professional development	Negligible evidence of specialist skill development. Very poor application of working processes and techniques. Little awareness of performance or competences. No evidence of links between theory and practice.	Little evidence of skill development or application. Poor application of working processes and techniques. Very thin analysis of performance or competence. Little appreciation of theory in practice.	Evidence of limited skill development. Some application of working processes and techniques. Partial analysis of performance or competence. Basic appreciation of theory in to practice.	Competent and informed application of specialist skills. Appropriate application of working processes and techniques. Sound analysis of performance or competence. Consideration of both theory and practice	Good performance, capable and confident application of skills. Differentiated application of working processes and techniques. Critical analysis of performance with useful links drawn between theory and practice.	Very good demonstration and innovative application of skills. Excellent application of working processes and techniques. Highly critical analysis of performance with skilled integration of theory and practice.	Mastery of specialist skills and technical understanding and judgement. Outstanding application of working processes. Creative and insightful analysis of performance with seamless integration of theory and practice.

Appendix D: Assessment Grading Criteria – Level Five

Marking Criteria	0-29%	30-39%	40-49%	50-59%	60-69%	70-79%	80-100%
Knowledge and Under-standing	A weak understanding of subject matter. Little evidence of background reading. Poor identification of issues. Possible inaccuracies in evidence. No awareness of ethical issues evident	Some level of understanding of subject matter, ideas and issues. Basic knowledge is sound but may be patchy. Limited range of reference to reading. Limited awareness of ethical issues	Adequately detailed understanding of subject matter, ideas and issues. Some consistency of depth and accuracy of detail. Reasonable range of reading with limited ability to respond to text. Shows some ability to debate issues in relation to more general ethical perspectives	Satisfactorily detailed and comprehensive understanding of subject matter, theory, issues and debate. A wide range of reading with some ability to respond to text. Some ethical awareness demonstrated. Able to debate issues in relation to more general ethical perspectives	Good understanding of subject matter, theory, issues and debates. Wide range of core and background reading effectively used. Able to effectively debate issues in relation to specific ethical perspectives.	Excellent understanding of the complexities of key theoretical models, concepts and arguments. Extensive use of reading. Focussed use of details & examples. Able to debate and discuss a critical dimension to ethical perspectives.	Outstanding understanding and insight in to theory with a range of academic sources. Develops new or novel perspective beyond the literature, and in relation to ethical perspectives.
Analysis and Evaluation	Purely descriptive. Confused, illogical or incomplete structure. Little or no attempt at evaluation. Lack of evidence or incorrect use of material. Views are erroneous and unsubstantiated.	Little attempt to interpret material – mainly descriptive. Poorly structured with little logic. Minimal appraisal or evaluation. Evidence is generalised Muddled expression of views and ideas.	Some analysis and evaluation, with attempts at independence of thought. Views are expressed but not significantly critical or substantiated.	A sound structure but may lack some cohesion. Reasonable evaluation with some personal insight. Attempt made to argue logically and critically.	Perceptive and thoughtful interpretation. Logically structured, coherent argument with evidence of some synthesis. Freshness of insight with some creative thinking and well-supported reflections	Sophisticated perception, critical insight and interpretation. Clear, logical and coherent structure. Convincing ability to synthesise views and integrate references. High quality evaluation and personal analysis	Outstanding level of original analysis, argument and evaluation. Authoritative and persuasive argument involving innovative synthesis of ideas and referenced to produce a rigorous evaluation.

