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ART TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL IDENTITIES AND ATTITUDES TO PROMOTION: A NARRATIVE STUDY

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A thesis submitted to the University of Huddersfield
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for
the degree of Master of Arts by Research

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Abstract

This research springs from my reflections on my own experiences as an artist, art teacher and senior manager in schools, FE and HE, and aims to find out why so few art teachers make the progression to senior leadership. It examines how they articulate their professional identities and their attitudes to promotion. In order to do this, the thesis reviews the contested concept of professionalism, and looks at how this can be applied to artists, to teachers, and to art teachers in particular. It then reports on the data from the interviews before offering interpretation of what the data means for these teachers.

The study was conducted through narrative life history interviews, enabling in-depth responses from the participants by giving them time to explore their professional identities. As the interviewees are art graduates, I sought graphic as well as verbal responses from them. The production of these images, in advance of their interviews, required reflective time in their production, allowing them to be better prepared for the interviews. The images also formed a focus for discussion, which enabled the participants to interpret their own images.

One of the participants is already an assistant principal, but prioritises her identity as an art teacher. The others all demonstrate both ambivalence about any promotion which would reduce their contact time in the art room, and a reluctance to take on senior roles which are seen as managerialist and driven by data and targets. In the conclusion I argue that this reluctance to seek senior management positions both weakens the status of art within the school, and denies their creative skills to whole school management and development.

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Abbreviations

BERA	British Education Research Association
DfE	Department for Education
DfES	Department for Education and Science
HE	Higher Education
HoD	Head of Department
HoF	Head of Faculty
ITT	Initial teacher Training
NASUWT	National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers
NCSL	National College for School Leadership
NFER	National Foundation for Educational Research
NSEAD	National Society for Education in Art and Design
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education
PGCE	Post Graduate Certificate in Education
RIBA	Royal Institute of British Architects
SLT *	Senior Leadership Team
SMT *	Senior Management Team
TEFL	Teaching English as a Foreign Language
TLR	Teaching and Learning Responsibility Post

* SLT and SMT are used interchangeably, in the context of which term the participants use.

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The five participants in my research, who took the time and effort to produce the requested artwork and to take part in extensive interviews; as Denzin says ‘Doing interviews is a privilege granted to us, not a right we have’. (Denzin, 2001, p.24)

Officers of the National Society for Education in Art and Design (NSEAD), and the convenor and members of the NSEAD regional network I worked with, all of whom were generous with their welcome and generous with their time and encouragement.

The many members of the NSEAD Facebook page for their responses to my various crowd-sourcing questions.

Finally, the art teachers and senior managers I have worked with over the years, who got me wondering about why the two sets seemed mutually exclusive.

Chapter 1. Introduction

This research springs from my reflections on my own experiences as an artist, art teacher and senior manager in schools, FE and HE (see Annex 1 for a biographical note), and aims to find out why so few art teachers make the progression to senior leadership. It uses narrative life history interviews, enabling in-depth responses from the participants by giving them time to explore their professional identities. As the interviewees are art graduates, I have sought graphic as well as verbal responses from them.

In 1982 the Gulbenkian Foundation called for secondary school arts teachers to aim for senior management positions (Robinson, 1982). However, very few specialist teachers of art and design become head teachers of secondary schools. Bennett's research (1985) demonstrated this 30 years ago, and recent correspondence with the National Society for Education in Art and Design (NSEAD) indicates that it still applies. Information from the Department for Education shows that there are 5,290 secondary heads; yet only 140 of these heads have post A level qualifications in art, or just 2.6%. In 2013 there were 12,700 staff teaching art in secondary schools, 5.5% of the total workforce (DfE, 2013) so one in every 100 art teachers becomes a head, compared to three in 100 historians and four in 100 biologists. Of the other heads, 7% have qualifications in maths, 11% in English, 30% in science, 15% in history/geography, 6% in modern foreign languages, 6% in business/economics, 6% in physical education, and 5% in design technology/engineering (DfE, personal communication, July 31, 2014). [See Annex 2 for a full list.]

This matters for a number of reasons. Education in the arts is just as important for cognitive and intellectual development as literacy or numeracy (Heads for the Arts, no date). Headteachers and senior managers who understand the role of art in education are needed to support the arts against the threat from current government education policies to the status of art and design in the curriculum.

In the 2010 White Paper, *The Importance of Teaching*, the Secretary of State announced the introduction of the English Baccalaureate, which only recognises 'good passes' in GCSEs in English, mathematics, sciences, a language and a humanities subject. Subsequently art and design was removed from the statutory curriculum in KS4 (although pupils have a statutory entitlement to study subjects in this area), and GCSE discount codes were applied, which mean that if a pupil takes, for example, GCSE Fine Art and GCSE Photography or Textiles, the school can only count one result towards their performance indicators. NSEAD's national survey of art educators found that learning opportunities for pupils in art, craft and design at key stages 3 and 4 in many state schools have reduced significantly and that:

'Performance measures that exclude or marginalise art, craft and design are impacting on key stage 3 and 4 provision, pupil choice, gallery and museum visits, specialist staff, professional development and the perceived value of the subject in state schools.' (2014, p.2)

These policies have resulted in declining entries for GCSE art and design, and one in six schools dropping art as a Key Stage 4 option altogether (Cultural Learning Alliance, 2013; Greevy, Knox, Nunney and Pye, 2013). They have been described by the general secretary of NSEAD, as ‘the most toxic thing to happen to art and design in education in my professional lifetime’ (BBC, 2013). Adams (2011) is one of many voices militating against this:

Art educators have a strong reputation and tradition for their commitment to the social emancipation and justice that can be achieved through education. Now more than ever it is time for our schools, colleges and universities to make a stand to defend the arts against austerity cuts, and the impoverished and reductive view of education that informs them.

(p.159)

This research aims to find out why so few art teachers make the progression to senior leadership, and thereby to contribute to a deeper understanding of their professional identities, and the social, cultural, institutional, and political factors that influence them. It may contribute to encouraging more art specialists to at least consider moving into school leadership positions – a hope shared by the Deputy General Secretary of NSEAD,

The reasons for the lack of arts specialists at leadership will be varied and need careful unpicking, this [research] could support more people to consider leadership. (Leach, personal communication, May 30, 2013)

Reseach questions

In order to examine this, the research involved five main questions. It asked the participants to give an account of their teaching careers, their ambitions, whether they had worked in the art world before they started teaching and why they came into teaching. It looked at how they articulate their professional identities, including if and how they differentiate themselves from teachers of other subject and how strongly they identified themselves as artists and/or as teachers; in preparation for this they were asked to produce an image of an art teacher. They were asked about any interest in promotion beyond their current level, and what routes they might be interested in for promotion. Lastly it examined their feelings about senior management positions, their perceptions of those in senior roles, and whether they might be interested in a senior role; this involved producing an image of a senior manager.

Outline of chapters

In Chapter Two I give a brief account of the contested notion of professionalism and how its use has changed in recent years, and then examine how this applies in the art world, to teachers in general and what it means in promotion and progression to senior management in secondary schools, and finally to art teachers in particular.

Chapter Three accounts for the methodology and methods I have chosen, some of the lenses I have used to examine the data, and reflects on the process and experience of carrying out the research.

Chapter Four introduces the five participants in the research, and examines the data from their interviews.

In Chapter Five I discuss the data and offer some interpretation of what it means in the light of my research questions and other issues that arose from the interviews.

Finally, in Chapter Six I look at how the research answered my questions, and other issues that arose in the course of the research.

Chapter 2. Concepts of professionalism and their implications for art teachers

Introduction

In understanding the career development of art teachers, as artists and as teachers, I begin with the contested notion of professionalism and its various conceptualisations. How have these changed in recent years? How do concepts of professionalism apply in the art world? And to teachers in general? What does it mean for promotion and progression to senior management in secondary schools, and finally for art teachers who try to combine the two roles of teacher and artist?

What is professionalism?

Professionalism is, and has been, a contested concept with a ‘chequered history of use and contrasting (even contradictory) interpretations in the sociological literature’ (Evetts, 2003, p.399). In his overview of the history of professionalism, Crook points out that ‘the application of historical perspectives confirms professionalism to be an artificial construct, with ever-changing and always-contested definitions and traits’ (2008, p.23).

Its traditional application to high income, high-status, privileged occupational groups such as Noordegraaf’s (2011a) ‘classic’ professions, medicine and law, is primarily limited to English speaking cultures (Evetts, 2002, 2009; Fournier, 1999). This notion of professionalism is based on trust, discretion, competence and professionals’ exclusive ownership of their areas of expertise. In this tradition, professionals were seen as elite groups that were separate from the state and from state control, and were self regulating, with their own professional institutions controlling aspects of their practice and conduct. These institutions have been seen as giving their members immunity from external scrutiny and regulation through an adherence to ‘collegial work relations of mutual assistance and support rather than hierarchical, competitive or managerialist control’ (Evetts, 2003, p.407). Freidson (1999) emphasises higher education, seeing it as a universal requirement of professional status. In Britain, professional identity has been based on a sense of common experience, understanding and expertise, which is developed and maintained through shared educational backgrounds and by membership of professional associations and societies. There is also a moral imperative for professionals to be committed to the needs of their clients, and to put these above their own or their employer’s needs (Evetts, 2003).

However, professionalism has undergone change which Evetts (2009) has interpreted as either the state’s response to problems arising from the high costs of public services, or as its response to the difficulties of controlling these powerful professional groups. As a result there are seen to be two forms of professionalism, the traditional one which is controlled from within the group and another, primarily in the service industries, which is imposed from outside, usually by the state, and which is controlled by the employing organisation’s management. As Whitty points out, most professionals are now either employed or regulated by governments and that ‘Professional status, therefore, is typically dependent on the sort of bargain an occupation has struck with the state’ (2008, p.32). In

this second model, autonomy is replaced by targets and performance indicators through which they have to justify their receipt of public funding, and which enable the performance of both themselves and their institutions to be measured and compared, and in which ‘Accountability has been operationalised as audit’ (Evetts, 2003, p.408).

However, when we consider the professional status and identity of artists, it is far more difficult to apply such specific categories. How might the notion of professionalism be applied in this creative sphere?

Professionalism in the art world

Defining professional status for artists is difficult; indeed, Mitchell and Karttunen (1991), seeking to find a definition of an artist, are faced with the dilemma of:

When we ask “what is an artist” we are dealing with more existential or ontological problems: what are the inherent characteristics of artistic work and artists themselves. (p.1)

UNESCO attempts to be broad and inclusive in its definition of an artist:

‘Artist’ is taken to mean any person who creates or gives creative expression to, or re-creates works of art, who considers his [sic] artistic creation to be an essential part of his life, who contributes in this way to the development of art and culture and who is or asks to be recognized as an artist, whether or not he is bound by any relations of employment or association. (1980, p.5)

Hope uses the term practitioner instead of artist to ‘denote someone who practically applies his or her creative ideas [...] Some may consider their practice their profession, sometimes it may be considered a hobby’ (2011, p.180). An artist can hardly be described as professional based solely on whether they make a living from their art, as clearly only a small minority do so. There have, however, been a number of attempts to reach a definition of a professional artist, including some from arts associations, and some from inland revenue services seeking to define who may be eligible for particular tax benefits: as a result there are a variety of definitions. Some definitions are narrow and exclusive, and introduce some degree of appraisal to back up the identification of professional status. For example, the Arts Council of Ireland views a professional artist as being anyone “who either makes or endeavours to make a living from their work. A professional artist will also be defined through peer recognition” (cited in IFACCA, 2002, p.3).

Mitchell and Karttunen (1991) suggest four possible ways of identifying a professional artist; self definition, in which an artist is a person who says so or who identifies themselves as an artist in the Census, or who applies for official grants; definition based on production, where an artist is someone who carries out productive artistic activities over a long, continuous period of time; definition by society at large, when artists are acknowledged as such within society, and finally, definition by peers, recognition as a legitimate colleague, which may involve some formal criteria, such as educational qualifications or a history of exhibiting work.) This continuity of practice, seeing a professional artist as someone who ‘will consciously intend to produce such valuable original products over time, i.e.

that the product will not be a result of luck or chance.' (Gingell, 2006, p.5) has also been emphasised by others.

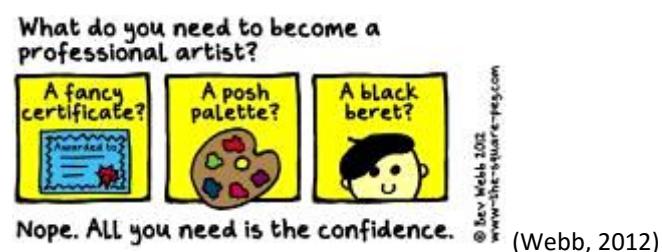
A report for the Arts Council England finds an number of issues which impact on artists, including job insecurity and the high risk nature of artistic careers, a high level of second or multiple job holding and 'the lack of clear definition of the professional artist' (Jeffreys, 2004, p.4). Research for the Australia Council for the Arts has focused on 'serious, practising professional artists', and defined these characteristics as:

[S]eriousness is judged in terms of a self-assessed commitment to artistic work as a major aspect of the artist's working life [...] The practising aspect means that we confine our attention to artists currently working or seeking to work in their chosen occupation. The term professional is intended to indicate a degree of training, experience or talent. (Throsby and Hollister, 2003, p.14)

Similarly, one might contrast the way in which the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) and the Architects' Registration Board seek to ensure high standards of professional conduct and performance from all their members through a code of professional conduct, with the 'the fluid, elastic or even vague definition' (Swindells, Atkinson and Sibley, 2001, p.130) of professionalism for artists. With its diverse individual practices, its basis on skills rather than a body of knowledge, and without a central overseeing association (such as the RIBA) it is almost impossible to develop an all embracing concept of professionalism for creative artists; 'the professional artist or designer may be counted upon to do their job but not necessarily to define their job' (Swindells et al, p.133). This is similar to re-phrasing Barnett Newman's famous quotation 'Aesthetics is for the artist as ornithology is for the birds' (Barnett Newman Foundation, 2005) to 'Professionalism is for the artist as ornithology is for the birds'

Webb expresses artists' professionalism more simply:

Figure 1.



Next I look at how the various conceptions of professionalism can be applied to teachers (if teaching can indeed be seen as a profession), and what the current state of teachers' professionalism means for teachers.

Professionalism in teaching

Unlike medicine, law or accountancy, teaching does not have a Royal College or a Chartered Institution; there is however, a College of Teaching with a Royal Charter of 1849. Formed as the College of Preceptors it was founded to certify the competence of teachers 'particularly in the Private Schools of England and Wales' (The College of Teachers, n.d.). Wilkins (2013), in partnership with the

College of Teaching, argues in favour of a potential Royal College of Teaching, developed autonomously by teachers themselves, and points out that if increased self-governance is created by legislation, it can only be regarded as ‘quasi-autonomy’, subject to political change, and cites the creation of the General Teaching Council for England in 1998 and its abolition in 2012 as example.

Although teaching has often been seen as a profession, it has been argued that for teachers, professionalism is still an aspiration (Socgett, 1989). A number of writers have commented on how the move from university based *initial teacher education* to *initial teacher training* emphasised this, as did the shift from *professional development* to *in-service training* (Day, 1997; Swann, McIntyre, Hargreaves & Cunningham, 2010; Whitty, 2000). Furthermore, increasing government control has imposed a detailed, centralised curriculum and stringent performance targets on schools, regulated and enforced by inspection. Not only do teachers deeply resent this control of what they deliver and how they deliver it; it has also led them to question the nature of their professionalism (as noted by Hargreaves, 2000; Biesta, 2005; Leaton Gray, 2006; Fielding, 2006; Socgett, 1989). Indeed, today a large majority (84%) of teachers and school leaders feel their professionalism is not respected (NASUWT, 2013).

There are, however, various ways of describing what it means to be a professional teacher; professionalism, based on their personal conduct and standards, and the quality of what is delivered, or professionalisation, concerning their status, both within the school and within society, and the level of rewards they receive. Alternatively professionalism can be based on teachers’ functionalism, or on their character and identity; other studies have identified teachers’ professionalism as a combination of both competencies and values (Hargreaves, 2000; Pollard, 2010). Commitment can also be seen as a key element of teachers’ professional identities, and shows a correspondence between the level of teachers’ commitment and levels of pupil attainment (Sammons et al, 2007). When teachers can find and maintain a sense of meaning in their work through their personal and professional actions and their moral purpose – what Taylor (2015) has described as occupational consciousness – this helps them to develop and sustain this sense of commitment over the course of their careers.

It has been argued that the effect of successive governments’ attempts to shift the humanist traditions of schooling with its intrinsic, non-instrumental values towards a more functional view characterised by competency based, results driven teaching, has been to ‘erode teachers’ autonomy and challenge teachers’ individual and collective professional and personal identities’ (Day, 2007, p.598). A similar description of teachers’ professionalism sees it as currently based on the demands of government, and focused on teachers’ behaviours – how they teach – rather than on their attitudes, a situation which Evans dates to the ‘statutory performance management system, introduced by the Labour government in 2007’ (2011, p.851). Echoing Wilkins’ call for a Royal College, Evans agrees that ‘the real shape of teacher professionalism will be that that teachers forge for themselves’ (p.868), but adds that this will have to fit within the limits of what government demands of teachers.

This leads to a form of professionalism, identified by Sachs (2001) as ‘entrepreneurial’, which she equates with efficient, responsible, accountable teachers who demonstrate compliance to externally imposed policy imperatives with consistently high quality teaching as measured by externally set performance indicators, and who are led by regulative, externally defined, standards. The alternative to this, which Sachs describes as ‘activist’, is driven by a belief in the importance of teaching in the best interests of student learning and improving the conditions in which this can occur. The former, Sachs argues, is the desired product of the performative, managerialist agendas while the latter suggests inquiry led teaching in which teaching and learning transcend the confines of government diktat.

Nowadays, teachers’ professionalism has been described as ‘post-professional’, where teachers struggle to counter centralised curricula, testing regimes and external surveillance (Hargreaves, 2000, p.153). Ball also uses ‘post-professionalism’ to describe a culture in which teachers and other public services workers succeed only by satisfying and complying with others’ definitions of their work (Ball, S., 2003). This matches Evetts’ ‘organisational professionalism’ which defines practitioner/client relations, sets achievement targets and performance indicators which regulate and limit the exercise of discretion and prevent the service ethic that has been so important in professional work (2005, p.8).

