



**A study into the use of metaphors, the narratives they represent, and the application of the Clean Language questioning model as a method of reflection within an HE context.**

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## **Abstract**

This thesis explores the relevance and significance of the metaphors used to convey a story and the broader narratives these metaphors represent, specifically within the context of reflective practice in higher education (HE). By situating the research in relation to traditional educative cyclical process models of reflective practice, this study identifies how alternative models of engagement could be used to promote academics' reflective practice, and how the metaphors employed to tell a story can give insights and inform narratives of teaching practice.

The study employed the Clean Language questioning model (Lawley & Tompkins, 2000; Sullivan & Rees, 2008) to encourage participants to recount their stories of teaching and elicit the metaphors representative of their teaching practice. The effectiveness as a research tool of the Clean Language questioning model, traditionally used in therapeutic contexts, was also evaluated as part of this study, given an emerging trend utilising Clean Language within research interviews. Eleven academics from different schools within a northern English university were interviewed to encourage stories of their teaching experiences. Furthermore, a participant questionnaire and a focus group discussion were used alongside the interview data to interrogate and substantiate the research conclusions.

The three strands of the study – metaphors, narratives and Clean Language questions – were synthesised via a conceptual framework, which informed the research's approach to analysis and findings. More specifically, content analysis coding of the interview transcripts was carried out to identify participants' metaphors against Kövecses (2010) list of source and target domains and evaluate the use of the Clean Language questions within the interviews. Thematic analysis of the data was also employed to gain an understanding of the broader narratives the conceptual metaphors might represent via frames of reference corresponding Tompkins & Lawley's (2006), to the Problem, Remedy and Outcomes (PRO) model and at a deeper level with McAdams and McLean's (2013) Narrative Identity Constructs and Schwartz's (2012) Universal Values Theory.

Findings established two dominant conceptual metaphors symbolic of HE academics' perception of their teaching practice: 'teaching is a journey' and 'teaching is a performance'. Participants corroborated the relevance and significance of these conceptual metaphors as representative of their focus on issues linked to learning and progression, and associated with

aspirations to teach well and improve aspects of their pedagogy. Additionally, the two key dominant conceptual metaphors espoused narratives representing exploratory narrative processing, agency and redemptive stories in relation to McAdams and McLean's (2013) Narrative Identity Constructs and embraced values of self-direction, stimulation and achievement when analysed for significance against Schwartz's (2012) Universal Values Theory.

The study's findings also determined the value of adopting a conversational storytelling approach to reflective practice, as opposed to cyclical process-driven models of reflection. More specifically, the value of identifying the dominant metaphors referred to by academics to reflect on their teaching practice was evident in giving insights into participants' pedagogical understanding of their teaching practice.

From a research methodological viewpoint, the positive potential of the Clean Language questions to elicit metaphors and encourage reflection emerged. Furthermore, the findings suggest that a limited range of Clean Language questions, in conjunction with reflective summaries and probing questions, could be used to promote effective reflective practice within HE.

From a theoretical perspective, the study suggested how the conceptual framework had relevance in synergising the study's three strands (metaphors, narratives and the Clean Language questioning model). More specifically, the findings also identified how an emphasis on exploring metaphors and analysing conceptual metaphors could assist in ascertaining broader narratives that might inform academics' pedagogy, especially within the environment of HE.

Practically, the outcome of the findings indicated an alternative approach and model to promote reflective practice. This model of reflective practice amalgamates and utilises a focus on exploring metaphors through a limited range of Clean Language questions to identify frames of reference and raise awareness of the broader narratives representing academics' approaches towards their teaching practice and pedagogy.

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# **1. Chapter 1 - Introduction**

## **1.1 Starting Point**

The foundation of the thesis stems from my voluntary counselling work and my interest in how clients reflect on and share very personal perspectives through analogies that can reveal how they have conceptualised their experiences. This process of recalling experience from a personal perspective within a counselling context recognises the distinction between what happened and the subsequent story of what happened from the individual viewpoint. As a higher education (HE) tutor, I inevitably considered how my wider experience might inform my professional practice and understanding by appreciating how teachers share and reflect on their stories as part of becoming a 'reflective practitioner' (Schön, 1983) in order to develop their practice. This symmetry between my voluntary and professional roles provided the initial stimulus behind the rationale for this study which explores how academics recount stories of their teaching practice with a particular focus on the metaphors employed to articulate their experiences.