Marking Criteria	0-29%	30-39%	40-49%	50-59%	60-69%	70-79%	80-100%
Transferable Skills Emphasis on Communi-cation	Very poor expression; style inappropriate, terminology inadequate. Many presentation errors in spelling, punctuation and syntax. No attention given to sources. Slight, if any, reflection or reference to personal or professional issues	Meaning is unclear with inaccurate or unprofessional use of terminology/language. Presentation errors in spelling, punctuation and syntax. Referencing incomplete. Thin discussion of personal and professional issues	Expression, vocabulary and style clear but lack sophistication. Some minor inaccuracies in spelling and syntax which do not interfere with meaning. References evident but not always cited correctly Some reflection on professional issues.	Clearly written, coherent expression; reasonable range of vocabulary and style. Overall competence in spelling and syntax with very minor errors. Sound presentation with mainly accurate referencing. Sound personal reflection on professional issues	Fluent, confident expression with appropriate style and vocabulary. High standards of accuracy in spelling and syntax Good presentation. Good awareness of implications for personal/professional development. Good citation of sources.	Very clear, confident and stylish expression Highly effective vocabulary with near perfect spelling. High standard of presentation with meticulous attention to detail. Thorough appreciation of learning and lessons for practice.	Exceptional clarity and coherence. Extremely well written with accuracy and flair. Highly autonomous, with maturity in presentation and independence or innovative thought relating to personal / professional practice.
Practical Skills Emphasis on professional development	Negligible evidence of specialist skill development. Very poor application of working processes and techniques. Little awareness of performance or competences. No evidence of links between theory and practice	Little evidence of skill development or application. Poor application of working processes and techniques. Very thin analysis of performance or competence. Little appreciation of theory in practice.	Evidence of some skill development, with the application of some working processes and techniques. Partial analysis of performance or competence. Basic appreciation of theory in to practice.	Competent and informed application of specialist skills. Appropriate application of working processes and techniques. Sound analysis of performance or competence. Consideration of both theory and practice	Good performance, capable and confident application of skills. Differentiated application of working processes and techniques. Critical analysis of performance with useful links drawn between theory and practice.	Very good demonstration and innovative application of skills. Excellent application of working processes and techniques. Highly critical analysis of performance with skilled integration of theory and practice.	Mastery of specialist skills and technical understanding and judgement. Outstanding application of working processes. Creative and insightful analysis of performance with seamless integration of theory and practice.

Appendix E: Radar Graph
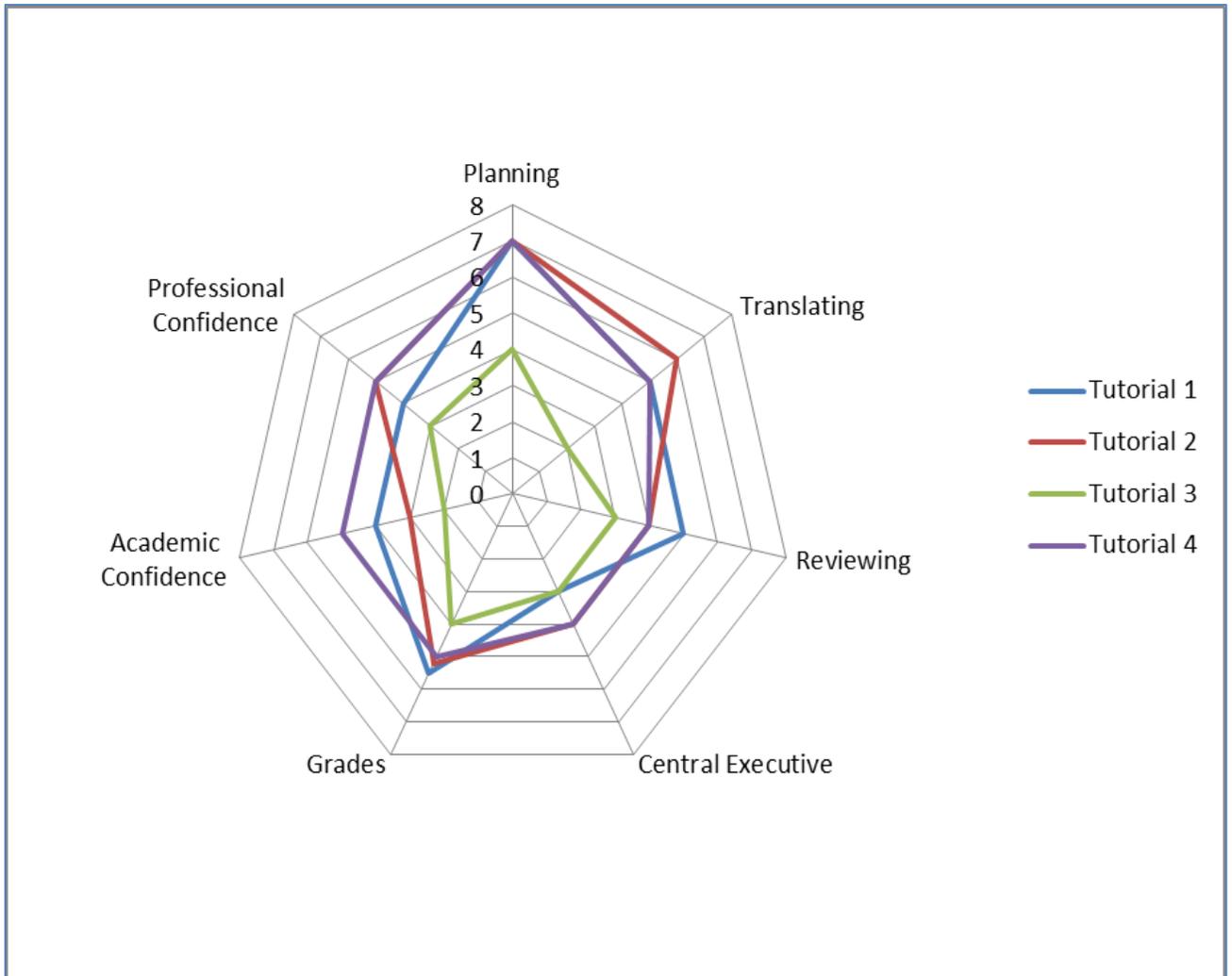
Appendix F: Radar Graph Scoring Criteria