However, as ‘excellence can only be motivated, it cannot be coerced’ (Stronach, Corbin, McNamara, Stark & Warne, 2002, p.132), the motivation to strive for excellence in teaching is more likely to come from teachers feeling pride in the expertise needed to carry out the complex job of teaching in the classroom (Swann et al, 2010), from commitment to their pupils and their subject area – Taylor’s occupational consciousness (2015) – and from belief in teaching in the best interests of student learning (Sachs, 2001).

In the following section I look briefly at the reasons teachers may – or may not – seek promotion, and the routes they can follow to achieve this.

Progression and promotion

For professionals, their careers are often the most important part of their lives in terms of satisfaction and success, and there is an expectation that they will aim for promotion, prestige and higher salary levels (Maclean, 1992, cited in Coldwell, Maxwell & McCaig, 2010; Day & Gu, 2007). For secondary teachers there are three basic routes to follow in pursuit of these professional goals; through taking on responsibility for a subject area as head of department or head of faculty (the academic route), or for a particular group of pupils as head of year, key stage or house (the pastoral route), or for an area such as examinations or staff development (the administrative route) (DfE, 2013). At the highest level of school leadership, headteachers used to be seen as experienced, authoritative – and authoritarian – teachers, who had achieved promotion through acknowledged excellence in their classrooms (Barrett-Baxendale & Burton, 2009, p.91). However, legislation and the large number of government

initiatives over the last thirty years, leading to increased bureaucracy, accountability, monitoring and managerialism have changed both the nature of headship and teachers' perceptions of it (DfES, 2007; Smith, 2011a). These changes led the National College for School Leadership (NCSL) to inform the DfES independent enquiry into school leadership that '43% of deputy heads and 70% of middle leaders say they do not aspire to headship, for reasons that include accountability pressures and other work stress' (DfES, 2007, p.2). Research for the NCSL has found that many staff now see their ultimate careers as faculty heads and pastoral heads (Hobbs, 2006, p.22).

Most teachers who become headteachers do so for idealistic reasons, and share a strong focus on pupil achievement (Smith, 2011a). As agents of change, they need authority in order to realise their vision and make a difference to the lives of children and young people. Many classroom teachers, however, think that becoming a head would mean abandoning their pupil-centred values, becoming isolated and unpopular and see headship as being risky (Smith, 2011a). Indeed, many heads themselves now feel stressed and talk about leaving the job (Smith, 2011a; Thomson, 2009).

Finally, the next section looks at how the professionalisms of artist and of teacher are combined in the artist/teacher, and the challenges which arise from this for the school teacher who tries to remain a practitioner of their own art.

The artist/teacher: a combination of the two

Between 18% and 24% of art school graduates go into some form of teaching (Harvey & Blackwell, 1999; Ball, L., 2003; Pollard, Conner and Hunt, 2008; Oakley, 2009; Ball, Pollard & Stanley, 2010). One of the reasons for this may be that people wanting a creative career often try to finance their creative work through teaching (Taylor and Littleton, 2008). But this dual identity may be problematic: art teachers are, for the most part, educated first as artists and second as teachers (Prentice, 1995; Zwirn, 2005; Adams, 2007; Imms and Ruanglertbutr, 2012), which may have serious effects on how they develop their professional identities both as artists and as teachers (Zwirn, 2005). Those who try to combine the often conflicting roles of artist and teacher may have to confront difficult questions about how and where they apply their creativity and about their professional and personal integrity and identity (Prentice, 1995).

One survey found that up to a quarter of art teachers said they had worked or were working as artists, although there was general agreement that the pressures of teaching left them with little time to pursue this (Downing and Watson. 2004). Those who manage to maintain this dual practice frequently use the term 'artist-teacher' (Daichendt, 2009; Graham & Zwirn, 2010; Hall, 2010; Hatfield, Montana & Deffenbaugh, 2006; Radley, 2010; Zwirn, 2005a; Zwirn, 2009) to distinguish themselves from those who are not practicing artists, and to emphasise the important relationship between their own art and their teaching. Indeed, art teachers who still practise as artists were viewed as more effective teachers by OFSTED, who found that their commitment to high standards in their own work enabled them to transfer these into their teaching practice (OFSTED, 2003, 2012).

However, the folklore of the authentic artist, who is prepared to suffer hardship in order to be true to their art, may mean that anything short of total commitment to art making can be viewed as failure. As a result teaching may be seen as an abandonment of artistic ambition for the relative security of a job as an art teacher, and a feeling of having ‘sold out’. As Radley puts it, ‘Engaging in artistic practice is frequently viewed as requiring total dedication and thus the art teacher is only ever able to act as a posturing amateur’ (2010, p.13); in a similar vein, Evetts describes how, once self-defined as a professional artist, ‘imposing time or other limits on one’s efforts is rendered illegitimate’ (2009, p.24).

But the idea of the artist teacher is not new; it could be used to describe professional artists from the Renaissance onwards who taught art as a trade to apprentices. Currently it is used to refer to professional artists who teach in higher education (which has a tradition in which art lecturers are expected to be art practitioners as a condition of employment), or to an art teacher in general education who also makes art. The term artist teacher is used to denote a mode of working in which personal art making and art teaching are complementary. However, the time and energy they devote to each practice may vary according to personal desire or circumstances. For example, full-time art teachers sometimes make art in their spare time; full-time artists sometimes teach in their spare time, and some artist teachers work part-time at both activities.

There are further issues for art and design graduates moving into secondary education, and for art teachers who maintain their own practice. Contemporary fine art (and design) is noted for its diversity. Artists are chosen for patronage because they display individualism and originality in their work. Consequently these qualities are looked for and encouraged in art schools and become an integral aspect of the identities of many aspiring artists. Undergraduate courses in art and design are focussed on making, and aim to develop students’ creative capacities within ‘a context of professional practice as artists, craftspeople or designers’ (Prentice, 1995, p.11). The art teacher, who has been educated to make art in this environment of relative freedom and who may have been encouraged to challenge convention, could find the conformist culture of schools difficult to negotiate and at odds with aspects of their artist identity (Adams, 2007). This represents a transformational challenge for intending secondary art teachers with specialised experience and education in an art discipline:

For an artist or designer, the decision to train as a teacher raises fundamental and complex questions about professional integrity, creative energy, belief systems and self-image. (Prentice, 2000, p.9).

Another problem for the artist teacher is the nature of what has been described as ‘school art’ (Steers, 2004; Radley, 2010; Wild, 2011), which is seen as ‘formulaic in subject, style and concept’ (Steers, 2004, p.26). Radley and Hyde both echo the concerns of all the teachers interviewed in this study that the pressures of achieving examination targets leads to highly structured, teacher led courses which are diametrically opposed to the creative practices in the art world and in higher education. As Burgess and Addison point out, art teachers are ‘victims of circumstance, trapped by tradition, timetables, examinations and restricted and restricting resources’ (2004, p.25).

Summary

This chapter has looked at the literature concerning professionalism as a concept, and at professionalism in the art world, in teaching, including promotion and progression within teaching, and how it applies to those art specialists who identify themselves as artist/teachers.

In the next chapter I give an account of the methodology and methods I have chosen, and reflect on the process and experience of carrying out the research.

Chapter 3. Methodology

Introduction

In this chapter I account for various aspects of the methodology I used in the research. These include ethical issues, my preconceptions and how I dealt with these, my target group, the sampling procedures I used and a brief introduction to the sample. I go on to consider the process and experience of interviewing, how and why I used visual data in the research and how I transcribed the interviews. Lastly it looks at how I approached synthesising the data, and two of the theoretical lenses (communities of practice and emotional geographies) I used in doing so.

As I aimed to understand from the teachers' own perspectives the issues involved in why very few art teachers progress into senior management positions, a qualitative approach to the research seemed most appropriate. Qualitative research aims to describe people's lived experiences in order to gain and form insights for future use (Kvale, 2008; Radclyffe-Thomas, 2011). My chosen methodology is narrative life history interviews which allow for what Denzin (1989) calls 'thick description [which] inserts history into experience' (p.83) and which aim to elicit in-depth responses from the participants by giving them time to explore their professional identities. Ponterotto's definition of thick description says that it is 'the researcher's task of both describing and interpreting observed social action (or behavior) within its particular context.' (2006, p.543).

I was able to establish context to a greater or lesser extent by carrying out three interviews in the participants' school, the sites of their professional lives, and one in the teacher's home with some of her artwork on display. The fifth was in my home but with a teacher whose department I know well. By using a limited number of questions I was able to allow participants space and time for thought and response, which was enhanced in four interviews through their preparation time in producing images in advance of their interviews (see below).

Safeguarding

These last two interviews took place during school holidays, so in both cases the respondents had been asked to choose the location of their interview. One had known me professionally for a number of years, and suggested my home. The Social Research Association's [SRA] ethical guidelines state that 'Both researcher and subject could gain extra protection from having a witness to the process' (SRA, 2003, p. 30), and as my wife was going to be home that day, I agreed. The other chose her own home; as I did not want to inconvenience her and was reluctant to infringe on her private space, I checked back with her that this was acceptable. She confirmed that this was her preference, and that she had arranged for her partner to work from home on that day. As with all interviews carried out at a distance, I contacted home to say I had arrived safely, and then that I had finished and was leaving.

Ethics

This research follows the BERA guidelines (2011) and complies with legal requirements under the Data Protection Act (1998). Following BERA guidelines (2011), the initial questionnaire (Annex 4) made clear that respondents' involvement was voluntary, that they could decline to answer any questions, and that by returning the form they were consenting for their data to be used. Only participants who gave voluntary informed consent, based on full information about the research, were interviewed. The basis for this consent was an information sheet about the research which had a consent form attached (see Annex 5). The information sheet also made it clear that participants were free to decline to answer any questions they chose not to and had the right to withdraw at any time and withdraw their data. In consideration of possible negative outcomes of the research (Roulston, 2010) the consent form advised talking to 'a friend, relative or counsellor afterwards' if the interview raised any distressing issues. After obtaining signed consent forms I checked that participants taking part in interviews were happy to continue with that permission before and after the interview.

A particularly important consideration is confidentiality (BERA, 2011). Participants were invited to choose an alias before commencing their interviews, and care has been taken to see that participants' real names are not disclosed at any point. Hammersley (2010) questions the use of gendered pseudonyms for interviewees; although gender is not a specific issue in this study, I have used gendered labels to reflect the gender balance of the sample. Any identifiable information (such as the university where they studied, or the schools where they have taught) was changed or removed during transcription. When writing the thesis I have been careful to ensure that it does not contain language or terminology which is biased on grounds such as race or gender.

Legal requirements under the Data Protection Act (1998) have been complied with. In particular, signed consent forms, audio recordings and field notes are stored in a locked cabinet, and identifiable digital recordings and transcriptions are kept on a password protected, encrypted storage device.

These ethical issues were covered in the formal research proposal, which was approved by the School of Education and Professional Development's Graduate Education Group on 24 January 2014. The section of the proposal dealing with ethics is attached at Annex 3.

Preconceptions

In planning this research I had to be aware of my own preconceptions; there were a number of these, and I had to be careful not to let these bias my research – although as Wolcott says, biases can have an important place in initiating research topics:

[L]et me put in a word on behalf of the much maligned term bias [...] The biases of our careers, our personalities and our situations constitute essential starting places for our research attention.' (1994, p.408)

In all the years I have spent in education, I have never met a headteacher who was an art teacher (and only one deputy), and met very few art teachers who aspired to senior positions beyond head of department. Based on my own experience and knowledge of art teachers I had worked with in the past and Bennett's earlier research (1985), my initial surmise was that substantial numbers of art specialists are split between their teaching careers and their desire to continue their own professional practice and this distracts them and delays their progression in teaching, missing opportunities for early promotion. I had also considered a number of other possible explanations for this under-representation; one possibility might be prejudiced perceptions of art teachers from the established hierarchy. An alternative possibility was that since art departments tend to be smaller than English, maths or science, heads of art are seen as having less managerial experience. Another might be something in the psychological makeup of art teachers which makes them reluctant to take on such responsibility.

Accepting that in qualitative research 'the researcher is the research instrument' (Hammersley & Gomm, 1997) I have attempted to overcome bias by both acknowledging and reflecting on my position as an ex-art teacher and senior manager¹ (and on my empathy with art teachers), and believe that the time which has elapsed since I held those positions allows me to approach this research from a more distanced position. My own experience, and Bennett's research did present an attractive hypothesis, but the existence of a number of equally valid possibilities allowed me to discount this.

I tried to construct my research questions and my interview schedule to be neutral, employing open rather than leading questions. As soon as possible after each interview I made notes about how the interview had gone, and any concerns I had about my or the participants positions. Before transcribing each interview I listened to the recording several times to try to spot any points where I might have influenced the participants, listened to it again as I read the transcription, and again when I had synthesised the data to check that I had not overlooked or misinterpreted anything.

Target group

My participants came from one of NSEAD's regional networks. These are teachers who give up their own time to take part in network meetings and training, and who support each other through on-line forums, forming a strong community of practice. Having been an art teacher myself for 24 years allowed me to follow Adler and Adler's advice to researchers to choose a setting where they 'have a good familiarity with the scene' (2012, p.10). People's difficulties in speaking confidently in research interviews have been related to issues of unequal power relations (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006; Knapik, 2006). I hoped that having a shared background with the participants, and being viewed as a retired person with an academic hobby, would reduce this; however, I needed to be careful about issues to do with insider/outsider research (Eisner, 2001; Hammersley, 2010). Some subjectivity is

¹ See Annex 1 for a brief autobiography.

inevitable in this study, not least because it uses qualitative methods, and so I had to be conscious of my own position in relation to the research and how this might shape the enquiry and its outcomes. While my time as an art teacher provided the contextual practitioner motive for the choice of the topic, with the distance of another 17 years I hoped to be able to exercise a more reflexive and disconnected approach to the research, by, for example, not allowing myself or my participants to make assumptions about shared knowledge or experience. This was helped by the fact that teaching, schools and the curriculum have moved on considerably since I was a teacher (as one of my interviewees pointed out).

As part of the process of building a rapport with potential respondents, which a number of writers see as essential to the process of qualitative research (Connelly & Clandinin, 2000; Mills, 2001; DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006; Knapik, 2006), I attended a network meeting, and had the opportunity to speak to the group about my research and why I was doing it, including where my interest in the topic came from. As I would be asking them about their careers, I felt it only fair to tell them about mine, partly as an element of exchange but also to establish my position as having been heavily involved in art and art education, although now having some considerable separation from it; Sikes (2006) points out that researchers should be willing to share their own experiences and perceptions as part of a two-way interchange. I outlined the nature of the contributions I was hoping for from them, emphasising the voluntary nature of their participation, how their anonymity would be assured, and how I would select potential interviewees from those who indicated their willingness to be interviewed.

In a study of respondents' views of being involved in research Knapik (2006) shows that their reasons for participation included being curious about the researcher's interest in the topic; that it was something that a researcher had decided was worth looking at and commenting on and that they could see themselves as potentially having the relevant experiences to contribute to knowledge on the specific topic. My session at the meeting was analogous to 'setting out a market-stall' (Woods, 1985, p.14) and inviting the teachers to buy into the research.

Sampling

A short questionnaire (see Annex 5) was used initially for mapping experiences across this group of art teachers. It asked about topics such as specific subject studied (to see if there were differences between fine art and design graduates), length of service, promoted posts held (if any), with open questions about their experiences and attitudes to promotion. They were also asked to indicate if they would be willing to take part in extended interviews. The questionnaire was distributed by email by the network convenor to 200 members of the network, and twenty were returned.

I intended to carry out interviews with four volunteers, as I was looking for the individuals' accounts of their own experiences and not trying to form any generalisations from these. Pragmatically, as this

was a part-time Masters by Research and I intended carrying out full transcriptions of the interviews, there would not be time for more (Mason, 2010; Adler & Adler, 2012; Bryman, 2012).

Merriam (2002) has the following advice for qualitative researchers:

[S]ince qualitative inquiry seeks to understand the meaning of a phenomenon from the perspectives of the participants, it is important to select a sample from which most can be learned. This is called a purposive or purposeful sample. (p.12)

Teddlie and Yu (2007) define purposive sampling as selecting research participants based on specific characteristics which will contribute to answering a research study's questions. For Polkinghorne (2005), the term "sampling" implies a representative sample of a population, from which findings can be applied to that population, and as a result prefers to use "selection". Participants are selected, not because they represent a population, but because 'they can provide substantial contributions to filling out the structure and character of the experience under investigation [and are] fertile exemplars of the experience for study' (2005, pp.139-140).

Using both the demographic information and the responses to the open questions in their questionnaires, I selected a short list of five participants whose particular characteristics, backgrounds, range of experience and attitudes to promotion were expected to generate rich data which would help illuminate the aims of the study. They were not intended to be representative of the population of art teachers, nor to produce anything that could be generalised across that population, but they were different lenses to examine my research questions through, chiming with Polkinghorne's view that 'The use of multiple participants serves to deepen the understanding of the investigated experience; it is not for the purpose of making claims about the distribution of the experience in a population' (2005, p.140). Although a specialist art teacher, one was subsequently excluded from the sample due to having a degree in film and theatre rather than in art and design. The gender ratio was three female to one male, reflecting the larger number of female art teachers in the network and nationally. These participants are introduced briefly below.

In advance of these interviews, I carried out an interview with an art teacher who was well known to me, both as an ex-student and as a teacher who was involved in Aimhigher² projects with me: she also fitted well with important criteria for my sample, being an experienced head of department with a fine art degree. I carried out this initial interview to test out my interview schedule, and to fit with Wolcott's suggestion that: 'Instead of "practicing" qualitative research, I suggest that the way to begin research is to begin research [...] proceed with a genuine study, not a pretend one or a warm up exercise.' (1994, p.400). As a result the data produced has been used as an additional source.

² Aimhigher (2004-2011) was an initiative by the Department for Education and Skills and the Higher Education Funding Council for England, aimed at widening participation in higher education, particularly among pupils from non-traditional backgrounds, minority groups and people with disabilities.

In an attempt to mitigate what Seawright and Gerring call ‘the dangers of selection bias introduced whenever researchers choose their cases in a purposive fashion’ (2008, p.295) my sampling was checked and agreed by my supervisor.

The sample

My five interviewees, including the trial interview, were (pseudonyms are used throughout) Lucinda, who is a head of department with a fine art degree and is unsure about promotion; Abbi, a classroom teacher with a textiles degree, also unsure about promotion; Anne, a head of department with a 3D design degree, who is not interested in promotion; Mike, a fine art graduate who has been a head of department, is now a deputy head of key stage, and unsure about further promotion, and Donna, an assistant head with a 3D design degree, who aspires to further promotion. All but Donna had experience of other work prior to coming into teaching. These brief introductions will be expanded in Chapter Four.