However, what further informed my initial thinking was recognising that teachers are encouraged to tell their stories of teaching through the lens of traditional and established reflective practice methods, predominantly process-driven cyclical models of reflection developed by Kolb (1984) and Gibbs (1988). As an alternative, exploring the value of allowing participants to freely reflect on aspects of their teaching, with a research focus on exploring metaphors to encourage reflective practice, helped to mould the key research questions of this thesis. Within the context of the study, this translated into encouraging HE academics, through interviews, to reflect on aspects of their teaching practice and to analyse the relevance and significance of the metaphors they use in order to identify their narratives for teaching.

The research utilised a questioning technique, known as the Clean Language questioning model, to interview participants in order to encourage them to identify metaphors and to reflect on and explore symbolic representations of their teaching experiences. The origins of the Clean Language model emerged out of the work of the New Zealand-based psychotherapist David Grove (1950-2008), whose observations into the use of metaphors mirrored my own experiences of how clients, within my voluntary counselling work, often referred to analogies and metaphors to tell their stories of their experiences (Grove, 1996). Grove developed a set of questions, codified by Lawley and Tompkins (2000), and subsequently referred to as the 'Clean Language model', to encourage and allow clients to express and explore the metaphors

symbolic of their experiences to raise their self-awareness and conceptualise experiences. Over time, the Clean Language model has evolved and progressed from its origins in psychotherapy to being utilised as a personal development and coaching tool for individuals (Dunbar, 2017; Hartley, 2020) and teaching children (McCracken, 2016). More recently, the potential of Clean Language as a phenomenological research tool and interviewing method has been recognised by Lawley and Small (2018), Lawley (2017) and, Tosey (2011). To further explore and validate the use of the Clean Language model within a research context, this study employed the use of Clean Language questions when interviewing participants about their reflections on their teaching practice (see sections 1.4 and 2.4 for further details of the Clean Language model).

The study was located within a post-92 university in the north of England where a sample of 11 participants (see section 3.2.1 for further details of the sample surveyed), across a range of subject specialisms, were interviewed in order to elicit and analyse the metaphors to which they referred when reflecting on aspects of their teaching practice. Participants' comments were subsequently followed up and explored through post-interview questionnaires and focus group discussion.

## **1.2 Stories and Narratives**

In our everyday lives, people tell stories about their life experiences. Stories about their triumphs and tragedies, their heroes and foes, their families, their friends, their thoughts and their feelings are conveyed through the tales we reflect upon within personal, professional, social, formal and informal situations. Gaining an understanding of how phenomena, as experienced by individuals, create stories that communicate and reflect their sense of experience forms the foundations of research into narratives. This is a feature of the study into academics' reflections into aspects of their teaching practice (Bold, 2012).

The allure and attraction of reflecting on and telling stories are historically resonant through oral and family histories. Lynch (1991), for example, sees the story as something which "grows out of life, reflects it and enters into dialogue with it. All life is in a story so that, there, we find our experience confirmed, challenged and broadened" (Lynch, 1991, p. 5); this is a notion Garnet et al. (2018) exemplify in relation to how Paulo Freire argued that the telling of stories could represent an act of empowerment by speaking up and by having our voice

listened to and respected by others. Ollerenshaw and Creswell (2002) contended that telling a story aids in enabling individuals to explore and understand their thoughts, behaviour and actions, while Bold (2012) further asserts that the act of narration gives individuals a creative licence to express emotions, and provides insights into the sense made of experience within the realm and context of the story. Regarding teaching, educators are regularly required to reflect on their practice to raise awareness and maximise opportunities to enhance practice by exploring stories of teaching and sharing experiences with peers and the wider teaching community (Moen, 2006).