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Planning	No comment.	No planning used.	Does not do a plan, but puts ideas into some broad format such as a spidergram, but does not stick to it.	Has a spidergram or mapping and uses this to write first draft. Sticks to this.	Basic plan with key structures identified e.g. intro, conclusion, key points from what comes to mind 'what do I know'.	Plans using notes and some reading to inform plan. Awareness of assessment criteria when planning.	Uses session notes, develops a detailed plan and sticks mainly to it.	Uses assignment brief to formulate plan. Clear sections and content identified.	Has a set view and plan from the beginning and creates a structure based around that. Sticks to it throughout. Ideas remain unchanged.
Translating	No comment.	Paralysed to start writing, finds it too difficult.	Starts and stops, falters when trying to get first draft written. No fluency in writing.	Finds writing it difficult although can commit something to paper. Takes a long time. Trying to edit it as writing.	Slow at this phase. Distracted by referencing accurately and phrasing.	Knows what is wanting to be said but can't get it out exactly as in their head. Manages to write but not content it is as wanted.	Writing first draft is relatively easy.	Confident to start to writing full draft and the quality of this is increasing.	Finds writing easy and does not need a lot of time to do this.
Reviewing	No comment.	Does not review or revise the first full draft.	Makes limited attempt to proof read.	Recognises that needs help with this but does not have support with proof reading or revision but makes limited effort themselves.	Has someone else read work but does not do it for themselves.	Some sense of ownership of work and moves to revise rather than just edit.	Has more than one proof reader. Begins to write sections, then edits.	Independently and increasingly recognises where sections are not as they want them and edits accordingly. Has multiple proof readers for final review.	Moves whole sections and ideas. Prepared to scrap some aspects of content and rework sections from scratch.Leaves time for doing this less reliant on proof reader.