All the schools are comprehensives, either academies or local authority: two are 11-16 schools, the rest have sixth forms. Four are described as good schools by OFSTED (or had been before converting to academy status) and one academy converter had been in special measures for several years.

Interviewing

Semi-structured interviews were audio recorded (with the participants’ consent) with field notes to capture non-verbal and other expressions. I had also considered other techniques which might help elicit narratives from these visual artist/teachers, and asked them to bring a pre-prepared image of a typical art teacher and of a typical senior manager; these would then form reference points for discussion. This visual aspect of my methodology is discussed further below. I hoped that the use of the initial questionnaire and the reflective time built into the image making process would afford participants opportunities to think about the topic in advance and so present more thoughtful and insightful responses to the research questions. I expected my interviews to be more concerned with discovery, with ‘building a descriptive model’ (Wengraf, 2001, p.51), than with building or testing a particular theory. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) describe this as seeking ‘to chart key aspects of the subject’s lived world’ (p.106); as a result my interviews were subject oriented, episodic interviews, rather than full life histories (Flick, 1997; Harding, 2006).

Whilst the research interview is ‘an interpersonal situation, a conversation between the two partners about a theme of mutual interest’ (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p.123) in which knowledge is produced through the interaction of interviewer and interviewee, interviews are very different from normal conversations. It is not usual to set a date, time and place for a conversation; one person in a conversation does not usually have an organised set of questions to ask the other; nor is it normal for people taking part in a conversation to have assigned roles as interviewer and interviewee. As a result the interview can be seen as constrained or controlled by the role of the interviewer; it is the interviewer who introduces the topic and asks the initial questions, and goes on to decide what to

follow up and what not to (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009); indeed, these differences in power and in social roles could even suggest that ‘the act of interviewing is invasive’ (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006, p.317). There is, however, a different view of the relationship in which the interviewer is seen as a learner and the interviewee as the expert in terms of their experience of the topic being discussed (Knapik, 2006). Mills (2001) takes this further, in that although the interviewer has the power to initiate the interview and to decide the framework of the questions, the respondents have the power of agreeing to the process and of withdrawing from it, the power of choosing what and how much to disclose, and special powers as the experts. The relationship between interviewer and interviewee can be seen as requiring negotiation of ‘relationships, research purposes, transitions, as well as how we are going to be useful in those relationships’ (Clandinin 2006, p.47). My position was very much aligned to Knapik’s view, seeing myself as learning from the participants’ expertise. I also made it clear to the interviewees at the beginning that they could decide how much to reveal in the conversation, and that they could terminate the interview at any point. At the end of the interview I checked if there were any issues they wanted to re-visit, or anything they wanted to add. Encouragingly, one of the interviewees contacted me a few days after the interview to say ‘[I]t was interesting to reflect on my own career and answer some very thought-provoking questions. Thank you for [...] giving me long overdue self reflection time and the head space to think. That should be part of everyone's Personal Development’ (Donna, personal communication, November 13, 2014).

Kvale and Brinkmann believe that many research projects would benefit from having fewer interviews, and from having more time spent on preparation and analysis (2009). Wengraf (2001) argues that a semi-structured interview requires more preparation than a fully structured interview; he suggests organising interview sequences into a series of components in which the central research question is broken down into theory questions, which in turn lead to specific interview questions. In a similar way, Rubin and Rubin (1995) advocate breaking the overall topic into several main questions which will provide a structure for the interview: these main questions should be open enough to allow interviewees to express their own opinions and experiences but sufficiently narrow to prevent them digressing from the subject. These main questions lead to probes, to complete or to clarify responses, and follow-up questions which allow for elaboration of particular aspects: these subsequent questions cannot be planned in advance as they arise from responses to the main questions. Following this advice, I constructed a schedule for my interviews using my research questions as the main topic headings, with specific questions aimed at examining components of these topics (see Annex 6).

As Kvale and Brinkman point out, the quality of data produced in an interview is dependent on the interviewer’s skills and knowledge, and that the interviewer’s role is to be a co-producer of the narrative by remaining a listener and helping interviewees tell their stories through ‘questions, nods, and silences’ (2009, p.74). The interview is a setting in which interviewer and interviewee jointly create data – although this is likely to be constructed specifically for the purposes of the research

project, rather than necessarily ‘authentic and direct contact with interviewees’ realities’ (Roulston, deMarrais & Lewis, 2003, p.645). In a sense interviewees are putting on a performance, presenting themselves as they wish to be seen. An interviewer can try to read between the lines of what they are saying, and try to listen for what they are not saying, but that, of course, leads to interpretation and is more open to the interviewer’s perceptions and biases. To avoid this, I chose to accept my interviewees’ accounts as I synthesised the data, only identifying some common omissions in the discussion and conclusion. Denzin (2001) describes interviewing as ‘a method of patient listening’ (p.33): one thing I learnt very quickly was how right the instructions that came with my hearing aid are when they said ‘Listening takes more energy than talking’ (University of California, no date).

Trial interview

My initial, trial interviewee (Lucinda) was known to me, which allowed me to feel more relaxed about the encounter, and, I hope, allowed me to make her feel less nervous about the interview. Although when we met she made a remark about the paragraph on counselling on the Consent Form being a bit superfluous, at the end of the interview, particularly in the context of discussing her disappointment at not having continued with her own work, she said it made a lot more sense. I had decided that, because of our familiarity, taking a conversational approach to the interview would lead us to digress too much, and so I limited myself to working through my pre-prepared questions, leaving her time to develop her own narratives; this proved to be very effective, as she was able to talk at length about her experiences with very little prompting other than eye contact and nodding. There were times when I found it difficult not to join in a conversation, but on the one occasion where I felt the need to interject (to cut off an assumption about my experience), she interrupted me to supply my response for me.

I found this non-intervention strategy worked well for me, rather than a more emancipatory approach of interviewing as a conversation, since it allowed space for the interviewees to develop their own narratives. In the pilot interview there were several points where I would normally have reciprocated, either with remarks about shared experiences or to give information, but instead noted these down and followed them up after the interview. As a result I employed a strategy of telling my subsequent interviewees that that was how I would conduct the interview, with the exchange, my side of the conversation, coming later, although there were a few occasions where I felt the need to interject, either as encouragement or to re-focus.

Looking back at my notes taken after each interview, I expressed concern that two seemed quite short, one because the interviewee was very focussed and one because the responses seemed quite terse: however on transcribing these they both had some of the most telling and informative data

Visual data

Having referred to the use of images in the interviews several times, I now explain the rationale behind my decision to use this approach, which was informed in part by Jones’ maxim that ‘If your

research question is about people, find a way to really involve them in the process, not just answer some stupid questions' (Jones, 2014).

The use of visual imagery (photographs, artefacts, etc.) has a long history in ethnography. However, these are usually existing images, or images taken by the researcher (Guillemin & Drew, 2010), and moreover, the images are usually interpreted by the researcher rather than by the researched, with all the cultural and experiential issues involved in this (Berger, 1972). Additionally, these images have not been made by the subject as part of their response to the research topic, and, as Prosser and Loxley (2008) point out, when participants create their own images, this will 'extend the participatory principle by emphasising respondents' ownership and agency through the act of creation' (p.33).

There is growing interest in this use of visual methods where research participants produce images which represent themselves and their identities, often in metaphorical forms, such as Gauntlett's use of Lego (2007) and Ingram's use of plasticine (2011). But these images are often produced in the presence of the researcher, either during an individual interview, or in group settings. Images produced in this way are likely to be inhibited in some way, either by the presence of the researcher, or some degree of time constraint, and also lack the possibility of reflective time before and after their production. As Gauntlett points out:

[T]he notion of having a picture "in the mind" – the kind of thing which we might then seek to get "down on paper" – is incredibly complex [...] Turning any of the information "in" your head into something representable entails a task of arrangement and processing. (2007, p.126)

My research participants are all art & design graduates, and used to taking experiences and translating them into visual forms which are then available to others to see and interpret (Eisner, 2001; Wainwright & Rapport, 2007). Writing about his hopes for qualitative research in the 21st century, Eisner points out similarities between artists and qualitative researchers:

The practice and products of qualitative research have much in common with the practices used in the arts; [both artists and qualitative researchers] use forms of communication that are intended to do more than tell, but to show, that is, to convey a sense or feeling of person or place. (2001, p.136)

The images prepared in advance of their interviews formed a focus for discussion; in this way they had active involvement in both the construction of the images and in their interpretation (Gauntlett & Holzwarth, 2006). By giving these visually orientated respondents reflective time in the construction of the images, it was hoped that the interviews could be much more focused and probably more relaxed (Prosser and Loxley, 2008). This reflective time would also see them better prepared for their interviews, since:

[T]he reflective process of making an artefact, taking time, as well as the act of making something that you can look at and think about and change, is different [...] to being in a face-to-face session where somebody asks a question and you have to provide an answer straight away. (Gauntlett & Holzwarth, 2006, p.85)

Guillemin & Drew, working with visual methodologies in health research, are concerned about their respondents' concepts of the audience for the images they produce, even if this 'relationship with the audience/s may not necessarily be a conscious one' (2010, p.183). My respondents are professional image makers with very sophisticated understandings of potential audiences for their images, which will have influenced both what they produced and how they produced it and their decisions about what content they included or excluded. I did not specify any requirements for the images, beyond the subject matter. One teacher did email me before her interview with a query about the images:

What exactly do you mean by an image? Googled? Written? Drawn? Annotated? Typical art teacher – divergent thinking! (Anne)

To which I replied 'Ideally the images should be ones you've made, could be drawings, collages, photomontages, monoprints, digital, whatever, could be annotated – as divergent as you like. (Note that I'm trying not to be too helpful!)'.

Having a background in art and design, I am well aware that images and the meanings of images, like language, are socially constructed (Berger, 1972) and consequently have multiple meanings, multiple interpretations. As a result I did not rely on my interpretation of the images but used them as a springboard for discussion in the interview, providing a chance for participants to provide their own interpretations. Thus these images can have their own place in the research, not as an alternative but as an addition to words, and can offer something to the research that words cannot.

Transcription

Interviews have been fully transcribed by myself in an attempt at strict transcription (Hammersley, 2010), with the assistance of field notes completed during and immediately after the interview. Although not intending to carry out discourse analysis, I tried to ensure that my transcriptions include all the 'ums' and 'ers', all the false starts and broken sentences, and indications of laughter, sighs, pauses and emphases. Although some of my participants had regional accents I did not attempt to indicate these. I played back the recordings as I read the completed transcriptions to check for errors and omissions, and these repetitions also allowed me to become thoroughly acquainted with the data (Hammersley, 2010; Colley, 2010), and encouraged an incremental development between transcription and data interpretation. Wolcott (1994) writes that it is only when attempting to make sense of the data that it becomes possible to start to 'understand what is central, what is peripheral' (p.21) and that this progressive focusing allows critical or key aspects to be dealt with more thoroughly.

Data synthesis

In reporting on the interviews (Chapter 4) I used a narrative approach to working with the interview data, rather than coding and classifications (especially given the small number of interviewees). A narrative approach to transforming research data is more a process of synthesis than analysis, a way of describing what can be known from the data with relative certainty, of telling a story which helps

to explain how aspects of the data help answer the research questions (Colley, 2010). As I used visual data as part of the research, it also seemed appropriate to consider visual methods of thinking about the interview data. Colley (2010) writes of using mind-maps of interview transcripts, and Wolcott (1994) sees how graphic presentation can be used instead of words to convey or to emphasise information. I produced word clouds (pictures made of words) of the data which were useful in emphasising the preoccupations of the individuals, such as Abbi's concentration on her students and Lucinda's concerns about time.

I intended to use participants' minimally edited words in writing up the data analysis (initially omitting the ums, ers, you knows and pauses except where these appeared to be significant), accepting that data can be interpreted in many ways, that each particular story tells only one version, and that my version is not a neutral one, but will have been influenced by my own perceptions, by my background, biases, interests and by the way I function as a researcher (Colley, 2010; Smith, 2012). As Wolcott says, 'Tell the story. Then tell how that happened to be the way you told it' (1994, p.16).

For Chapter 4, reporting on the data, I tried three approaches to working with the data. Firstly I tried to construct biographic, storyline narrative versions of two of the interviews, but decided the data was too episodic to allow this. Next I considered looking at the data thematically, using the interview topics as headings, but found this led to considerable imbalance between individuals, and fragmented the narrative. Finally I settled on treating each participant individually, but looking for critical points rather than a straightforward biography (Polkinghorne, 1995). Wolcott (1994, pp17-22) gives 10 methods for organising and presenting descriptions: I have tended to combine two of these, critical or key event and plot and characters. I have looked for key points in the interviews as a way of focussing on the participants' professional journeys; I have also introduced the characters and let them tell their own stories as I provide linkages and a voice over.

Data handling has been seen as a reductive process, similar to an artist producing a recognisable portrait sketch with a few lines (Tesch, 2013): my notes compare it to a landscape artist choosing which particular view to capture, and then which elements of that view to include. This aligns with Wolcott's view that:

Description entails both art and science and seems to suffer more in the absence of the former, for it is an intuitive as well as an objectifying act. It requires not only a sense of what to observe and report but exquisite judgment about what not to report, a keen sense of what is focus, what is periphery, and how to maintain a perspective and balance between them. (1994, p.56)

In 'constructing' (Hammersley, 2010) my narratives I endeavoured to ignore my research questions and focus on what my participants said; having done this I then went back to look at how I might interpret this. I found Wolcott's advice very useful:

The advice I give to others is the same that I would follow myself: I would rather err on the side of too little interpretation than too much. I strive first to present an adequate descriptive account and then – marking the threshold – suggest what I make of it. (1994, p.259)

Having used a narrative format for reporting on the data, in the discussion and interpretation section (Chapter 5) I decided to use a thematic approach, which would allow me to examine how their responses might answer my research questions, but also to look for other issues arising from the data. These include performativity, already discussed in Chapter 2, communities of practice and emotional geographies.

Communities of Practice

One aspect of performativity is that government, the inspectorate and hence school management all seek to define how teachers should teach, limiting the scope for teachers and for their departments to have control over what they do, and limiting professional development activities to those focussed on centralised priorities. Recent years have also seen the demise of local authority subject advisors as the LEAs focus on school improvement. As a result any opportunities for art teachers to develop their skills both as teachers and as artists have to be developed externally, and NSEAD and its regional groups have become major providers of development activities, both formally (such as the Artist/Teacher MAs) and informally through regular regional meetings.

These meetings, and the social media developed out of them, form communities of practice, which have been defined as:

Groups of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.4).

A community of practice is not just a club of friends or a network of connections between people. Its identity is defined through a shared domain of interest or activity. Participation therefore implies a commitment to the domain, and a shared competence that distinguishes members from other people. They are practitioners who seek to develop a shared repertoire of resources, experiences and ways of addressing recurring issues: a shared practice. This takes time and sustained interaction and engagement.

Wenger's use of the term 'community' expresses the voluntary, informal nature of the group, with individual members 'participating' in the group being within the 'periphery' of the group, which in the case of the NSEAD groups, is wider than the individual school or department.

Emotional geographies

Emotional geographies have been described as being concerned with the way emotions 'coalesce around and within certain places' (Davidson, Bondi & Smith, 2012, p.3), and the way they gain 'symbolic importance' through these emotional associations. These then create boundaries by which we 'differentiate ourselves from others and from our environments' (p.5).

Hargreaves (2001) identifies several forms of emotional geographies which impact on teachers; two of these appear to have particular relevance to this study. Firstly moral geographies, in which 'people pursue common purposes and feel a sense of accomplishment together' (p.508), or conversely, who

become defensive or disagree with the purpose of others. The other is professional geography, in which people's definitions and senses of professionalism either distance them from their colleagues or allow them to work more closely together. Hargreaves' research points to four emotionally significant aspects of teachers' relationships with their colleagues: 'appreciation and acknowledgement; personal support and social acceptance; cooperation, collaboration and conflict; and trust and betrayal' (p.519).

Summary

This chapter has looked at various aspects of the methodology used in this research, including my own preconceptions, and at how I arrived at a sample from my target group. It covers how I prepared for and carried out my interviews, my use of visual data alongside the interviews, and how I set about synthesising the data generated by the interviews and the images. Lastly it sets out two of the theoretical lenses I used to examine the data.

In the next chapter I introduce the five participants in the research, and examine the data from their interviews.

Chapter 4. The art teachers' interviews

Introduction

In this chapter I present the data from each participant's interview. As I was not seeking to generalise from the research, the individual narrative approach discussed previously permits a more cohesive sense of the five teachers' journey through their professional lives, rather than the fragmented account created through a thematic approach. Ponterotto advocates 'describing fully the participants without compromising anonymity' (2006, p.564), and this I have attempted to do. The individual accounts which follow are arranged in alphabetical order.

Abbi

Abbi has a degree in textiles, and had considerable experience in that industry before coming into teaching. She is currently a main scale teacher and has begun to re-establish her own artistic practice. Abbi is happy with her position at present, although she might consider looking for a HoD post at some point, but is also considering leaving teaching. She identifies herself as an artist/artist teacher.

In spite of an early ambition to become a nurse, Abbi decided art was the right route for her.

[E]ven from high school I was very creative. And so I knew that an avenue of mine was going to be art, and I had the flair for it and so I just went for it really.

Abbi really enjoyed dressmaking from an early age, so when it came to deciding on an art based degree course, she decided to study textiles.

Because I didn't just want to be an artist, to be able to make a living because I knew that that was going to be a very, very tough area, so I decided to do textiles [...] From a very early age I did a lot of dressmaking, I made my own clothes, so I was pretty much sorted...

When she chose her specialised area her desire to have 'the opportunity to go into manufacture if I wanted to', meant she went for woven textiles rather than fashion or dressmaking.

[W]hen I was doing textiles at school it was something I was really quite passionate about, and then I went into doing a degree course where you actually made woven fabrics, so it was a completely different area, but you were still doing drawings, you were still [...] using your imagination, but you were also learning the skill of actually making cloth.

When she graduated she wanted to travel, and worked as a designer in the developing world with communities aiming to produce items for the world market. When Abbi returned to the UK she worked in several specialised garment companies, gaining managerial experience.

I learnt about managerial jobs, to actually manage people within the company [...] I was overseeing peoples' work, and making sure it was to the quality that we needed it to be, and that was challenging, that was interesting.

She became involved in local artists' groups, but preferred her fabric work as it had a purpose beyond display.