Stories – the tales we tell of our experiences – evolve into narratives through a process of associations, reconstructions and interpretation. Storr (2020) succinctly summarises how the processing of experiences is associated and interpreted against previous experiences, thus creating and reinforcing patterns that form the narratives that can influence and guide thoughts, behaviours and actions. Therefore, the perception of an experience is a reconstructed and processed narrative, whereby differences exist between what happened and the interpretation of the story of what happened in relation to previous experiences. The associations between experiences and conceptualised memories allow us to think metaphorically and generate metaphors that convey how experiences are conceptualised. Recognition of this forms a bedrock of this study regarding how academics' articulation of their teaching experiences and, more specifically, within the context of this research, the metaphors they use to tell their stories, gives insights into their narratives for teaching.

To help locate this study within the fields of reflective practice, the process of recounting experiences as a story acknowledges the value and importance of storytelling to aid understanding in contrast to reflective practice encouraged by cyclical models of reflective practice (i.e., Kolb, 1984; Gibbs, 1988). Therefore, the process of telling stories of experiences is seen as the prime source of encouraging reflection via the research interviews and specifically exploring the relevance and significance of the metaphors referred to in telling a story in keeping with the research questions (see section 1.5) of this study.

Within this research into narratives and the study's context of academics reflecting on the stories of their teaching practice, consideration was given to acknowledge the differences between a story and a narrative. Squire et al. (2014), citing the work of early Russian linguists, refer to the terms 'fabula' and 'syuzhet' to distinguish between a story and a narrative, where a 'fabula' denotes the factual description of events in contrast to the reflective recalling of an

event signified by a 'syuzhet'. Within the context of this study, a working definition of narratives as 'developing an understanding of how metaphors (i.e., meaningful units) within a story aids in reflecting participants' narratives of their teaching practice' leans towards the notion of identifying stories as 'syuzhet' (Squire et al., 2014), and more specifically towards an analysis of the metaphors used to convey a story and the meanings people attach to a story, in order to make sense of and organise their lives (see section 2.3 for further discussions of definitions of research into narratives).

Analysis of narratives aids in giving voice to experiences by furnishing a story with culturally resonant meaning (Garnet et al., 2018). The appeal in researching narratives lies in gaining insights into how individuals create the stories which communicate and reflect their sense of the experience (Bold, 2012). The analysis and study of stories, within a research context, referred to as narratives, aids in developing and documenting an understanding of phenomena as experienced by individuals; a process which moves away from what might purport to be a factual account of a phenomenon towards recognition that the interpretive representation of phenomena, as experienced by individuals, actually reveals how experiences are conceptualised and acted upon (Fivush, 2008). Moen (2006) stresses how narratives, far from being abstract thoughts, are located by context, time and audience, and the narrator's agency. Narratives have an emergent quality in giving valuable insights and understanding into how individuals process phenomena by recalling and reminiscing events. Furthermore, the transformational potential of narratives in encouraging change through an exploration of the past, and by promoting a more empowering narrative of the future, establishes an aspect of this study whereby narratives may develop and impact teaching practice (Burchell & Dyson, 2005). Within the context of this study, the stories academics tell of their teaching experiences are viewed as acts of reflective practice. More specifically, the metaphors referred to convey a story are meaningful units used by individuals to help them make sense of the complexities of understanding experiences, which can further give insights into their narratives of their teaching practice.

Given the range of potential insights offered by a study of narratives, this research sought to establish, through its analysis of interview transcripts, to explore how microelements, such as the frame chosen to project metaphors, can influence thoughts and behaviour via Tompkins and Lawley's (2006) Problem, Remedy, Outcomes (PRO) frames, and McAdams and McLean's (2013) theory of Narrative Identities, specifically regarding the seven categories of Narrative Constructs identified by McAdams and McLean (2013). A further level of analysis

explored how the values fit within Schwartz's (2012) theory of Universal Values was utilised to identify the values emerging out of the academics' narratives of teaching and to identify potential congruence or conflict between Schwartz's (2012) 'openness to change', 'self-transcendence', 'conservation' and 'self-enhancement' categories of values.