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Central Executive	No comment.	Lack of awareness of strategies used or of the rhetorical goal.	Limited awareness of strategies used/demands of the task or what is expected at higher grades.	Emerging awareness of strategies used for the task, aligned with the task and for higher grades.	Some analysis of strategies in relation to the demands of the task. Some sense of knowing what needs to be done to gain higher grades.	Analyses where aspects of the process need attention and increasing focus for development, although not always able to action this sufficiently.	Clearly identifies what needs to be done and is making efforts to apply strategies that supports development.	Identifies what is required and applies strategies accordingly. Aware of grading criteria and learning outcomes.	Highly aware of strategies used and makes adaptations to these in relation to the demands of the task for higher grades.
Academic Confidence	No comment.	High levels of anxious and insecure about academic work. Possibly failing assignments.	Feels unable to fully undertake assignment and struggles to complete assignments, obstacles too difficult to resolve. Overwhelmed.	Aspects of the task are able to be completed but others are very challenging e.g. referencing, structure.	Feels able to complete task but confidence might be shaken by a drop in grades.	Emerging confidence, feels more confident in some aspects than others.	Increasing confidence, often triggered by unexpected high grade.	Confident with most aspects of writing processes and academic work.	Highly confident in academic work, comfortable with what is asked of them and able to undertake tasks appropriately.
Professional Confidence	No comment.	Possibly in early stages in career and not confident in work place setting. High levels of anxiety evident.	Some confidence but easily unsettled by not gaining a promotion or disturbance in work-place.	Feels able to complete job role although awareness of own limitations.	Some anxiety about workplace but reasonably confident. Not experienced sufficiently to manage others.	Emerging confidence in securing new role or moving settings. Awareness of areas of development.	Enjoys the challenges of role, keen to develop own skills and experiences.	Verbalises confidence. Appreciates that still has room for development. Not always able to manage difficulties confidently. Gains promotion, feels increasing autonomy in practice and to lead others.	Self declared high levels of confidence typically based on lengthy experience in sector. Feels able to manage difficulties and deal with unusual situations competently.

Appendix G: Amber's Example of Radar Graph Scoring with Data from transcripts

	Planning	Translating	Reviewing	Central executive	Academic Confidence	Professional Confidence
Radar graph score	4	5	5	6	2	8
From Transcript One	'I'll sort of sit down, and plan it' 'I wrote a bit of a plan um… deciding where the child was, the story bit that what I call the introduction, I did that cos that's where she is'. 'once I feel happy with what I'm gonna do, I'll sort of sit down, and plan it, it's like the first one in 101, if I'm interested in what I've got to do'	'I was trying to, I was trying to write to the words and cutting bits out, and she [her daughter] said 'no Mother, put everything down that you want, look at it, and then…', actually edit it from there, but everything you think, just blast it all out, and then cut it down, and then actually that works better'. 'Yeah, but no now I just put the lot down ' – then edits 'well in the first one I wrote it all down and then put it on the computer, so I've come a long way'.	'Mary was saying today editing wise, is actually edit it from there, but everything you think, just blast it all out, and then cut it down, and then actually that works better'. 'But it was good for me actually last Thursday to have the day off as well, cos I spent like most of the day sort of titivating my report, and doing my reference list and things like that'	'Actually some of the things there like the two long quotes, they were my quotes from OFSTED, and my daughter said to me 'you've got too many quotes mum', but I didn't want to take them out because… to me that made it better, and I would just rather lose the marks than compromise what I wanted to say' 'I can't… I talk how I talk, so I talk from the heart, so that's not academic.' 'I'm not very computer literate really' ' But it's about building up, it's about building up my repertoire isn't it?' [of knowledge]	'through the week I didn't understand the question to the essay, it was explained in class and I still didn't understand it. And all of a sudden I came home and there was this bright red rash and I found I'd got a headache, I didn't feel well… so I said to [the tutor] 'will you come and explain', so she did, she came and explained it fully, which made it an awful lot clearer. But all of a sudden I just burst into tears, I know, it's because I couldn't see- I couldn't see the end, and if I can't see the end, I can't do it'. 'Because if I can't see the end, I can't do it, and I have a fear of failure'	19 years of experience Manager of the setting