I got involved with a few artist groups within the area where I lived, and it just seemed a really, really hard area to move into, to do art [...] and all the way along I've always wanted to do textiles, wanted to do something that was a purpose. Whereas an artist, fantastic, but

sometimes it's like your work just either ends up on the wall or as a piece of sculpture which sits somewhere.

Eventually she thought 'wouldn't it be really nice to teach this', so she enrolled for a PGCE course in textiles but realised it wasn't working out, withdrew, and got a job as a technician in a school's design technology department. After a few months she started covering some art lessons and realised she should have trained as an art teacher, so went back to take a PGCE in art.

[T]here was an art teacher who was leaving and she said "Why don't you take over my role as an art teacher?" and I said "Oh no, not again {laughs}. I don't want to do that again" and then she said "No, seriously," and it was the best thing I've ever done, because it was obviously art that was my area.

She has now established herself as an art teacher, and she has also begun to re-establish her own practice.

[S]ince I've become an art teacher, I've gone and done my life drawing again which I absolutely love, and really have a passion for it [...] so I've really enjoyed going back to my art work [...] and sharing that in the classroom

Abbi's involvement in the network 'has been fantastic, because it's allowed you to go back and explore your artwork and actually share with other art teachers', and has led to sharing students' work reciprocally with other schools, broadening her horizons as a teacher.

So it has been really nice and it's also strengthened me from the point of view of building up relationships with other art teachers, and seeing what they're doing [...] So that's allowed you to be a lot more expressive, a lot more creative.

When she began teaching she had no ambition for promotion:

I never really had any ambition as to moving up the scale, I just wanted to be able to spend time with the students, and just teach with the students really.

With the concurrent development of her teaching and her own art work, she feels her professional identity is developing as well.

[M]aybe an art teacher or an artist/teacher starting to explore a little more about my artist side of things [...] I can sit and just really enjoy just being creative, and I get a lot out of it, so maybe artist/artist teacher.

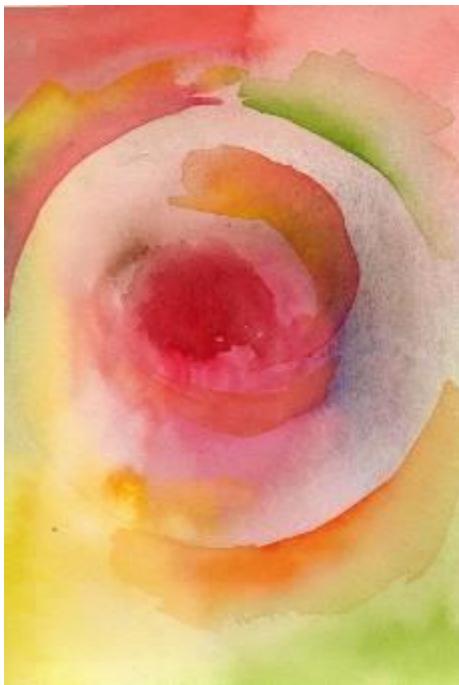
Abbi's image of an art teacher is an abstract painting, to which she had added 'key words' on the back. I asked if its symbolic, abstract rather than representational style related to her own practice.

[S]ometimes it does and sometimes it doesn't. If I want to actually draw something from nature then I will, or if I want to explore with different materials, it's actually quite like that with layering up. I like abstract, but I don't think I can do it to the length that some people do it...

Her interpretation of her illustration dealt with the imagery of the circular motif and the key words, which she had considered integrating into the image. 'I did this and then I thought "Should I have some words on it?", and then I thought "Well, if I put words on it, it's going to maybe take it away"'.

This was, I feel, the art teacher being very flexible, being able to explore, so there is some sort of structure, but, more often than not, it's allowing the students just to be free, and some of the key words that I've come up with: flow, rhythm, experiment, explore, develop,

abstract, imagination and then communication, because obviously we need to communicate in some way. I just feel it's kind of a circle of progression, but it's a circle of enjoyment and seeing where it takes you.



*Figure 2. Abbi's art teacher
The 'key words' on the back are: flow, rhythm, experiment, explore, develop, abstract, imagination and communication*

She sees a good art teacher as someone who is not fixated on results. For Abbi the essential qualities are:

Being able to be flexible and being able to allow the students opportunity for exploring with a range of materials, and not just one particular material [...] I think the biggest thing that I've learnt, especially this year, is that students need time to pay attention to things, to observe things, but how they respond to that, and how they create, that should be a personal response from them.

Abbi is happy with her position at present, although she might consider looking for a HoD post at some point.

I'd kind of like to move into that next step, I don't know [...] some people say to me that "You, you're at the stage of being head of department", but I don't really feel that I'm at that level yet.

Alongside this, Abbi is considering an alternative career to teaching:

I'd love to do a bit of art therapy, just allowing time for students just to get rid of whatever, and just being creative and just enjoying that space. So I'm not sure whether the school environment is for me, I don't know.

She is also cautious about promotion because:

I've seen [...] people try and take too much, they then are not able to deal with it, and they get stressed and things like that and I'd rather slowly build myself up and if the opportunity came, then yes. Otherwise I'm just quite happy where I am.

Her time in industry has made her question the limited experience of school managers, and she is unsure about seeking promotion to that level.

[W]hen I see people above me, sometimes they've got to those positions without experience, and I just think "How have you got that far [...] when you need the experience along the way." Especially when I've had experience within manufacturing, within a company, and seeing the job for what it actually is: sometimes within a school environment those people haven't really got that experience, and that's why I sometimes find it a bit frustrating.



*Figure 3. Abbi's senior manager
Her key words on the back are: structure,
routine, appointments, targets, deadlines,
flexible, leadership, manage and
communication*

Abbi's illustration of a senior manager is also an abstract piece based on circles, with key words on the back, but has a more formal, rigid structure than the image of an art teacher.

[W]ith the senior leader I just feel that everything's a lot more structured, they're able to be flexible 'cos they have to be flexible, but also they have to meet targets {pause} so everything has to be a little bit more within a structure [...] some of the key words here are structure, routine, appointments, targets, deadlines, flexible, leadership, manage and communication.

Abbi's managerial experience in industry sometimes makes her think that she could potentially be a head teacher, but she doesn't think that is very likely.

Probably not, no. because of all the stress and everything, and I just think, "Well, no, probably not."

Anne

Anne studied 3D Design, and spent several years working in that craft. She did a PGCE to get access to a more secure income, and is now a HoD. She is disappointed that she has no time for her own work but still identifies herself as an artist/teacher. She feels that promotion beyond HoD would take away her identity and her motivation

Anne decided to pursue art because it was the subject she was best at in school. Originally she intended to study textiles, but initially switched to ceramics on her foundation course and eventually to a glassmaking degree, followed by another year at a specialist glassmaking college. Her ambition was to be a freelance glass designer, but she got into glass blowing. Realising that the costs of setting

up were prohibitive, she spent sometime working as assistant to some glassmakers to earn her own, very limited, kiln and furnace time.

I polished glass and ground for a couple of glassmakers [for] many, many hours just to get a couple of hours, it was about £300 for a couple of hours with the furnace, so you had to build up a lot of hours.

Eventually she realised that she needed a better income just to survive and needed to think about a long term career, which was when she considered teaching, not thinking that she would actually be very good at it. However, within the first few weeks of her PGCE she realised it was the right course for her.

I got to a point where I needed to think long term about a career, so I thought I would give it a go, I'd go on the training, see what it was like and within the first few weeks of the training I realised it was actually the right path for me, it was quite rewarding.

Asked what her aspirations were when she started teaching she laughed and said 'Survival', and just to be an art teacher; she can't remember having any ambition to be a head of department.

[S]urvival really {laughs} [...] just to be an art teacher. Nothing more than that, I don't think I ever aspired to be a head of department, to teach well, to enjoy sharing of art with young people; there was nothing more managerial certainly.

Although she is a HoD now, she says her aspirations are still about the students enjoying art and her enjoying the job:

I am now in charge of the department, I have two teachers beneath me, but it's all about the students enjoying the art and me enjoying the job really: that's what I aspire to. The minute I stop enjoying the job and enjoying the teaching, that's when it will become a problem.

The expense of getting access to a furnace to maintain the required skill level means she hasn't been able to carry on with her glass work, and she is also disappointed that she hasn't the time to make any other personal artwork.

I'm disappointed that I don't have the time I thought I would to make my own work generally, never mind the glass. I spend so long making the items to demonstrate skills for the students which are not necessarily what I would do if I wasn't teaching. I think a lot of teachers go into art teaching thinking that they'll do their own work, and some go part-time, thinking that they'll free up time and still don't do their own work.

Asked whether being an art teacher was different to being a teacher of another subject and how she had illustrated this (Figure 4), Anne said:

[Y]es, very, and people don't understand [...] that's a sort of analogy, with the Lego blocks {laughs} and as an art teacher I feel the possibilities. I see the students very differently [...] and try and work with the materials I've got, whether they're the art materials or the students' strengths, and the outcome's always going to be very different. Whereas other teachers (and I link that with senior leadership as well, they tend to be other teachers) see a final thing, an outcome and sort of know the instructions as to how to get that outcome, whereas I don't necessarily.



Figure 4. Anne's art teacher

She thinks the first thing a good art teacher should have is 'absolute enthusiasm for the subject'.

When interviewing for a post she would look for someone who 'just loved art', who was an artist before they were a teacher, and:

I think they need to be dedicated, I think they need to have a sense of humour, playfulness, experimentation, creativity that runs through the subject, but also through their planning and preparation, and the way they teach the students, and sometimes I see that lacking in other subject teachers.

She sees art teachers as being able to say 'Let's throw it all up in the air and start again, and see how we can gather it back again', and doesn't think other subjects can do that. Another difference is that:

[W]hen it comes to other subjects' teachers, they don't have the same love necessarily, they don't spend their weekends doing what they do at work, and I explain that to the kids as well when I'm teaching them, that that's the difference.

Anne always says she's an artist first, even though she's not a practicing one, because it's the way she sees her teaching.

I always say I'm an artist first, although at the minute I'm not really a practicing artist, but it is the way I view my teaching, so yeah, artist/teacher is the way I would describe myself, because that's what I'm doing all the time. I am being an artist all the time at work, even when I'm planning for work.

Being an artist 'dominates' everything she does, if that changed she would look for a new career:

[T]hat's when I'm looking for a new career because that's the thing that dominates what I do, the fact that I'm an artist, and I get into several arguments with senior leadership over this, over the fact that I'm creative and this is what I do, and art, art is different.

She cites an example about assessment policy, which requires her to write comments on students' sketchbooks, which she doesn't think should ever happen, so she's trying to find ways around this.

[T]hey try and fit me into a box with all the other subjects and I just don't fit [...] they're trying to bring in rules as to how we assess work, and we need to write on everything, and I have a problem with writing on sketchbooks for a start. I don't think we should ever write on sketchbooks.

[Q]uite often art just doesn't fit in to their box {laughs}. I'm constantly there saying "Whoa, can't do that." But I must admit, on occasions, it is to be awkward because I don't like being told what to do [...] I don't like trying to fit into things.

She gives the example of OFSTED looking at her planning and preparation and saying it's exemplary, so she gets annoyed when senior leaders tell her to change it.

Although she complained when a director of arts and technology post was ring fenced which meant she couldn't apply for it, she's not sure she would want the job anyway.

I'm not sure I want the job because it would take me out of the classroom more. I'm already out, I get extra non-contacts compared to my other art colleagues, to do data and various other really {laughs} inspiring things, and if I went higher I'd be taken out even more and that's not what I want. I want to work with the kids, I want to make a difference.

But if she was to go for promotion, it would be something like the director post. She worked in a middle school first, became a head of department quickly and in order to offer her a chance of promotion, they offered her a head of year job, but she wasn't interested as it wouldn't be creative enough. When the National Curriculum for art was published she got an advisory post, which entailed going around the region introducing it, which gave her different experience relevant to art teaching, but now she's a head of department again, she wonders if this is the level she stops at.

Is this where I stop? Is this the level I'm going to be at? I have got responsibilities because every time I'm observed I get outstanding in my lessons, so they don't quite know what to do with me now, so I actually do extra CPD for that and end up training the rest of the staff, which is good, but I don't get anything for it {laughs} just extra work.

Her image of a senior leader, unlike the pile of Lego for the art teacher, is an organised, step by step instruction diagram for assembling some "Technic Lego", in which 'there's a certain way to do things, everything needs to fit, it's got to be organised'.



Figure 5. Anne's senior manager

Anne sees senior leaders frustrated by art, because it can't be measured easily, although she manages to 'tick all the boxes' when she's observed. She thinks this is due to her background as an artist making her able to adapt to her audience, and knowing what OFSTED are looking for.

Anne can't see herself applying for a senior role if it took her away from being an art teacher. She's not a disciplinarian, which is how she sees senior leaders.

I've seen senior leadership team, one in particular, who's a superb teacher, the kids loved him; he's now a deputy head [...] he's become the one that barks at them in the corridor, and that's how I view senior leadership.

She wouldn't apply for the financial reward, but would look at what difference she could make for the students.

It would have to be more than money, I'm not really looking for money, I'm looking for the difference it would make to the students, and how much say I'd have over how the school was run. I couldn't run a school, there's a kind of chaotic quality about me {laughs}, and to be honest if there were art teachers in charge of our school, it wouldn't run very well either.

So although she's very critical of senior leaders, she understands the need for order:

I think the qualities that particularly the art teachers I've worked with would bring – it would turn into a sort of hippy kind of commune and it would all be very experimental, so I understand we do need that order, but it's a very different way of thinking.

She does, however, think that she has things to offer to a senior leader position.

I can look at the problems and say it's all very well rebelling against these, but we need to find a way round them, we need to answer the problem, and I reckon I can do that quite well. So I have got things to offer.

This ability to look at problems and find ways round them is why she has been given the staff training role. But while she thinks senior leaders assume that everyone (including her) aspires to a senior role, they often single people out and encourage them, no-one is encouraging her.

Donna

Donna studied 3D design with the ambition of becoming a designer/maker, but signed on for a PGCE course as a back up plan. She has been deputy head of house and HoD. Donna has never identified herself as an artist, and although she is now an assistant head she still sees herself primarily as an art teacher. She has her sights set on a deputy headship but she is not interested in headship, seeing it as too lonely.

Unlike the other interviewees, it wasn't until secondary school that Donna really got involved in art:

I hadn't thought much about art until I got to secondary school and the art department was just the most vibrant, exciting place to be in school [...] So that was really the igniting of the fire and the passion that I had for art at that point.

One of the things that really enthused her was when the 'really inspirational art team' brought professional artists and designers into the department.

[T]hey'd bring in people from the real world: we met the man who designed The Smiths album covers; I thought "This is amazing, people do this for a living, this is a real job"

After A levels, Donna did an art foundation course, which led to her taking a degree in an area she had not previously considered.

I got to do my Foundation Course, it was then that I did 3D Design on my last rotation, that I thought “Yeah, I’ve loved this, this is brilliant” and I’d never considered before that could have been an option [...] it just floated my boat.

During her degree course Donna always planned to set up her own business:

I always thought I was going to be a designer/maker [...] I dreamed I would have a studio space, people would come, have commissions [...] in metal and glass and things like that.

However, at the end of the course, when many of her fellow students were moving away to work, her ties to her region meant she was left wondering what to do. The university’s PGCE course was in an adjacent building to the design department, so she had a look around and thought:

“Do you know what? I think I’ll just do this extra year, see what comes out of it.” Never really given teaching much of a thought until that point, so that’s how that happened [...] it was like a little back up plan.

Her second teaching practice was in ‘one of the most challenging areas in the country’ and she says she ‘absolutely loved that environment, of that school, of the challenge of those kids’. Her first teaching job was in a very similar area and she wanted to do ‘the best for all of those kids who came through my hands, and it was that feeling that if I’m not doing it, who is?’. It was this challenging environment that made her realise that her ‘driving force’ was the need:

...not just to teach them how to paint, it’s to teach them things about life, things about how to talk to each other, it’s a wider remit than just art.

Donna had always expected her career to follow the ‘traditional route of second in department, head of department’, but as the school was involved in initiatives such as Excellence in Cities, a number of opportunities came up which meant her ‘...career did a sort of a snake-like move’ through positions in those initiatives ‘to deputy head of house, then to head of department, so it’s been a real veering about...’.

Donna has not been able to carry on with her own work; the last major thing she did was making furniture for her home. Now she says that the only other times she’ll do anything arty or creative is when she is demonstrating things to the pupils in her art classes, and when she gets involved with the school plays:

I always do the set design for them, and that’s probably the most creative I get throughout the year.

She says she looks back on doing her own work ‘nostalgically’, but:

[W]hen my career got busier, and then I had a family, and you know, the things that got squeezed really were the things that I loved the most. Which is a bit sad really...

Donna sees art teachers (in which she includes the arts subjects in general) as having a very different relationship with their pupils than other teachers, where it is ‘knowledge driven and it’s from the front and it’s what they’re going to put down on an exam paper’, whereas with art teachers:

Often it’s very personal and it means something to them on a higher plane than just sitting in a Maths lesson and doing an equation, and they’ll talk to you about things, and you’ll get

that different kind of feedback from them than you would anywhere else. I think we're very privileged actually, seeing that because you get to see the insights sometimes into their heads.

She describes her illustration of an art teacher as being 'more or less a philosophy of art teaching'; it shows a map or maze which the art teacher guides the pupils through, and the passion they are trying to get out of them:

[...] it's just the fact that they can express themselves, and that's what I was trying to get across with this is that we are there just to be the people who help you on your way, to guide your way through this maze, and there's no right and wrong answer, which I love about art.



Figure 6. Donna's art teacher

As a result, helping pupils through the process and the 'journey' is more important to Donna than the finished pieces of artwork.

Doesn't matter if the answer's not $2X$ times Y squared – who cares? You'll get something out of it, and whether that's really a scratty piece of work, but they've absolutely put their heart and soul, and everything that goes behind it [...] for me it's more about this journey that they've gone on rather than being the best artist in the class.

Donna thinks that many other teachers' view art teaching as '[J]ust a doss! Art is just colouring in, giving out the pencils, and checking that they haven't coloured in over the lines'. However, this year a senior manager from another subject took over line management for the art department, and within a couple of weeks he came to her office and said that he couldn't believe what went on in an art lesson. '[T]here's 20 kids all doing something completely different from the same theme, I don't know how you do it, how you teach that' and he was amazed by 'the amount of depth that those kids can talk about their work, the way that they can express themselves, the analysis that they go into when they're looking at paintings'.

Donna thinks good art teachers are ones who 'give you the belief to think that what you are creating is worthwhile'. You don't actually need someone who is 'technically a brilliant artist, that's not what you're after, you just want somebody who's got that real enthusiasm, passion, love, drive that'll inspire you as a person'.