### 1.3 Focus on Metaphors

Exploring metaphors to encourage individuals to tell their stories formed a central tenet of this thesis. This section highlights the importance of exploring metaphors as linguistic phrases used by individuals, conveying deeper meaning and the implications embedded in what they wish to say. It draws upon Lakoff and Johnson's (1980; 2003) seminal work on the theory of conceptual metaphors, delineating the inherent and subconscious meaning contained within metaphors, especially within a teaching context.

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) initially promoted the broader significance and importance of exploring metaphors by their key text *Metaphors We Live By*, and the theory of 'conceptual metaphors'. In defining metaphors as "describing one thing in terms of another", Lakoff & Johnson (2003, p. 5) promote metaphors as a way of understanding an unfamiliar idea, event or state of affairs in relation to something more familiar, mainly when restraints imposed by language, vocabulary, context, emotions, cultural norms, etc. inhibit a person from openly expressing their thoughts or a phenomenon. This, they explain, is a process whereby metaphors referred to by a person to convey a concept gives insights into their cognitive schema and conceptual systems, which suggest how preference is given to one perception over another.

Subsequently, a range of authors (e.g., Grove, 1996; Battino, 2005; Kövecses, 2010; Geary, 2011; Gibbs, 2017), amongst others, have concurred and promoted the use and value of 'conceptual metaphors' to raise awareness of how a person's thoughts and schemas are constructed and structured. This broader value of exploring metaphors is reiterated and summarised by Saban (2006), who describes metaphors as:

*"Far from being a figurative device or simply an elliptical simile, metaphors structure our perception, thoughts and actions. For better or worse, they fundamentally affect our way of conceptualising the world and reality whether we are aware of this phenomenon or not" (p. 299).*

Thus, metaphors, as patterns of thoughts linked to Lakoff and Johnson's (2003) work on 'conceptual metaphors', offer an alternative variable and unit of reflection more closely resembling and aligned with the natural thought processes of individuals. Consequently, exploration of the conceptual metaphors, representative of a person's underlying thought processes, gives metaphors a heuristic quality potentially worthy of study, and hence was chosen as a focal point for this thesis.

Various authors have further emphasised the fundamental essence of metaphors representing the broader cognitive processes at work when reflecting on and analysing experiences. For example, in support of Lakoff and Johnson's (1980; 2003) theory of conceptual metaphors, Mahlios et al. (2010) accentuate the significance of how a person's beliefs impact the metaphors individuals choose and use to describe and reflect on their experiences. Yero (2010) further emphasises how metaphors impact the "judgements and evaluations we make about ourselves, others and the world around us" (p. 28) and help give a person a sense of stability, consistency and predictability in the way they think and behave.

The use and role of metaphors as a method of reflection within a teaching context has been cited as having value. For example, an exploration of metaphors within the context of reflective practice taps into Schön's (1987) concept of 'appreciative systems' of how teachers frame and interpret their teaching experiences in relation to their values, beliefs, knowledge and prior experiences (Bullough et al., 1992; Pajares, 1992; Zeichner & Liston, 2014). Cook-Sather (2003) and Mahlios et al. (2010) further suggest that to better understand teachers' 'appreciative systems', it is necessary to research the metaphors representative of their experiences to identify the more prominent constructs teachers reflect on in relation to their teaching practice. Therefore, an analysis of the metaphors academics use can be employed to gain insights into the narratives underpinning their teaching practice.

In summary, this thesis examines how metaphors, far from being mere linguistic terms, are fundamental in mirroring individuals' underlying thought processes and cognitive schema (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; 2003), their narratives (McAdams et al, 2006; McAdams & McLean, 2013) and values (Schwartz, 2012). They can be explored to identify how individuals conceptualise experiences and linked to Schön's (1987) theory of appreciative systems, within the context of this study, to encourage academics to reflect on their teaching experiences through the stories they tell.

## 1.4 Use of the Clean Language Questioning Model to Explore Metaphors

This section briefly introduces the origins, history and theory of the Clean Language model to explore metaphors, before explaining why the model is used as an alternative framework, in place of process-driven cyclical models of reflection, to complete the research interviews and encourage participants to more freely reflect on their teaching experiences via discussion and the metaphors used to describe their teaching practice.