|	Planning	Translating	Reviewing	Central executive	Academic Confidence	Professional Confidence
Radar graph score	0	4	5	6	3	8
Transcript Two	No comment.	'My introduction's not long enough apparently' 'It's just knowing how to put it down, and my problem is referencing'	'I did this one first, quite quick- quite quickly at the beginning, and then I went back at the end and sort of put it right' 'But the trouble is who do you ask? Who do you ask?' [to be a literacy broker]	'I've got a list of different phrases that I should or shouldn't use, things like that, I mean it's really- it really made me laugh cos I didn't, you sometimes think you're the only one that doesn't know this, but you know when you find a book in the library and you click on it on the computer, you click the button that says 'cite', so it gives you the citation, so you copy and paste it straight into your reference list, sometimes you have to change it because it's not always right….' 'I mean I know it's going to be over 40 and I don't have a problem with that. I knew they were both passes'	' They [the marker] said it read well, but there's obviously some of the things that er- you know, obviously they don't like' 'continuity of marking, what one person likes and what another person doesn't like….cos I think two people have sat down er- when we got back last time, and side by side you could tell they must have been marked by different people, somebody got something underlined they didn't like, the other one got it 'good', so it is down to the fact that, I know it's impossible, every single person marks differently, but there is a lot of- a lot of difference, even down to referencing'	Getting awards from various professional bodies

	Planning	Translating	Reviewing	Central executive	Academic Confidence	Professional Confidence
Radar Graph Score	4	5	6	6	6	8
Transcript Three	'I probably just done [examples from practice], and wrapped them both into one…but the problem I wouldn't have- I wouldn't have been able to give you a taste of all of it if I did' 'the questions are not written…so you can see the end of it, if that makes sense, cos that last time I said to you that night didn't I, 'I cannot- I cannot get my head round the question in task two, I can do task one not a problem', but there's always one of the questions that I like and I can get on with, and there's always one of them that I can't see the end of it…'	' Yeah there's not enough words though a lot of the time is there? It's about being more…I think that's what goes all the way through it doesn't it, there is not enough words. I've spent ages this time, cos I wrote one… so I spent just as much time trying to knock it off as I have to write it' 'now we're all struggling……to chop them all down' ' but sometimes I found it difficult to…to put into practice what you actually do, write down what you actually do, I don't know if they can make sense of what I mean really'	'What I do is write something, put it away for a few days, then get it out, cos I end up with like whole boxes of information, then it's about putting them into each other, so I've sort of got that skill, I won't say it's perfect cos it's not'. 'My daughter- she'll proof-read it for me, and she said to me the other night 'you've actually nearly got it now Mother'	'I think just I've taken on board how to write it, and I think what I've actually learnt sometimes more so, is actually wrapping stuff together…' 'Trying to like one thing, like if Vygotsky said this way, that's fair enough, and actually in comparison Bandura said this, and then putting in…cos I've always known that you've got to do what they said and what you…but the thing is it's not always easy to do though is it, and it's actually looking at bands of information' '… Cos with social capital you look at everybody's perspective, and when you've done all that and then you go back and put your practice' had been starting with practice first in year one? 'I could have done it better though if I'd have just done it on…one activity or the other I think'.	'It's the best thing I've ever written' 'why?' (SM) I don't know' 'see I either get it or I don't get it' 'If I don't get seventy for that, I shall eat me hat', so I didn't have to eat my hat' 'But sometimes when I sit down to do it, it's actually easier than what I thought, but it's building up, I've probably put my own wall up haven't I.'	'Yeah, yeah. It's funny actually, I have conversations with parents now, and I hear myself saying all these big words and quoting theorists, and I think 'oh my god', you know, eighteen months ago I would never have said that, I'd say it won't make a difference to me, but it has'.