Having done a design course, Donna has never identified herself as an artist, but when asked if she sees herself as an artist/teacher, an art teacher or a teacher, she does identify very strongly as an art teacher.

Art teacher! I mean even now when people ask me what I do the first thing I tell them is I'm an art teacher, I don't tell them I'm assistant head, that comes second [...] first and foremost I'm an art teacher.

She says she cannot understand why some head teachers no longer do any teaching, why they would 'want to lose that contact with the kids'. In her own case:

[W]henever I'm in here [her office] doing my work for this job, as a member of SLT, when it comes to the point of having to go away and teach, I don't ever think "Oh, I'm right in the middle of something", I always think "Right, great, I can go and free my mind for a couple of hours, and just get in there with the kids."

Donna talks of the 'zig-zag' nature of her career, and being willing to 'give it a go' rather than having any planned, pre-prepared route, but she is aiming for further promotion.

Deputy head's always been the main aim, for me. I think Head is just – the way Heads are at the minute, and what they're expected to do, responsibility is just absolutely huge, and I don't think I would ever want that on my shoulders.

When she does look for a deputy headship, she would prefer it to be a teaching and learning role, which she is involved with now as part of the quality assurance team, working with staff to improve lessons.

Donna describes her image as having a picture frame because 'you've got to see the bigger picture', glasses for a clear vision of where things are going, a mirror background because of the need to be reflective and 'not just get into the zone and get on with it'. There's a punch-bag because 'you're barraged all the time' and a sponge because you're absorbing all the time. The juggling balls are there because 'somebody every now and then throws another one in, and you've just got to be ready to keep them going', the big ears because you're listening not just to people who come to see you, but to 'what's going on out there'. In the eye sockets there is a maze because of 'not knowing where to go a lot of the time' and a clock with numbers 'that are just all over the place because sometimes I feel like I don't know where the day's gone'. The ruler for the mouth is 'because you have to be measured in what you say all of the time'. The football strip shows 'you've got to be part of the team' and the tattoo on the neck is because 'it gets under your skin'. (For the full quotation from Donna's interview, please see Annex 7)



Figure 7. Donna's senior leader

Asked to consider the likelihood of art teachers becoming senior managers, Donna thinks that a lot of art specialists she knows 'seem to enjoy the relationship of a them and us', and wouldn't 'aspire to be part of that establishment which they so want to rally against'. She thinks some of them would make brilliant leaders but:

[T]hey're happy to go to head of department or subject leader, because that's fine, they still keep their distance from SLT. [...] So no, for their own subversive minds they don't want to be part of the establishment. Which is a shame because I think some of them would probably change things if they were.

Donna sees her role, as a creative person on a SLT which is made up of people from 'a more traditional academic straight-laced kind of a background', as being able to:

...just to throw in questions that sometimes seem a little bit silly, but sometimes will just make them think a little bit more, so I do see my role as being that person who – not rock the boat, but will just maybe upset the status quo a little bit by asking questions.

She would like to think that senior leaders would 'just view people as what their qualities and skills are [...] and I think you sometimes need creative people in there'.

Lucinda

Lucinda's degree is in fine art painting. On graduating she had a variety of low paid jobs before taking a PGCE course. She is now HoD but very uncertain about further promotion and feels her participatory style and her dislike of data and statistics debar her from a senior role. She is frustrated that teaching and family commitments leave no time to pursue her own work, and that she has become 'a teaching machine', focussed on getting results.

Lucinda was focussed on art from primary school, and remembers always asking for art materials for birthdays and Christmas.

I had no interest in any other subjects – I struggled with them. But with art, it was a thing that, right from an early age, I was recognised as good at.

She applied for fine art courses because she ‘couldn’t imagine studying anything else’, and she had no aspirations beyond doing her degree:

[I]t wasn’t a case of “What job do I want to do?” I just thought “What’s going to make me happy? [...] never ever while I was doing my degree did I think about a career.

Although she would have loved to be a full time artist, she feels she had neither the drive nor the financial backing. She had a Saturday job in a novelty shop during her degree course, and was offered a full time job there when she graduated. Although she was earning very little money:

I was kind of floating along, it was a nice environment to be in, quite hippy, going to Glastonbury and just enjoying myself...

The nearest she came to involvement in art for several years was organising an exhibition for students who had just graduated.

I was running a [...] novelty gift shop [...] and I also managed the top of the building which was an art gallery and we ran one exhibition for all the local students who had just graduated, and that was really good, it kind of gave me a taste for managing things in an artsy kind of way.

But after a few years she began to feel that she needed to do something ‘proper with my life’. When she found that a friend from her course was teaching art, she decided to see what that would be like. She arranged to spend a day each week in a local secondary school; although the teacher she worked with tried to put her off teaching, she felt comfortable and she enjoyed being with the pupils.

And so I decided to apply for the PGCE [...] and I think at that time because I was about 25, 26 [...] I was ready to mentally stimulate myself and do something, and I think it was the right time for me.

When she started teaching her ambition was to be the best art teacher she could be – and to be promoted quickly; one of her friends had been promoted before her, so her competitive side was focussed on progression. Within three years she became head of department, and whilst initially Lucinda ‘never thought any higher than head of department’, after 10 years as HoD and with two young children she says that now:

I’m in a quandary position; I want to go further, because I’ve been a head of department for 10 years but I’m internally fighting a struggle, a battle, I do and I don’t.

Recently she has applied for two faculty head jobs because as an experienced HoD she knows how to manage and monitor people. But she also feels she doesn’t want to move into a more managerial, administrative role which wouldn’t excite her and which would take her further away from teaching art, which is what she loves.

[M]oving further up in the chain of command means that you've got to do things that you don't really want to do, and I don't know if I can stomach that, I don't know if I can go into work and have a skip in my step knowing the other things that I've got to do.

For the first few years in teaching, Lucinda was able to carry on with her own work, and participated in local exhibitions. She was also able to do some of her work in school, and the pupils enjoyed seeing her working, but:

I haven't done anything remotely creative for about two years. Which really frustrates me because I really want to get back into doing some artwork, but I have got absolutely no time. I don't get enough time to spend with my own kids, and they're only little, and I'm going to miss them growing up because it's relentless at the moment, teaching is, absolutely relentless.

Lucinda feels that what makes art teachers different from other teachers goes beyond their less formal dress but is based on their approach to their subject.

I think it's a different outlook, that's what it is, what's brought art teachers into teaching is the love of the subject, and I don't know if that's the case for other subject teachers [...] does a maths teacher really, passionately adore his own subject?

Her image of an art teacher, which she had intended to be a very abstract collage, was done under the time constraints she spoke of earlier and is a pencil sketch based on someone she had worked with recently. She doesn't think this image is typical of all art teachers, but when she was thinking about her image, this person just 'popped into my head' because of his wild hair; she doesn't think you could be a senior teacher with wild hair, but an art teacher can get away with it.



Figure 8. Lucinda's art teacher

For Lucinda, a good art teacher is someone who is passionate about art, skilful, and has good classroom management, who knows how to get pupils to make progress, to reflect on their work, but can also give them the skills and the independence to develop their own ideas.

[S]omeone who's passionate, definitely, can bring the subject to life, someone who's good at it, 'cos you obviously have to demonstrate and show how to develop the skills, someone who can clearly get across instructions, I think that's important [...] somebody who would be able to manage a classroom, without it being chaos [...] somebody who can, as well, in the cold light of day, get results.

She would describe herself as a teacher, as she is not producing anything artistic herself now, although she aspires to (she speaks of getting a little shed to work in at a later date), but at present school and her family leave her no time, certainly not to do anything to the standard she wants.

Art, teaching art just kills it, it just absolutely kills, for me, any creativity, you become just a teaching machine, and art becomes another subject where you've got to get results, any which way you can.

Having led a department (and she is emphatic that she led it rather than managed it) she knows she has the ability to progress, but doesn't think she could become a 'bully', which is a characteristic she applies to many senior managers.

I just don't know if I can become – I'm going to be a bit controversial here – a bit of a bully. [...] some senior managers, that's what they're like, and I'm just not sure if I've got that in me.

She sees her style as much more 'participative, non-confrontational' and she's not sure that style is what's wanted in more senior positions. She certainly would not want to move into a pastoral role, and having applied for two faculty jobs, sees that as her preferred route, but getting involved in more whole-school things doesn't interest her, as that would mean moving out of the classroom and becoming a 'business person'. So while she wants to progress, she doesn't see where she can go, especially now the Advanced Skill Teacher roles have been abolished.

The more I want to move on and make that progression, you move out the classroom and you do become a business person, and you become a manager, and it's more about figures, data, and I'm rubbish with numbers.



*Figure 9. Lucinda's senior manager
The 'threatening' requirement to hit targets is emphasised by the words
'Levels', 'Data' and the '71%' target figure
in the picture.*

Her image of a senior manager is of a very business like man in a suit, because she sees managers as business people, almost like lawyers, doing little or no teaching and so far removed from the classroom that they don't know what's actually happening at 'ground level'. She sees that schools need people like this, but they're no longer 'passionate teachers'. In her image, the manager has his fist up, emphasising the need to hit targets in a threatening way, which she finds quite intimidating. (Her images are reminiscent of characters in a graphic novel.)

And there's never any artists {laughs}, they're just science teachers or maths teachers, or English teachers,

She doesn't think many art teachers could fill that role, and knows very few who have progressed beyond head of department.

She ended the interview saying that she felt bad about not doing any of her own art (although the interview may spur her to get started), and that in spite of everything, she still enjoys teaching and working with the pupils.

I feel bad for not doing any art {laughs}. They've turned me into an art teaching machine, that's what they've made me into. But I enjoy it. I do, I still enjoy it and I still enjoy working with the kids. I just might start a little painting when I get back.

Mike

Mike also has a fine art degree followed by a variety of short term jobs, before becoming a TEFAL teacher led him to consider teaching art. He has always done his own art work, but taking the Artist Teacher MA helped him make the transition from art teacher to artist/teacher. He has been HoD and is now deputy head of key stage; although he is confident that he has the ability to take on a more senior position, he doesn't like 'toeing the line'.

Apart from a period in his childhood when he wanted to be an astronaut, Mike knew he wanted to follow the art route.

I knew that if I could tap into visual arts, creativity, I would be happier. I knew that instinctively from a young age [...] from junior school really – it was the one big passion I had.

He was accepted to do a fine art degree, which he describes as being given 'the golden ticket', although without any real drive to study fine art.

I wasn't that focused, my interests in arts were quite vague. I didn't really know, even after doing a foundation year [...] I needed more life experience really.

His main motivation was:

[B]eing part of that environment and the freedom [...] it was about experience, there wasn't a practical end result.

As a result, he had no strong career intentions or aspirations.

I think there were people on the course who were much more focused than me. I was much more tentative, just "I know I'm going to be good at this, I enjoy doing this" [...] there was nothing tangible or focused.

After his degree Mike had a variety of short term jobs, including painting some murals, picture framing, working in a food franchise, and some gallery work. Eventually he realised he was ‘lacking any serious direction’, and the opportunity came up to train to teach English as a foreign language (TEFL), which he followed with two years teaching English overseas, which he describes as very positive:

I think teaching English as a second language was a very tangible experience so if you’ve got a student for six months, you can push them from beginner to intermediate [...] you know immediately when you’re making a difference

This experience, even though it was through the medium of language, which he says he is not confident with, made him realise that it would be ‘better to do this and make a positive impact through the medium of something I’m really confident in’, so he came back and took a PGCE course for art and design.

When he started teaching he felt he had to make up for lost time and had a lot more to offer ‘in terms of personal potential, and I wasn’t really hitting it at all’. As a result his main ambition was:

[T]o seek out excellence, to be really, really good at something. I think four, five years in the wilderness, I think that I was looking forward to a challenge [...] I wanted to achieve that positivity, that sense of accomplishment.

Mike is now well established in his teaching career, but his ambition to be an excellent teacher remains, although he has added other aspirations to it.

I’ve been teaching for fourteen years and I’m getting better, but just keep developing that sense of looking for excellence, something unattainable, to be as effective as I can in this medium. It’s not the only aspiration, I mean I think I’ve got other aspirations outside of teaching [...] I’m developing my own art, trying to be a good dad, I mean these are all aspirations.

Although Mike tried to carry on with his own work, he reached a point he describes as the ‘seven year itch of teaching’ when he felt that:

[B]eing an art teacher was creating a kind of mindset, where lack of confidence was creeping in, a little bit of self-doubt, and also I think the work that I did was to make a bit of extra money, and then there was the art that I was teaching in school, and they were becoming two separate creatures.

At that time there was still some funding available for staff development which contributed to Mike taking the MA Artist/Teacher programme³.

I was fortunate enough to do the [Artist/Teacher] programme and it was great. I mean I was working before then; mostly, to be honest, it was like greetings cards and prints, but I think [...] through that course, it’s revitalised a confidence in myself as an artist.

³ This is a part-time Masters programme allowing art teachers to engage with contemporary art practice. It is delivered by partnerships between university art schools and art galleries, such as Birmingham City University with The Icon and New Gallery Walsall or Goldsmiths with The Tate Modern and The Whitechapel Gallery.

It also helped with the reintegration of his practice and his teaching, 'it really pulled those together in a fantastic way. I'm a much, much better teacher for it', and he sees the potential of that programme for other teachers.

I think the teacher/artist way, for an art teacher, definitely a very important way to go, and I think when you lose that I think you can start suffering all sorts of negativity, little bits of bitterness, little bit of lack of creativity.

(Mike had not completed his images in time for the interview, although he was sketching them as he talked, so the sections describing them are based on images he sent the following day, the appropriate sections of the interview and comments sent with the images.)

He says his illustration of an art teacher is actually an illustration of any good teacher; someone who sees beyond the bounds of the school and of their own subject area. He also questions the existence of boundaries between subjects, 'I mean the thing about a school is, there are no subjects, there's a wavelength of knowledge and we've conveniently chopped it up into little bits'.

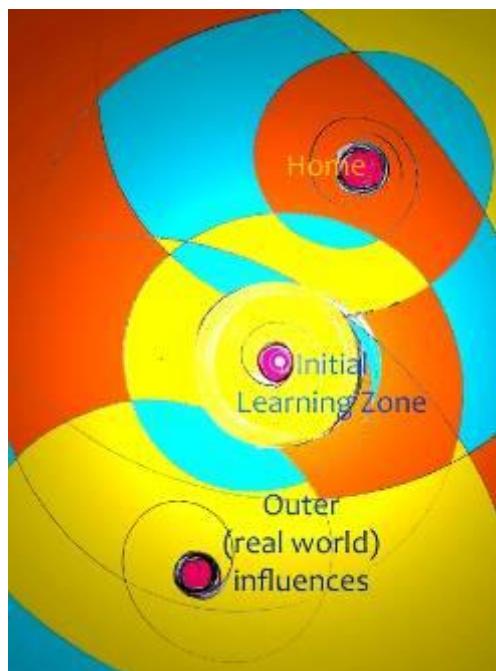


Figure 10. Mike's art teacher

[T]he crucial difference is that our work is more of a spiral, complex spirals and interference patterns, intuitive, and other subjects like maths, for example or modern languages tend to be boxed. [Art is] complex and individual and personal, and I think [...] that's a massive difference when we come to talk about our subjects, and discuss things.

His description of what makes a good art teacher echoes and extends many of these themes.

[A] good art teacher tends to have a wide interest, in all things. I think there has to be that wide starting point [...], you can almost smell in the room, you know, complexities of objects and possibilities, just the feel of the work itself.

Having said that, Mike perceives other teachers' view of art teachers as 'perhaps a slightly square peg – we're certainly on the periphery'.

[T]here's the clichés aren't there; we're a bit whacky, a room full of art teachers is like herding cats, we don't like working with statistics; perhaps sometimes we're the victims of our own stereotype.

He thinks this viewpoint can be exacerbated by the school's management.

I think, in my experience, the way the art department is dealt with is dependent on the experience of the senior managers, if there's a fear of art, and the complexities of art then that can come through in the relationship.

In the early part of his career he would have described himself as an art teacher, with 'teacher being the underlying word', and with a sense of satisfaction that came from feeling that 'I've got a future, I've got a pension'. However:

{A}fter a while I think there was an awareness that there was perhaps a lack of confidence, and a lack of self-belief in my own artistic capabilities, and I think there was a danger of drying up a little bit.

Taking the Artist/Teacher MA helped him make the transition from art teacher to artist/teacher.

I think I'm happy with the idea of an artist/teacher [...] being just a teacher, for our creative subjects – I'm sure it's different for other subjects, but being just a teacher implies a loss of something, so artist/teacher.

Mike had been a HoD in a previous school, and is now deputy head of Key Stage.

I'd got a head of department [...] which was good, was rewarding, I think it's just natural really, when you learn the ropes and you realise you can do this. It's nice to realise you can put your stamp on things.

He has worked in a number of schools, and has also done some work on ITT courses, which he found 'very, very rewarding'. He would be interested in further promotion, and says he enjoys applying for jobs, seeing it as a form of personal development.

I only recently went for the post of faculty deputy, not successful, but I mean that was a positive experience, I like the fact that every now and then you sit in front of your CVs and what you've done and you reflect on what you've done.

Mike feels, possibly as a result of his 'lack of direction from day one', that he would be interested in any sort of promoted post; in particular, because of the different relationships that exist in art rooms, 'the pastoral role would be a possibility', but he would not be happy with a 'deeply organisational' role:

I'm an OK organiser, but I'm aware that there's people around me who are much better at it, they take real pleasure in spotless files and things, and I don't get that sense of pleasure from it.

Although he might apply for a management position, he doesn't think he would get one, because 'it's not that I don't like toeing the line, but I like to question what's being done'.

[M]anagement is deeply tied to numerical, statistical evidence. I accept its usefulness but also feel qualitative, instinctual, tacit, intuitive knowledge is very undervalued and yet lies at the core of my success as an engager/teacher.

Mike is concerned that senior managers are now too 'knee jerk' reactive to OfSTED and government pronouncements and too focused on targets and statistics to take any risks.

I think a lot of senior managers can get obsessed with the graphs and the details.

During the interview Mike said 'I think my picture [of a senior manager] that I'm going to send to you would be that idea of containment and grid'; the image below arrived the following day.