	Planning	Translating	Reviewing	Central executive	Academic Confidence	Professional Confidence
Graph Score	0	6	3	5	4	8
Transcript Four	'There's so much out there, so much out there, and I think yeah it says there: I read too much, it says my introduction's not very good, well I don't know, how was I supposed to…I don't know' 'Yeah, it's too complex really, the maths part of it added too much to it'.	'Yeah it's too much, far too much, far too much. So I did it in blocks anyway, I did the reading in blocks, did that, put it away for a couple of weeks and then come back to it'.	'Yeah cos it's separate you see, very separate bits' 'But with this one…I didn't really have a lot of time to get it back out and slip it together', 'The last few weeks when you're trying to draw it together it's like, you know, didn't fit, but there's nothing you can do about it, you've just got to carry on cos it's too late…to try and do it'.	'You're trying to please two people [markers] in one bit of essay, and I think it's been really bad this time, consistency has not been good, you can't please everybody can you?' 'I think I'm going to have to sit down with somebody and look at it. What would have been a good introduction? I mean…I don't know'. ' I don't like that sort of thing, I don't like asking around [for help]' 'Yeah…oh I see yeah, yes I just…trying to forget the big words cos it's a load of…yes'.	'It's rubbish, rubbish, worst I've ever done'. 'Not good enough though' 'I'd like to do better than that and I did the crappiest piece of work I've ever done, got thirties in one of them, crap, absolutely rubbish' 'I said: 'no at the end of the day I like them in there and I'm not taking them out, if I lose marks, I lose marks, but at the end of the day it's my work, and I won't- I won't compromise', but I compromised on that and that's where I shouldn't have done, I should have done what I wanted to do'.	Feels course has supported her understandings. Feels confident

Appendix H: Average Scores across the sample for each category

	Tutorial 1	Tutorial 2	Tutorial 3	Tutorial 4
Planning	4.4	4.1	3.7	4.9
Translating	5.0	5.8	5.2	5.5
Reviewing	5.4	5.2	4.7	5.3
Central Executive	5.0	5.5	5.5	5.5
Academic Confidence	4.7	4.9	4.5	5.6
Professional Confidence	5.2	5.9	5.5	6.1
Oral and written assessments grades	60.1	59.1	59.2	60.4
Written assessments grades	60.9	58.8	55.2	58.0