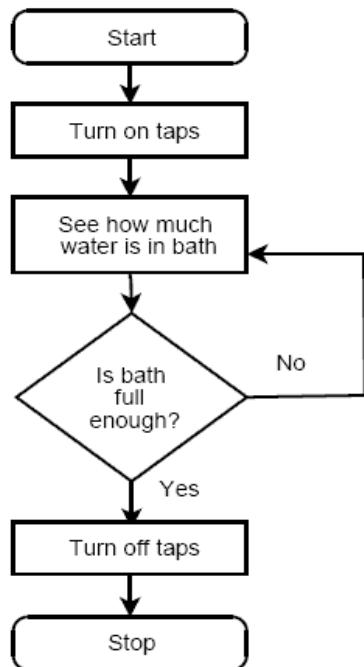


Figure 11. Mikes senior manager

This poem was in the email accompanying the senior manager image.

But the patterns are complex

We shouldn't pretend they are simple

The only reason for overly simplistic analysis and pattern finding is to reassure in a false way

The flow chart patterns of identifying reality do not confront the truth

A good leader seeks his/her own patterns

Too much complicity currently

He thinks that art staff are less likely to get promotion into management 'in the current climate, because of the data driven, target driven, heavy emphasis', which he sees as risk averse and lacking creativity.

[P]erhaps art teachers, by the nature of this subject have to be, or try to be, more innovative and risk taking, because that's where success lies in the art classroom, and that is not what [is wanted] in a financially tight time, so driven by data.

For Mike, success in teaching comes:

[W]hen you shake their hands on a prom night, and you learn that one has gone off to university to study video game design you get a feeling of being worth while.

Summary

This chapter gives an account of the data constructed during the interviews, including the participants accounts of their images of an art teacher and of a senior manager. In the next chapter I discuss what

this data means, both in terms of my research questions and the other issues which arise from the data.

Chapter 5. Discussion and interpretation

Introduction

In this chapter I return to the initial research questions, and examine the data in the light of these. The main aim of this research was to explore the reasons why specialist teachers of art and design are under-represented in senior management positions in secondary education. It used episodic life-history interviews with five art teachers, allowing them space to reflect on their professional identities, their careers to date and their aspirations for the future.

Although the data does provide me with answers to the initial research questions, including their attitudes to promotion, it became clear that the data also contains answers to other interesting questions. Exploring these helped to broaden my understanding of the research questions themselves, by deepening my awareness of the participants' sense of identity and awareness of context. These included their regret at losing their artistic practice or their replacement of this and where they saw their identities on the continuum between artist and teacher. In looking at these issues I became aware of the need to apply a number of lenses as I focused in and out of the data: what Wolcott (1994) describes as 'progressive focussing', zooming in and out of the data in a descriptive account, from 'ground to figure' – the same vocabulary as in art. These lenses include performativity (a key issue for all of them), emotional geographies and boundaries, and aspects of Wenger's communities of practice (2005), including participation and geographies of practice.

In this chapter I summarise my key research findings against each of these issues and consider what the findings mean in light of previous research.

Performativity

They've turned me into an art teaching machine, that's what they've made me into.
(Lucinda)

There's always this thing about targets, we have to get our students to this level or that level, but do we have to? (Abbi)

Performativity is a key issue in teachers' perceptions of their professional status, and a topic of intense debate within NSEAD, especially in relation to SMT imposed assessment policies (a particular issue for art teachers is the requirement to write comments on pupils' sketchbooks to provide evidence of feedback for OFSTED, which is resisted strongly by art specialists), but also more widely in relation to data, verification, and targets: the measurable outputs of their work. All the interviewees voiced concerns that reflect on performativity, mostly centred on assessment, monitoring and the requirement to maximise results at the expense of what they see as the important elements of art education. This echoes Ball who notes:

A kind of values schizophrenia is experienced by individual teachers where commitment, judgement and authenticity within practice are sacrificed for impression and performance.
(Ball, S., 2003, p.221)

Steers (2003) sees the National Curriculum Art Order as being concentrated on ‘what is to be taught rather than learnt and on relatively easily defined and assessed competencies’ (p.22), and (predicting Lucinda’s comment) that as a result:

[T]eachers are too often reduced to the role of curriculum delivery automatons. (Steers, 2003, p.30)

All these art teachers express their concerns for the journey the pupils go on, and the learning processes they go through – what the teachers see as the important elements of art education – rather than the artworks they produce. As a result, when it comes to inspection, they have learned to play the game, what Anne refers to as ‘adapting to my audience’ when she is being observed, or what Ball describes as:

[A] particular performativity – the management of performance – which is ‘called up’ by Inspection. What is produced is a spectacle, or game-playing, or cynical compliance [...] which is there simply to be seen and judged – a fabrication. (Ball, S., 2003, p.221)

Perhaps because of this dissonance between their views and concerns and those of the school more generally, they have started to look to network for their subject support.

Communities of practice and emotional geographies

[The network] has also strengthened me from the point of view of building a relationship with other art teachers, and seeing what they’re doing. (Abbi)

[O]ur department meetings were fun [...] but we had good ideas coming in and when you’ve got a group of people who share that same vision, you can do anything really. (Lucinda)

Wenger notes the idea of ‘community membership’, in which ‘we define who we are by the familiar and the unfamiliar’ (2005, p.149). This is particularly important for these artist/teachers, since their transformation from one to the other is exacerbated by the fundamental differences between the practices of the artist and the teacher (Adams, 2007). Coming from art colleges, where innovation and social critique are encouraged, their value systems are at odds with the heavily regulated teaching institutions they now operate in. Their inbound trajectories (Wenger, 2005, p.154) mean they have to try to adapt to the performance of professionalism imposed by the schools, such as codes of behaviour, dress (as emphasised by Lucinda), language etc. For some this may lead to what Wenger describes as a ‘peripheral trajectory’ in which ‘By choice or by necessity, some trajectories never lead to full participation’ (2005, p.154).

As a result, there is a strong sense of feeling on the periphery, of being outsiders in the school community, but also of placing themselves outside, of being ‘mavericks’, of ‘not fitting into the box’, which is amplified into a ‘relationship of them and us’ with management, thereby establishing a boundary which ‘is mobilized in the service of protecting professional autonomy against outside powers (legislators, corporate managers)’ (Lamont & Molnár, 2002, p.179). These perceptions echo Wenger’s comments on the opposition of some communities of practice:

If communities of practice see themselves as opposed to others (such as teachers and senior managers or arts departments and science departments), then participation in one demands non-participation in the other. (1998, p.168)

This sense of not fitting in, of seeing themselves as different, leads to the development of a sense of otherness, and the establishment of them and us boundaries.

I know when I go down there again [to the art room] it's like a little oasis. (Donna)

[T]hey try and fit me into a box with all the other subjects and I just don't fit. (Anne)

Emotional geographies become apparent in a sense of 'acceptance, affiliation, shared interest, openness, intimacy, help and support' (Hargreaves, 2001, p.516) within the art department, and feelings of a lack of these from elsewhere in the school, especially from senior managers. This leads to the establishment of boundaries, symbolic boundaries of 'us and them' (Lamont & Molnár, 2002), and a feeling of the art room being a different kind of space from the rest of the school, a place where things are done differently (sometimes even a haven for both pupils and staff).

As a result, this shared interest extends beyond their departmental colleagues to their students.

While many speak of the need for classroom control in an environment with paints, glues, knives, scissors, etc., all place far more emphasis on their less formal relationships with pupils in the art room compared to relationships elsewhere in the school. Donna sees this relationship with pupils as 'a privilege', while Mike speaks of learning from the students. The art department has been described as a shared space, 'a studio environment, both in physical and in social terms [...] to support a different, more creative culture', in which 'the teacher is no longer in a position of being the sole expert or authority' (Patrick, 2014, p.169). This is seen as creating a community of learning, with a more collaborative approach, allowing students to be in control of their own learning: one in which teachers who were also practitioners were confident to let pupils see that they are not just teachers but learners too.

For those who are no longer practicing artists or designers, this can result in a sense of loss.

Regret at losing practice, replacement of practice

I think the teacher/artist way, for an art teacher, definitely a very important way to go, and I think when you lose that I think you can start suffering all sorts of negativity. (Mike)

[W]hen my career got busier [...] the things that got squeezed really were the things that I loved the most. Which is a bit sad really. (Donna)

In Australia, a survey of early career art teachers found that for many their main motivation for making art before coming into teaching had been to forge a career as an artist, but this had subsequently changed to enjoyment, personal development and improving their teaching skills (Imms & Ruanglertbutr, 2012). Only two of my five participants are currently engaged in their own artistic practice and as a result describe themselves as artist/teachers, although Anne says she sees her teaching as her practice and also describes herself as an artist/teacher. This links with the view that both teaching and making art involve creativity and skill, and that teaching itself can be understood as

an art when teachers, like dancers, musicians, or painters, 'make judgments based largely on qualities that unfold during the course of action' (Eisner, 1985, p. 176).

Of the three who had experience as artists or designers before coming into teaching, Mike in particular feels very strongly that for an art specialist 'being just a teacher implies a loss of something'. This is certainly the case for Lucinda, who did produce and exhibit her own work in her early teaching career, but now regrets having no time to spend on her painting – although following her interview she has acquired a shed to make into a studio. Lim observes that in terms of an art teacher's identity, being 'a great artist/teacher may not be so critical; however, maintaining one's artistic nature while teaching art can be an important aspiration of art educators' (2006, p.12).

Although Donna never had her own practice she also regrets not being involved in her own work.

This continuation or abandonment of personal practice matters, not only in relation to their individual identities, but also in terms of their teaching. Artist/teachers believe that making art, responding to art, reflecting on art and teaching art are significant, both in fostering their creativity and innovation and in inspiring their students (Ball, 1990). In their survey of art teachers, Downing and Watson (2004) found that a quarter said they were, or had been practising artists alongside their teaching, and emphasised the beneficial link between their practice and their teaching, as did OFSTED in their surveys of art teaching (2003, 2012). Prentice has also shown the benefits of continuing to make art, and has recommended 'the recognition of art practice as a relevant and worthwhile' professional development activity (2014, p.169).

How does this range of continued practice, alternative practice and loss of practice impact on their identities as teachers of art?

Professional identities

[E]ven now when people ask me what I do the first thing I tell them is I'm an art teacher, I don't tell them I'm assistant head, that comes second. (Donna)

I always say I'm an artist first, although at the minute I'm not really a practising artist, but it is the way I view my teaching. (Anne)

Adams (2007) has written about the problems created for PGCE art students as they struggle with 'the identity transition between their former role as an artist and the new one of institutional art teacher' (p.262). For the teachers in this study, however, there is little evidence of a struggle with this, although perhaps more so for those who came into teaching after some time working as artist/designers. Their resistance to being 'just a teacher' leads these art teachers to see themselves as outsiders to some extent, what Mike describes as 'school mavericks' who 'don't like toeing the line'.

Their images of art teachers all share similar qualities: flexibility, a sense of freedom, slightly chaotic, and a willingness to accept (and embrace) uncertainty. Abbi describes her abstract image of an art teacher as loose and free and flowing. Mike's is 'individual and personal' made up of 'complex spirals and interference patterns'. Anne talks of an analogy between her pile of Lego blocks and art teachers

who see the possibilities as they work with their students and their art materials, and of being willing to ‘throw it all up in the air and start again’. Donna’s image is about the passion she is trying to get out of the pupils and the journey their work takes them on. Lucinda’s more literal image of an art teacher is about informality, about being more relaxed than other teachers.

These qualities are repeated in their requirements for a good art teacher, which include a passion for art, flexibility, competence as an artist (although Donna does not see this as an essential component), someone who can inspire students and who values students’ work and ideas. Coming from a school which has been in special measures, Lucinda is the only one who emphasises classroom management, pedagogy and being able to get students to higher grades. Possibly as a result of the additional pressures of working in a school in special measures, Lucinda has developed a somewhat negative view of her identity as a teacher.

Nonetheless, these teachers all display an activist professional identity (Sachs, 2001), believing in teaching in the best interests of their students, and based on their ideals and values. This allows them to maintain commitment to and a sense of meaning in their work through what Taylor (2015) calls ‘occupational consciousness’. For their professional identities as art teachers, what seems to be most important is that they are able to maintain their artistic nature (Lim, 2006), rather than necessarily being active artists.

How do these issues affect their careers?

Career development

I never really had any ambition as to moving up the scale, I just wanted to be able to spend time with the students. (Abbi)

I’ve been teaching for fourteen years and I’m getting better, but just keep developing that sense of looking for excellence. (Mike)

Donna is the only one who came straight into teaching, Abbi and Anne both had careers in the design industry they had trained for. Lucinda and Mike both had a series of jobs, some involving art. Abbi made a positive decision to enter teaching; the other three started PGCE because they needed a long term career. Abbi (who has been a teacher for less time than the others) is a classroom teacher, the others all either are or have been heads of department. Anne, Donna and Lucinda all got promoted fairly early in their careers, whereas Mike moved schools quite frequently before becoming a HoD. Donna speaks of her ‘snake like move’ through various initiatives, into a pastoral position and then to HoD, and is now an assistant principal. Mike currently has a pastoral role, whereas Anne turned down promotion to head of year.

Apart from those teachers who avoid applying for promotion because of the risks of professional exposure and of damaging self-esteem, Draper, Fraser and Taylor (1998) identified two other groups of staff who did not seek promotion. With the exception of Donna, the others seem to fall into both of these groups, those who actively wished to stay in the classroom and those who found the managerial content of promoted posts unattractive.

They also fit with two groups in Smith's typology of teachers' career expectations. One group are 'pragmatists', who are willing to take on responsibility provided it does not interfere with everything else they do and who are more likely to respond to opportunities than to seek out promotion. The other group is 'pupil-centred', in that their professional satisfaction comes from pupil achievement and from positive relations with their pupils, and they contrast themselves and their values with their perception of senior managers' values (Smith, 2011b).

What effects do these pupil-centred values and this pragmatism have on any ambition they may have?

Attitudes to promotion

[I]f the opportunity came, then yes. Otherwise I'm just quite happy where I am. (Abbi)

Is this where I stop? Is this the level I'm going to be at? (Anne)

Apart from Donna, they all display considerable ambivalence about seeking promotion. Anne and Lucinda, who are heads of department, are interested in promotion but only to specific roles equivalent to faculty head, a post which has traditionally been the career pinnacle for art specialists. Harland et al (2000) quote from an LEA arts adviser who was very much in favour of arts faculties because:

[Y]ou can aspire to be a senior teacher in a school and still stay within the arts, you don't have to give it up and go off to be a pastoral teacher, or a deputy head or something. (p.325)

However, their main concern is the amount of time that they would be out of the classroom, and the requirement to get involved in what Anne cynically refers to as 'data and other really inspiring things'. Although they all say they have organisational skills, they do not want to be committed to a 'deeply organisational' role, which they feel other people are better suited to. Whilst Donna does not mention data, the others all exhibit antipathy, both to being involved in working with data, and the uses that data and statistical evidence are put to within their schools.

Their images of senior managers are a strong contrast to their images of art teachers. Apart from Donna's image constructed from her experience in a management position, they are all rigid, hard edged and formal. Abbi's image uses a similar composition to her art teacher image, but it is far more controlled and constrained, almost resembling a target, Anne and Mike both provided images of logical, step by step thinking, with no deviation. Lucinda's businesslike, suited, 'intimidating' manager is diametrically opposite to her 'wild and whacky' art teacher.

Donna's SMT image is more complex and wide ranging, but she shares the others' perception that SMT members normally come from 'a more traditional, academic, straight-laced background'. As someone who has broken through into management (albeit through a 'zig-zag route'), she is an example of one of the 'breakthroughs' in Gunter's research which shows that while there are:

...accounts of breakthroughs and experiences of those who have risen to the top job, it is still the case that those who do not fit remain othered to the margins or outside the organizational boundaries. (2006, p.259)

These art specialists do not see themselves as part of the usual group of staff who become managers, and also feel a sense of not being understood by SMT, which leads to a sense that they are not the sort of people who are ‘selected, appointed, sorted and placed in ways that connect the self as follower with the organizational vision and mission.’ (Gunter, 2006, p.259)

What is it about their attitudes to data that acts as a block?

The issue of data and statistics

It’s all about data. There’s no personalisation, you are a number and that equates to another number, and that number refers to that number. When I look at senior management, I just see numbers. (Lucinda)

It’s got to be measureable and you can’t measure art. (Anne)

Although Mike acknowledges that data has its uses, citing its use in helping to close the gap in attainment between groups of pupils, he also thinks there is a naïve faith in the power of statistics, that ‘overly simplistic analysis and pattern finding [can] reassure in a false way’, and that ‘qualitative, instinctual, tacit, intuitive knowledge is very undervalued’. Whilst they say they are not comfortable dealing with data, this may be more to do with their pupil centred opposition to performance management and measurement and a perception of data dealing with absolutes rather than the uncertainties they are more used to, than to any lack of innate ability with statistics, although Lucinda does say that she is ‘rubbish with numbers’.

What does this mean for these teachers?

Even for the two with active professional practices, their identities as artist/teachers, described by Bennett (1994) as ‘concurrent careers’, are not a blocker to promotion as Bennett saw it, a choice between ‘paint, pots or promotion’, but they are generally comfortable in their roles, enjoying teaching and their positions, and not looking for escape into practice.

What stops them moving to promoted posts seems to be as much internal as external. For the four who are not senior managers, there is no evidence of actively seeking out promotion, or of career planning. While all four say they might be interested in progressing, and all think they have things to offer in senior roles, they all seem content to see if opportunities arise and then decide what to do; only Lucinda mentions looking beyond her current school. They are all deeply passionate about art education and its benefits for their pupils, and this makes them reluctant to spend more time away from their classrooms, especially when that involves activities which they are not interested in, of which data seems to be a particular concern. As a result, all draw specific limits about what they might apply for, with none really interested in anything beyond faculty head level (with only Mike potentially interested in a pastoral post).

All four have negative perceptions of management (having become a manager, Donna speaks of being seen as having ‘gone over to the dark side’) which they see as having a ‘managerialist, functionalist and modernising agenda’ (Fitzgerald & Gunter, 2008, p.338), rather than being focused on learning. In

particular, they see a relentless focus on finance, statistics, data and targets, which they say they are not comfortable with or interested in (and as a result they can sometimes be, as Mike says, ‘the victims of our own stereotype’). Both Anne and Lucinda see management as remote, with little contact with what happens in classrooms – even Donna questions why some heads no longer teach.

A further issue seems to be their perceptions of what SMT think about them. Although Mike says he might apply for management, he doesn’t think he would be successful because he is seen as innovative and risk-taking, which are not characteristics he thinks are required in the current data driven, risk-averse climate. Anne mentions that in her school SMT ‘often single people out’ for possible promotion, but no-one is encouraging her to apply.

So what is different about Donna? Although her intention on her degree course was to be a designer/maker, Donna is the only one of my participants who has not had her own practice and who went directly onto a PGCE course (although without any clear career intention) and this may have some bearing on her focus on teaching. She experienced a sort of epiphany on her teaching practice in a challenging school, when she realised that, for her, teaching was ‘a wider remit than just art’, although she is every bit as passionate about her teaching as the others and she still prioritises her identity as an art teacher over that of a senior manager. Working in schools in deprived areas led to opportunities to take roles in a series of initiatives, which would also help to broaden her outlook and experience. Although she has not had a pre-planned career route, she speaks of her willingness to ‘give it a go’ when any new opportunity comes up, and of looking at more senior staff and thinking ‘do you know what, I could probably do that’ – but although she aspires to a deputy headship, she has no interest in headship.

Donna fits closely with Smith’s ‘politicized leader’ profile; she has a strong sense of values, a high level of motivation and a sense of mission and purpose, she places a strong emphasis on young people’s welfare and achievement, and she makes her career decisions in accordance with her educational values and philosophy (Smith, 2011b).

Summary

Having examined how the data answers my research questions, in the following chapter I review the research, discuss the findings from it and any use that might be made of them, offer some thoughts on how the research might be improved and developed, and reflect on my own practice.

Chapter 6. Conclusion

Introduction

This thesis looked at the ways in which art teachers narrate their professional identities, their careers and their attitudes to promotion, and posed the following questions:

- How do art teachers articulate their professional identity?
- What accounts do they give of how their careers have developed?
- How do they envisage their careers developing in future?
- If they seek promotion, which routes do they follow, and why?
- Are they interested in seeking senior positions, including headships? And what reasons do they give for their decisions about this?

My research was a narrative study based on episodic life history interviews with five art teachers, one of whom is a senior manager, and included their own visual images of an art teacher and a senior manager.

The data constructed through these interviews allows me to answer the initial research questions in so far as the respondents demonstrate a number of broad similarities but also a few significant differences; however, given the small sample, these findings cannot be generalised beyond these particular teachers.

How do art teachers articulate their professional identity?

Their professional identities are dependent on a very strong identification with their subject, indeed three of them describe themselves as artist/teachers (although only two of these have any current personal artistic practice), and another prioritises her identity as an art teacher over being a senior manager. They all focus on their teaching and their students' learning rather than on complying with performative policies, and so aligning themselves with Sach's' activist professionalism (2001). Their participation in the NSEAD regional group and their membership of NSEAD itself can be seen as going beyond a community of practice, being effectively a professional association since as well as being a trade union the Society delivers professional development and publishes an academic journal (the International Journal of Art and Design Education).

In spite of feeling that their creative characteristics make them different to other teachers and hence rather sidelined in the school community, although based on a very small sample, these results appear to contradict the notion that the transition from "artist" or "art student" into "art teacher" is especially difficult (Adams, 2007). This may be due to four of the sample being mature entrants who made positive decisions to enter teaching.

What accounts do they give of how their careers have developed?

Even though two of them have restarted their own artistic output, their accounts of how their careers have developed all evidence some degree of regret at the loss of their own practice. Furthermore, they all feel their teaching and their students' experiences of art have been narrowed by the constraints of the curriculum and a regime of testing. This is especially acute for Lucinda, who works in a school in special measures and feels immense, even intimidating pressure to achieve national targets for GCSE success.

Most feel sidelined to some extent within the school community, both by the value placed on art by government and managers, and by the stereotyping of art teachers. Whilst they often seem to resent this, there is also an element of their status as mavericks being welcomed as a major part of their identity.

This sample also appears to contradict the notion of 'concurrent careers' impacting negatively on promotion (Bennett, 1985), indeed, two of them had given up their careers in design to enter teaching. Those that are still practitioners see their practice as integral to and informing their teaching, rather than something separate from it, and believe that it would be beneficial for all art teachers to have this joint involvement.

How do they envisage their careers developing in future?

None of the four who are still classroom teachers have any clear career plan, and there is ambivalence both about their desire to progress, and about their ability to progress, especially around data and statistics and what they see as managerialism in promoted posts. They are resistant to being taken out of their classrooms, doing less teaching, and becoming 'business people', even turning into what Lucinda describes as 'a bit of a bully'. They see the gatekeepers to promotion, the existing senior staff, perceiving art specialists as unsuitable due to their intuitive, innovative, risk-taking characteristics. What applications they have made for promotion have been opportunistic rather than driven by ambition; in fact the only one with a clear ambition for promotion is already a senior manager.

If they seek promotion, which routes do they follow, and why?

Apart from Donna, the routes they might consider for promotion are largely centred on their subject, with three of them having expressed interest in faculty head positions: only one of these might be interested in a pastoral post, and one is actively considering leaving teaching. They all express wariness of what promotion beyond head of department brings with it.

Are they interested in seeking senior positions?

The four who are not senior managers seem to see little benefit, either for themselves or their subject, from becoming senior managers, and demonstrate a strong antipathy to management, which is seen as remote, and as having little contact with classroom teaching. The four teachers' images of

managers are all depictions of a dispassionate, hard edged, step by step logical, organised persona, which is at odds to their own softer, complex, slightly chaotic imagery. Their images of managers are also in a marked contrast to Donna's more humane, measured and thoughtful image.

This disinterest in management positions, together with their focus on teaching and learning and on the young people they teach means that with the removal of positions such as Advanced Skills Teacher, there is nowhere for them to progress to. Even Donna's ambition is limited to deputy headship, with headship seen as too onerous.

What might these findings mean for art education and for education more generally?

With the exception of Donna who has already moved into management, their aspirations are limited to departmental leadership (although Mike might be willing to consider a pastoral role) rather than institutional leadership, with faculty head being the limit for those who might consider promotion beyond head of art. As a result, art is far less likely to be represented at whole school decision making levels, and consequently will be less able to have sufficient influence to defend itself against the threat of being side-lined, especially in the key Stage 4 curriculum and in the sixth form.

For the school in general, this reluctance to take on whole school roles also means that the innate creativity of art specialists is not available to their senior teams. Part of that creative ability is to question and challenge the status quo, and to be willing to ask questions which may make colleagues from more traditional academic backgrounds 'see things sometimes in a different way, or see people in a different way, or what they could do with the resources they've got available to them' (Donna). Another aspect is their willingness to take risks and accept, even to embrace, uncertainty, to 'throw it all up in the air and start again' (Anne). As Mike says, 'I think that we revel in the ambiguity, we deal with things which are intangible' which contrasts with his view of managers who he sees as being 'terrified of taking risks'.

Another aspect of their creative background is their absolute focus on the student experience, the 'journey' and the learning which takes place in the classroom, rather than on the outputs and results, and their willingness to accept their pupils as partners in that experience, to, as Donna says, 'get into the headspace of the kids'. They all contrast that approach with what happens in other subjects, and some comment on the remoteness of managers from what actually happens in the classroom and their seemingly cold, logical approach, to the extent that Abbi mentions a colleague's expression, 'A very good word that he uses a lot – he thinks they're philistines'.

What did I learn about researching from this study?

As I worked with the data, I quickly became aware that the constraints imposed by the time available for an MA on the size of my sample were very limiting. This led me to consider what alternative cases I might have included in the sample, and whether my focus on promotion had limited the sample too narrowly to those already at HoD level, or too narrowly to those who had been in practice before

entering teaching. By necessity my choice of art teachers who had entered management was more limited, but I could have given more consideration to selection of the other four cases.

Reflecting on the interviews themselves, I realised that I could have used more prompts, and possibly have probed further into the participants' responses than I did, although I still feel that my decision not to use a more reciprocal, conversational style was the right approach for me, as it prevented my getting too involved, too digressive.

I had several discussions with my supervisor about participants' verification of their data, and a decision was reached not to seek their comments on my accounts of their interviews. I was, however, pleased to be able to attend a network meeting to feedback on the project as I worked on the final draft of this thesis, and was able to get feedback from them on the results.

As I worked with the data, I came to realise the importance of a journal, as it enabled me to look back on my initial reflections on the interviews and how these had developed over time, and as I drafted sections of the report it allowed me to see where and why I had made and altered decisions about the structure of each section.

Possibilities for further research

There are a number of ways this study could be extended. As it stands it would benefit from both a larger and a wider sample, including younger, less experienced teachers. With more time a longitudinal study, tracking individuals from their degree programmes, through initial training and on into their teaching careers might reveal interesting data, especially at the points of transition.

Other avenues which might be explored could include seeking the views of senior managers from other subject areas about art specialists and their perceived suitability for management. Another interesting possibility would be to explore the differences between serving artist/teachers and those individuals who found the conflict between teaching and practice too onerous and left to pursue their own art.

A personal note

I want to end by expressing my admiration for the enthusiasm these teachers all show for teaching art, in spite of the circumstances they have to teach in, and for their absolute focus on the young people they teach.

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Annex 1. Biographical note

From my first year in secondary school I wanted to be an architect. When I got my “O” level results I went to Hull School of Architecture to ask what “A” levels I should take. Their answer was maths and physics because you have to make the buildings stand up, then art (because being able to draw is very useful) or a language. In September I went back to school and said I wanted to take maths, physics and art, all of which I had good “O” level passes in. The response was that I could not, as there was a science sixth and an arts sixth and you cannot mix courses from both and in any case I should do art, music and literature if I wanted to be an architect. So, reluctantly, I signed up for art, French and English. At Christmas we went to visit relatives in Newcastle and I took the opportunity to go to Newcastle University’s School of Architecture and asked them about my “A” levels. Their reply was the same as Hull’s had been. In January I went back to school and told the Head he did not know what he was talking about, and was promptly ‘invited’ to leave.

‘Recommendations in the first Coldstream Report stated that entry to the new Dip AD [Diploma in Art & Design] would depend on a satisfactory completion of a pre-diploma course, five O levels and a minimum age of 18. Of the five O levels, three subjects should be recognised as being ‘academic’ and one of them should be in a subject considered to provide evidence of English language ability.’ (Lord, n.d.)

This meant that I could apply for the pre-diploma course at my local college, Hull Regional College of Art, on the strength of my “O” levels and my portfolio of work. I was offered a place on the course and went to work in France to fill the intervening months. Having only done painting and drawing at school, working in three dimensions was a revelation, particularly using clay. I applied for DipAD courses which mixed ceramics and fine art sculpture, and was accepted at my second choice college, Stourbridge College of Art. My sculpture tutor there was Harry Seager who made large sculptures in glass and steel, and I often worked as his assistant at weekends and in the holidays.

In 1969 I graduated from Stourbridge with a Diploma in Art & Design in Sculpture, Glass & Ceramics. After a year working as an occupational therapist and teaching an adult evening institute course in sculpture, I went on to take a Post-graduate Certificate in Education at Birmingham University and a specialist Art Teaching Diploma at Birmingham Polytechnic. From 1971 I taught at a 13-18 senior high school in Hull, but was also a practising sculptor, exhibiting⁴ and selling work until 1985. I also occasionally worked as an assistant to Martin Wolverson, my sculpture tutor on the pre-diploma course, and Judith Bluck, who was working on monumental sculptures for public spaces.

⁴ Solo Show, St Edmund Hall, Oxford University, 1973; Knowles & Tonks, The Gallery, Market Weighton, 1975; Solo Show, Lincolnshire & Humberside Arts Association, 1976; Hull Ferens Art Gallery Winter Show, various dates; Six Art Teachers, Hull Central Library, 1978; Humberside Art Teachers, Beverley Art Gallery, 1978 and Site Specific Sculptures, Bishop Burton College, 1985

I also carried on teaching evening institute courses and O level Archaeology at the school. In 1982 the local authority sent out a document about gender equality; as I was teaching in a recently built girls' school which had no CDT facilities I sent the document back with a request for funding to set up CDT resources. This was successful and I was promoted to teacher in charge of design studies. In my final year at the school I was seconded to the Royal Institute of British Architects to develop an Architects in Schools programme in partnership with Hull School of Architecture.

In 1986 I moved to become head of department in an 11-18 school and began to throw so much effort into developing and running the department that my own work fell away. I was also teaching evening classes in art for the local FE college and archaeology for the WEA. In my last year there I was also acting head of sixth form, and made the first of my two (unsuccessful) applications for a deputy headship. This was in a school in the south west, which was being formed from a merger of three smaller schools, with all the sixth form on one site, and this post was to be in charge of the sixth form campus.

I had moved to the East Riding because Hull was reorganising from a three tier system with middle schools to a junior, senior (11-16) and sixth form college/FE system. The LEA published a list of all the available positions some three years in advance of the reorganisation and invited expressions of interest for three posts. I was told I would not get any of the ones I was interested in, and that my best option was to get out of the authority. Two of the jobs I had identified were as head of art in either of the two new sixth form colleges. In 1988 a head of arts faculty post in one of the colleges was advertised nationally, and I was appointed. With a broad range of subjects in the faculty I became increasingly interested in curriculum issues and in teaching and learning strategies, and was promoted to assistant principal for curriculum development in 1990, responsible for the introduction of vocational courses, higher education links (including the franchising of Year 0 programmes from Hull University), records of achievement and curriculum entitlement. I was also the college's Technical and Vocational Educational Initiative co-ordinator, which gave me strong links with the partner 11-16 schools. My second application for a deputy headship was to a school in a market town in the north of England which was about to be totally rebuilt, and this post was to take responsibility for working with the architects and developers to ensure that the school's curricular and pastoral needs were met. In 1992 Humberside Polytechnic closed its art foundation course, and to replace this I quickly established and became Course Leader of a BTEC Foundation Studies in Art & Design programme at the college for three years.

From 1995 to 2001 I was seconded (initially part time but later full-time) to the University of Lincolnshire & Humberside to run a widening participation scheme linking the University to a number of 11-16 secondary schools serving disadvantaged communities, and in 2001 I was appointed to a permanent post as Widening Participation Coordinator at the University of Lincoln. In that position I met with the heads of most of the forty schools we worked with, and represented the University on three Education Action Zones, one Excellence in Cities Partnership, one Gifted & Talented Partnership

and two Aimhigher Area Partnerships; none of the heads I met were from an art and design background, although the arts were represented by a head who had been a drama teacher. I was also seconded part-time to Action on Access (the national advisory team for AimHigher) as an area advisor in the north-west region; again, none of the heads I met there were from art backgrounds.

Annex 2. Teacher and headteacher subject specialisms

	Heads		Teachers	
	N	%	N in 000s	%
Mathematics	350	6.6	33.3	9.7
English	570	10.8	37.5	10.9
<i>Physics</i>	160	3.0	6.2	1.8
<i>Chemistry</i>	180	3.4	7.4	2.2
<i>Biology</i>	390	7.4	8.8	2.6
<i>Combined/General science</i>	670	12.6	32.9	9.6
<i>Other Sciences</i>	210	4.0	2.4	0.7
SCIENCES	1,610	30.4	57.7	16.8
<i>History</i>	500	9.4	16.1	4.7
<i>Geography</i>	280	5.3	14.7	4.3
<i>Religious Education</i>	230	4.3	15.4	4.5
<i>Citizenship</i>	90	1.7	7.0	2.0
HUMANITIES	1,100	20.8	53.2	15.5
<i>French</i>	160	3.0	14.2	4.1
<i>German</i>	70	1.3	5.0	1.5
<i>Spanish</i>	30	0.6	7.2	2.1
<i>Other Modern Languages</i>	70	1.3	3.0	0.9
LANGUAGES	330	6.2	29.4	8.5
<i>Design and technology</i>	220	4.2	13.4	3.9
<i>Engineering</i>	60	1.1	1.5	0.4
<i>ICT</i>	60	1.1	15.4	4.5
TECHNOLOGY	340	6.4	30.3	8.8
Business / Economics	300	5.7	10.3	3.0
<i>Music</i>	90	1.7	7.3	2.1
<i>Drama</i>	140	2.6	10.2	3.0
<i>Art and design</i>	140	2.6	12.7	3.7
<i>Media Studies</i>	30	0.6	6.1	1.8
ARTS	400	7.5	36.3	10.5
Physical education	300	5.7	24.6	7.1

Source: DfE. (2014). School workforce in England: November 2013. Retrieved from
<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/school-workforce-in-england-november-2013>

Annex 3. Ethics approval from Research proposal

What ethical principles/codes of practice will guide the research?

This research will follow the BERA guidelines (2011), and will comply with legal requirements under the Data Protection Act (1998).

Are any particular ethical issues likely to arise in this research, and how will you address them?

Following BERA guidelines (2011), only participants who have given voluntary informed consent, based on full, accurate information about the research, will be interviewed. The basis for this consent will be an information sheet about the research which will have a consent form attached. The information sheet will make it clear that participants are free to decline to answer any questions they choose not to and have the right to withdraw at any time and to withdraw their data.

Subsequent to obtaining signed consent forms I will continue to check that participants are happy to continue with that permission throughout the research project.

A particularly important consideration is confidentiality (BERA, 2011). Participants will be invited to choose an alias before commencing their interviews, and care will be taken to see that participants' real names are not disclosed at any point. Hammersley (2010) questions the use of gendered pseudonyms for interviewees; in this study gender may be a specific issue, and so I intend to use gendered labels.

As a further assurance of anonymity, any identifiable information (such as the university where they studied, or the schools where they have taught) will be changed or removed during transcription. However, if participants wish to be identifiable (e.g. by speaking as a representative of an organisation, or by association with their artistic output), they can choose to be so identified.

Specific ethical issues about confidentiality and anonymity are likely to arise if I am able to interview a headteacher. If it proves to be impossible to ensure anonymity through removing identifiable information, it may be necessary to omit their data.

When writing the thesis I will be careful to ensure that it does not contain language or terminology which is biased on grounds such as race or gender.

Legal requirements under the Data Protection Act (1998) will be complied with. In particular, signed consent forms will be scanned and the scans kept on a password protected, encrypted storage device, and the originals destroyed. Audio tapes, any other recordings (e.g. video) and field notes will be stored securely and the transcriptions will also be kept on a password protected, encrypted storage device.

All participants will be provided with a copy of the final report.

Ethical issues will be reviewed in an ongoing way in supervision.

Annex 4. Research questions

1. How do art teachers articulate their professional identity?
2. What accounts do they give of how their careers have developed?
3. How do they envisage their careers developing in future?

4. If they seek promotion, which routes do they follow, and why?
5. Are they interested in seeking senior positions, including headships? And what reasons do they give for their decisions about this?