Appendix I: Amber's Radar Graph Data
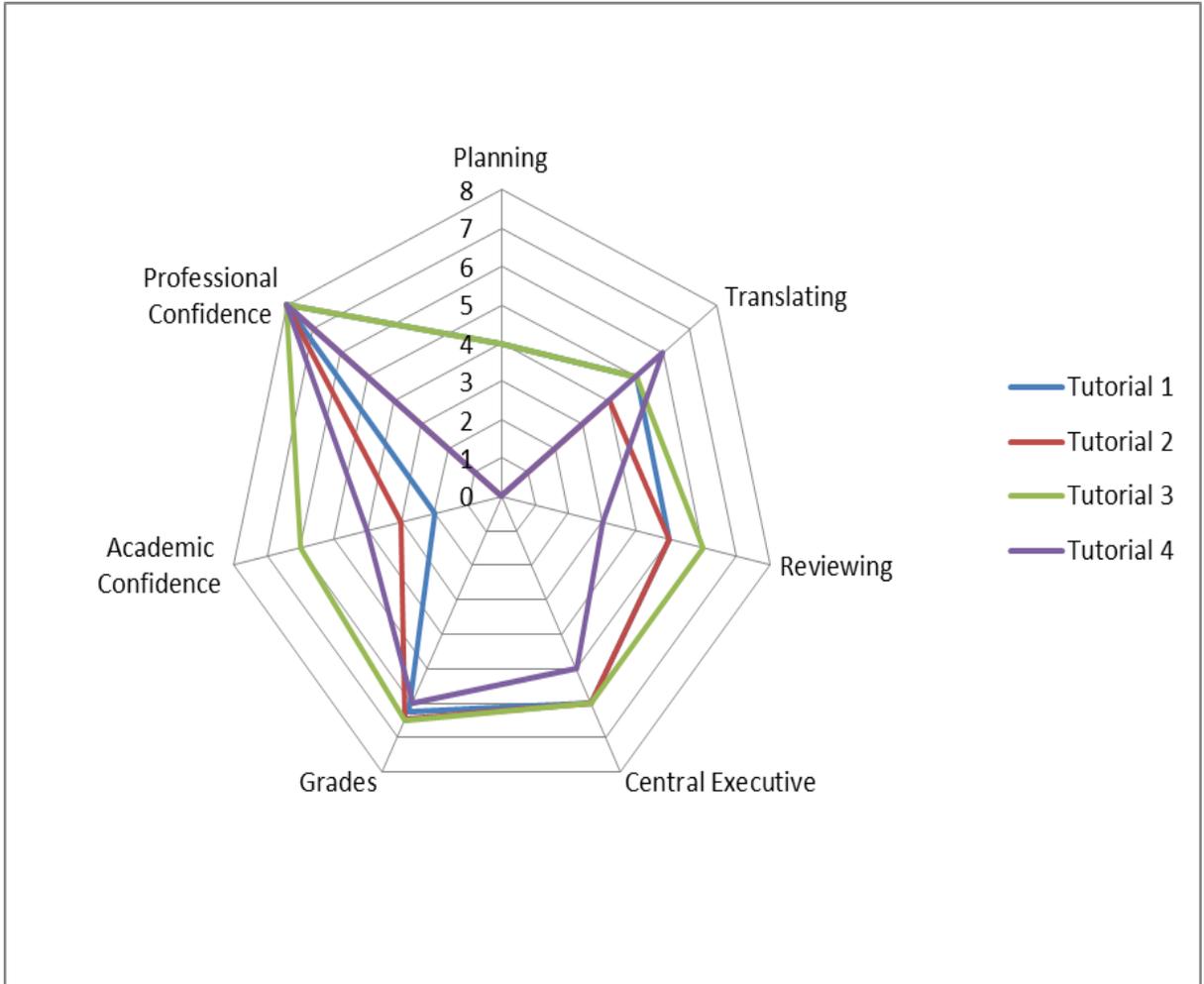
Appendix J: Examples from Indicative Reading List and Example of Directed Reading

Aubrey, K. & Riley, A. (2015). *Understanding and using educational theory*. London: Sage.

Bartlett, S. & Burton, D. (2016). *Introduction to education studies* (4th ed.). London: Sage.

Bedford, D. & Wilson, E. (2013). *Study skills for foundation degrees.* London: Routledge.

Blakemore, S., & Frith, U. (2005). *The learning brain, lessons for education.* Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

Cottrell, S. (2013). *The study skills handbook*. (4th ed.). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Dweck, C. (2007). *Mindset: the new psychology of success.* London: Random House.

Edmond, N., and Price, M. (2012). *Integrated working with children and young people: supporting development from birth to nineteen.* London: Sage.

The directed reading text used for the taught session in module one as discussed on page 138:

Blakemore, S., & Frith, U. (2005). *The learning brain, lessons for education.* Oxford: Blackwell Publishing. Chapters 1 and 2.

Appendix K: Scores and Ranking for Grades and Central Executive

	Ranking for Central Executive Score	Grade average 1st Yr	Grade average 2nd Yr	Grade average overall	Ranking for grades using overall grade average	2nd year versus 1st year
Tom	1	65	68	66	1	3.0%
Amber	4	64	63	63	3	-1.0%
Zoe	3	65	67	66	1	2.5%
Philippa	1	62	68	65	2	5.5%
Mary	8	61	60	60	5	-0.8%
Laura	5	62	60	61	4	-1.8%
Lucy	10	60	59	59	6	-0.8%
Mary	7	59	62	61	4	3.5%
Mariea	2	55	48	51	9	-7.8%
Louise	6	53	54	53	7	0.5%
Rachel	11	53	51	52	8	-1.3%
Isobel	9	Data not included due to non-submissions				

Key = Drop in grade