Annex 5. Initial questionnaire

Project title: **Art teachers' professional identities and attitudes to promotion: a narrative study**

Name of researcher: **John Knowles**

Nature and purpose of the study

In 1982 the Gulbenkian Foundation called for secondary school arts teachers to aim for senior management positions. However, very few specialist teachers of art and design become head teachers of secondary schools. Research demonstrated this almost 30 years ago, and recent correspondence with the National Society for Education in Art and Design indicates that it still applies.

Having recently retired after some 40 years in education, 24 of these as an art teacher, I have started a research degree at the University of Huddersfield looking into the reasons behind this. I will be using this short questionnaire to map and evaluate experiences across a group of art teachers. This will be followed by 90-120 minute life-history interviews about their careers with a small sample of art teachers. These will be drawn from respondents to the questionnaires who volunteer to be interviewed. There will also be an opportunity for them to create an artefact to express their thoughts.

Your involvement in this research is entirely voluntary, and your responses to this questionnaire will be anonymous. You are also free to decline to answer any questions. By completing and returning this questionnaire, you are giving your consent to take part in the project and for the data you provide to be used.

There are 10 questions in total. Please click the boxes you want to tick or type into the grey spaces (they will expand as you type).

1. Are you: female male

2. How old are you?

- | | |
|------------|--------------------------|
| 21 to 30 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 31 to 40 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 41 to 50 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 51 or over | <input type="checkbox"/> |

3. What was the main study area of your degree?

- | | |
|------------------|--------------------------|
| Painting | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Sculpture | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Printmaking | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3D design | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Fashion/textiles | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Graphic design | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Lens based media | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Digital | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other | |

4. Apart from teacher training, did you do anything else between graduating and starting teaching?

- Yes No

If so, what did you do, and how long for?

5. Would you describe yourself as working or as having worked as an artist?

Yes No

If so, can you say a bit more about this?

6. How long have you been teaching?

First year	<input type="checkbox"/>
Two to four years	<input type="checkbox"/>
Five to ten years	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ten to twenty years	<input type="checkbox"/>
Over twenty years	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. What promoted posts have you held? (Please tick all posts held)

None	<input type="checkbox"/>
Excellent teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advanced skills teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>
Head of department	<input type="checkbox"/>
Head of year	<input type="checkbox"/>
Head of faculty	<input type="checkbox"/>
Head of upper or lower school	<input type="checkbox"/>
Specialist leader of education	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assistant head	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deputy head	<input type="checkbox"/>
Head teacher	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. Do you intend to seek promotion beyond your current role?

Yes No Not sure

9. What have been your experiences of seeking promotion, or your reasons for not doing so?

10. Any other comments?

Thank you for completing this form.

If you would be prepared to take part in a face to face interview with me, to discuss your career and your career aspirations in more depth, please give your contact details on the next sheet. This will be removed from the questionnaire as soon as you return it and stored separately. Your contact details will not be used to identify you in any outputs of this research.

Annex 6. Information sheet and consent form

Project title: **Pedagogues or practitioners: how do secondary art teachers articulate their professional identities?**

Name of researcher: **John Knowles**

Nature and purpose of the study

In 1982 the Gulbenkian Foundation called for secondary school arts teachers to aim for senior management positions (Robinson, 1982). However, very few specialist teachers of art and design become head teachers of secondary schools. Bennett's research (1985) demonstrated this almost 30 years ago, and recent correspondence with the National Society for Education in Art and Design indicates that it still applies.

Having recently retired after some 40 years in education, 24 of these as an art teacher, I have started a research degree at the University of Huddersfield looking into the reasons behind this.

I will be using a short questionnaire to map and evaluate experiences across a group of art teachers, followed by 90-120 minute interviews with a small sample drawn from respondents to the questionnaire who volunteer to be interviewed.

Expected benefits of the study

A better understanding of why so few art teachers make the progression to senior leadership, and thereby to contribute to a deeper understanding of their professional identities

Possible harm that may come from the study

It may be that the conversation turns to events which have been unhappy, unpleasant or painful for you. You are of course, free to not answer these if you choose not to.

Confidentiality, anonymity, data storage

Confidentiality will be assured by following the British Educational Research Association Guidelines (BERA, 2011) and by complying with the Data Protection Act (1998). Care will be taken to see that participants' real names are not disclosed at any point. As a further assurance of anonymity, any identifiable information (such as the university where you studied, or the schools where you have taught) will be changed or removed during transcription.

Your involvement in this research is entirely voluntary. Should you choose to take part you are free to decline to answer any questions you choose not to, and free to withdraw and/or withdraw your data at any time during the project.

Ethics procedures and routes for further questions or complaint/appeals

This research will follow the British Educational Research Association Guidelines (BERA, 2011) and will comply with the Data Protection Act (1998). I am happy to answer any questions you may have about this. My contact details are:

John Knowles
School of Education & Professional Development
University of Huddersfield
Queensgate,
Huddersfield,
HD1 3DH
email: u1354286@hud.ac.uk

Should you wish to make a complaint, you should contact my supervisor:

Professor Helen Colley
School of Education & Professional Development
University of Huddersfield
Queensgate,
Huddersfield,
HD1 3DH

Consent form

Project title: **Pedagogues or practitioners: how do secondary art teachers articulate their professional identities?**

Name of researcher: **John Knowles**

This research is being carried out for a Masters by Research at the University of Huddersfield.

Your involvement in this research is entirely voluntary. Should you choose to take part you are free to decline to answer any questions you choose not to, and free to withdraw and/or withdraw your data at any time during the project.

Confirmation of how data will be recorded

Interviews will be tape recorded and accurate transcripts taken from them. Images will be scanned or photographed.

Confirmation that anonymity will be protected

Confidentiality will be assured by following the British Educational Research Association Guidelines (BERA, 2011) and by complying with the Data Protection Act (1998).

Participants will be invited to choose an alias before commencing their interviews, and care will be taken to see that participants' real names are not disclosed at any point. As a further assurance of anonymity, any identifiable information (such as the university where you studied, or the schools where you have taught) will be changed or removed during transcription. However, if participants wish to be identifiable (e.g. by speaking as a representative of an organisation, or by association with their artistic output), they can choose to be so identified.

Any arrangements for de-briefing and feedback

All interviewees will be provided with a copy of the final report.

I have read and understood the information sheet and this consent form, and I am willing to take part in an interview for this research project.

Name:

Email:

Mobile:

Phone:

Signature:

Date:

Annex 7. Interview schedule

Research questions	Interview questions
(Introductory question)	When did you decide to take art into higher education, and why?
What accounts do they give of how their careers have developed?	What were your ambitions when you started your degree course? Did you do anything else before starting teaching? If so, tell me more about it. What led you into teaching? What were your aspirations when you started teaching? What are your aspirations now? Have you carried on making your own work? If so, tell me more about it. If not, why? How do you feel about this?
How do art teachers articulate their professional identity?	Do you think being an art teacher is different to being a teacher of other subjects? If so, how? (Use illustration) What makes a good art teacher? Do you identify yourself as an artist, as an artist/teacher, as an art teacher or as a teacher? Has that changed over your career?
How do they envisage their careers developing in future?	What post do you hold now? Do you intend applying for promotion beyond this level? If so, why? If not, why not?
If they seek promotion, which routes do they follow, and why?	If you were to seek/when you applied for promotion, would you be/were you interested in an academic role, a pastoral role or a management role? Why?
Are they interested in seeking senior positions, including headships? And what reasons do they give for their decisions about this?	What is your image of senior leaders? (Use illustration) Have you ever considered/do you think you might consider applying for a senior role? If so, why? If not, why not? What do you think is the likelihood of art specialists becoming senior leaders? Please explain.
	Thank you for your time. Is there anything you wish to add, or any topic you want to revisit?

Annex 8. Full length quotations from Donna's interview

John. How do you think teachers of other subjects view art teachers?

Donna. It's just a doss! Art is just colouring in, giving out the pencils, and checking that they haven't coloured in over the lines. I mean that's not everybody. What's been interesting is I've line managed art for the last four or five years, and this year a history subject SLT took over the line management, and he came to me within a couple of weeks and just said "My God, I can't believe what goes on in those art lessons." He says the amount of depth that those kids can talk about their work, the way that they can express themselves, the analysis that they go into when they're looking at paintings and artists and the links they have to make. He couldn't believe what went on in an art lesson, because obviously he just sees portfolios or he just sees a piece of work on a wall in a frame, he was just blown away by it, and I think that's been really useful this year for him to have been in that position, to be able to spread the word a little bit, because I know what they do down there, I know how hard they're working, what they get out of those kids, but he was absolutely amazed Obviously from a history background, it's all about "Here's some facts, learn those facts, and then answer this question." The process is so clear cut, whereas you went down to art and there's 20 kids all doing something completely different from the same theme, and he was like "I don't know how you do it, how you teach that. I don't know how you get in the headspace of all those kids."

John. Again, this is a – could be a difficult question to ask somebody in a senior leadership team: what's your image of senior leaders? You might want your illustration.

Donna. Right. This is a bit more organised, and that was more creative and messy, I think, this is probably right. So {pause} this [[*indicates picture frame*]] is the seeing the bigger picture thing, in that you can't be a senior leader and just exist within your own line management structure and what's going on, you've got to see the bigger picture, as in what's happening outside of, not just your own department, but outside your own school, outside the region, what's happening nationally, across the world so it's having your eye on what's going on. The glasses are like this clear vision of where, of where you want to be with things, and how you want things to be for yourself, and what's the best thing for your teams that you're leading. The background was a mirror, so that's about being reflective as you go along and not just get your head down, and get into the zone and get on with it, you've got to keep stopping every now and again, and just think "Right, what's happened? What have I done? Where do we need to go?" and just being a bit reflective; em, punch-bag because you're just constantly barraged all of the time, and sponge similarly because you're absorbing all the time. Sometimes you're taking the hits because people are just coming in and they're either pissed off about something or they really want to rant about something or they want to rant at you or they just want to rant about somebody else, whatever. You've got to be ready for that, and then ready to deal with that, and how you deal with the people, so you can't just go "Well thanks for that, see you next week." You know, it's what do you do next and that, because you've just got to absorb, you know, peoples' emotions, peoples' feelings, peoples' thoughts: and then you've got to absorb all the important things, as in documentation, like things that are written down, and it, it's filtering all the time, you know, which bits you can keep, which bits you can throw away, em, and then thinking "God, I spoke to him this morning, I wonder if they're all right? I'd better go back and check on them, because they weren't too happy about that." Or it, it's – hence the juggling balls; just all the time

there's – and somebody every now and then throws another one in, and you've just got to be ready to keep them going, because it {pause} you've just got o be ready, 'cos you're on your toes all the time. Obviously big ears, because you're listening, em, not just to people who come in here purposely, but listening to what's going on out there, like the groundswell of what's happening. 'Cos we've recently got a new head, things are happening fast here {pause} jobs are here, there and everywhere, there's – it's been a real year of change for us, em, and having that ear on the ground with staff has been vital this year, more than any, because we've needed to know like the thermometer, what's it like, what's happening down there. Em, that one here, oh, hang on, we've got, em, that was a maze [[*in the eye socket*]] which is just basically because you do find yourself not sure how to solve half these problems and you try one thing and try another so it, it's not knowing where to go a lot of the time, just trial and error. That was a clock [[*in the other socket*]] with numbers that are just all over the place because sometimes I feel like I don't know where the day's gone, and I wish there was more hours in the day, because if I could move the numbers around I would {laughs} sometimes move the numbers further because you just – and your days are never the same. Although you might have a timetable that you do your art lessons with, what happens around that is often a bit wild and unpredictable and a bit chaotic, because you don't know who's going to appear at your door next, or what's going to happen in school, so sometimes that's why that's such a joyous time because that's – I know what I'm going to be doing then, and I know when I go down there again, it's like a little oasis sometimes. A ruler for your mouth because you have to be measured in what you say all of the time, you're not in a position where, for example, if I go down to the art block – I went down the art department today (I was on duty) went down, talked to them, They wanted to tell me something about the state of this place, they wanted to have a bit of a <unclear> about something, and they know I can't say anything back. So it's me knowing then that I can't then sit down and go "Oh, you're right, because I tell you what..." You've just got to then, like, back out, it's making sure you're always thinking before you say anything, because whatever you say, people are just going to take on board, and they're going to quote back to other people, and they're going to – so you have to be really careful all the time, you know, you can't just mouth off like they would down there, you're in a different role. Em, {pause} so, team player, which was the footie strip with the [school name] badge on; you've got to be part of the team, you've got this corporate image all the time, again, you know, you can't ever let your guard down, you're constantly – it's like you're acting sometimes because you're constantly this person. And that was a tattoo [[*on the neck*]] because {pause} it gets under your skin is what I was trying to say there, it, it, you know, you do have to live and breath this, and I do. It's always in the back of me head, doesn't matter where I am, what I'm doing – I might be on holiday and I'll go "Oh, that would be great for like still life", or I might be, em {pause}, even on a night time I'll be sitting watching a show and I'll think "Ah, that's interesting, I might mention that with my group tomorrow" or, you know, it's, it's just everything: or I'm on my iPad "Ah, I'm doing Twitter link tonight with this head from another school". You know, you've got to – well, you don't have to {laughs}, I have to {pause} just fully immerse myself in it, so it's that feeling that it's always under your skin. Yeah.

Annex 9. Word Cloud images

I used Wordle (Feinberg, 2010; McNaught & Lam, 2010), an application that creates word clouds based on the frequency of the words that are entered in the Wordle site (www.wordle.net). The words are shown in a larger type size the more often they are used. Common words are automatically omitted, and other words can be edited out to clarify the image. These images all use the 80 most used words in each interview

Figure 12

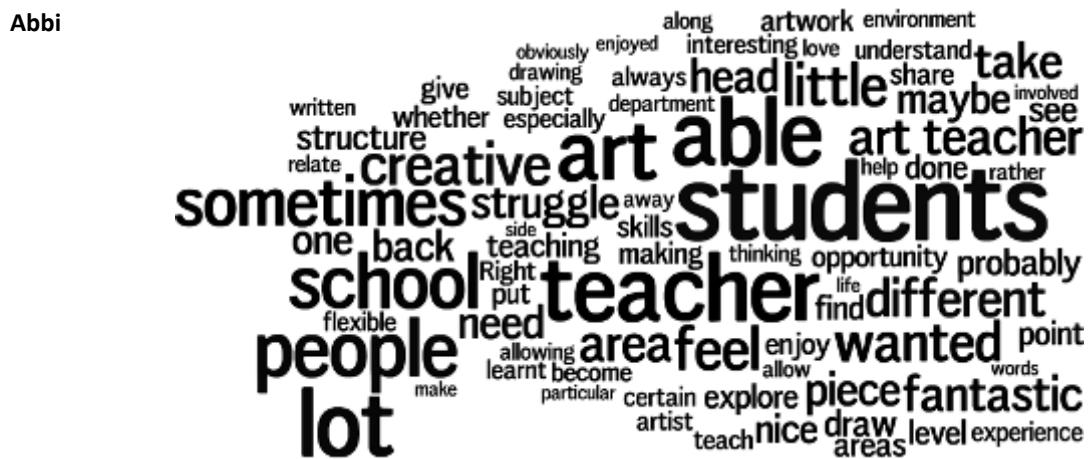


Figure 13

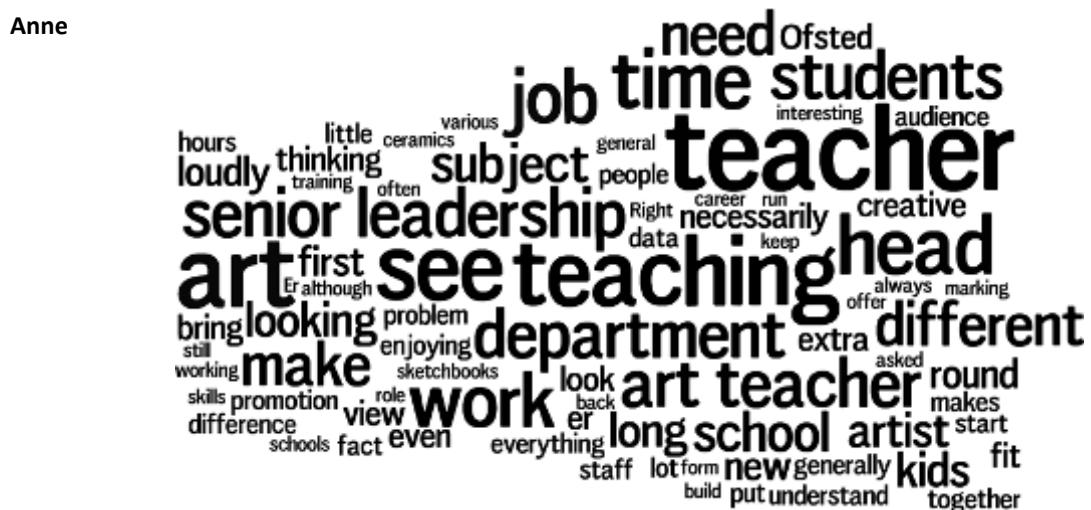


Figure 14

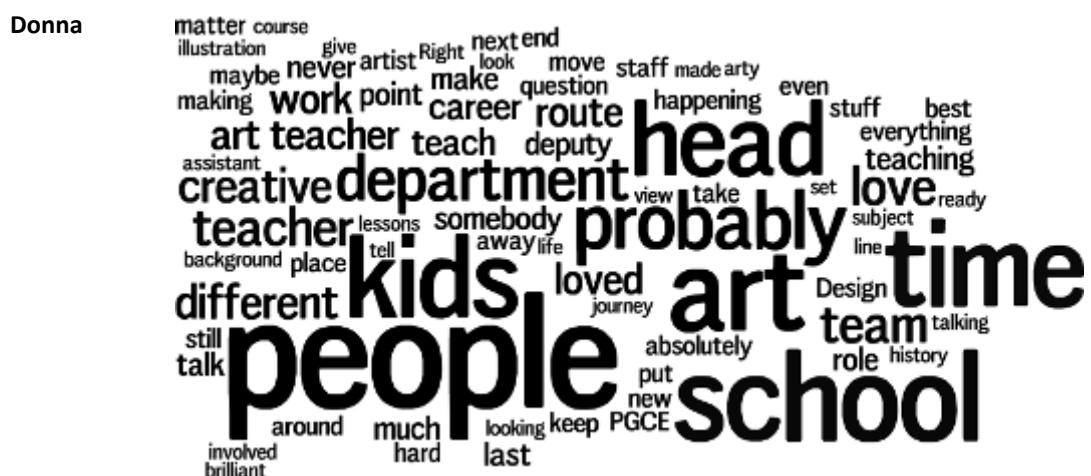


Figure 15



Figure 16