The origins of the Clean Language model emerged from New Zealand-based psychotherapist David Grove (1950-2008). Grove, while working with victims of trauma and traumatic memories, observed how:

*“Many clients naturally described their symptoms in metaphor and found that when he enquired about these using their exact words, their perception of the trauma began to change” (Lawley & Tompkins, 2000, p. xiii).*

This observation into the use of metaphors by clients gave rise to the early origins of the ‘Clean Language’ model, founded on the premise of how ‘dirtying’ a conversation by questions loaded with interpretations and assumptions (of the interviewer) negatively influenced the discussion and outcomes of conversations with clients. In contrast, allowing clients during counselling sessions both the space and opportunity to express themselves purposefully revealed their metaphors and exposed the underlying significance of these metaphors in raising self-awareness and comprehending experiences.

The Clean Language model was further developed by Lawley and Tompkins (2000), who on observing the work of David Grove, codified the set of questions (see Appendix one) Grove used when working with and analysing clients’ metaphors. These questions form the cornerstone of the Clean Language model, and within this study will be referred to as the Clean Language questions, in contrast to the Clean Language model, which signifies a focus on wider use and explorations of metaphors within other contexts (see section 2.4 for further details of how Clean Language questions are distinguished from other forms of questioning participants within this thesis). While the roots of the Clean Language model had its origins in psychotherapy and the work of David Grove, the model has evolved and progressed from its origins, and, in addition to a coaching and personal development context, has been employed as a research method in social sciences and as a phenomenological research tool used by interviewers (Tosey, 2011). Within this study, the Clean Language questioning model



was specifically aimed at encouraging reflective practice within a teaching context to explore its depth and resonance as a qualitative research method within a HE environment.

The decision to utilise the Clean Language questioning model was reinforced by the four key strengths and features of the model. Firstly, the use of the Clean Language model in offering an alternative approach to reflective practice would counter criticisms of existing models of reflection, as identified by Boud and Walker (1998), Johns (2000) and Bulman and Schutz (2013), who highlight how popular models of reflection potentially diminish the quality and specific nuances of the way individuals reflect on their practice. The Clean Language model, in contrast, aimed to allow participants to freely reflect on aspects of their teaching practice and explore the intricate dimensions of an experience without the intervention or influence of the questioner/researcher. Secondly, intrinsic to the Clean Language model is the significance of the word 'clean' within the title of the approach, in contrast to a 'dirty' questioning approach whereby an interviewer may actively decode or subconsciously interpret the matters discussed and subliminally ask potentially leading questions as a result. Thirdly, the Clean Language model focus of enabling participants to steer the discussion and respond openly to interviewer questions would tap into Boud and Walker's (1998) suggestion of the need to adopt a 'coaching' approach to encouraging reflective practice. Finally, by the use of the Clean Language model to explore academics' reflections on their teaching practice, a novel and innovative reflection method may provide a more dynamic and flexible model of reflection more closely aligned to academic experiences.

A study of the literature suggests that much of writing about the Clean Language model originates from the experiences of the principal advocates of the model, as opposed to a critical analysis of the validity and application of the model. Hence, evaluating the efficacy and effectiveness of the Clean Language model as a method of reflection informed the third research question of the thesis. This is an aim that James Lawley, co-author of the key text *Metaphors in Mind* (Lawley & Tompkins, 2000), is keen to promote in giving the Clean Language model some rigour through doctorate level and academic studies into the use of the Clean Language model within a range of different contexts.

In summary, the Clean Language questioning model, despite its origins being rooted within the fields of psychotherapy and coaching, has more latterly been noted for its potential use as a research interviewing tool and is used within this study to promote a more conversational

coaching approach to reflective practice and to explore the relevance of specific nuances of metaphors expressed by a participant in more depth.

## 1.5 Research Questions

Having explained the key strands underlining the rationale and motivation of this thesis, the research questions of the study focus on gaining an understanding of the use of metaphors referred to by academics while reflecting on aspects of their teaching practice and the broader significance of these metaphors, and an evaluation of the Clean Language questioning model as a research tool within a qualitative research context. Therefore, the specific questions which drive the research are:

1. What are the dominant metaphors used in the way academics recall, reflect and describe their teaching experiences?
2. What are the relationships between academics' use of metaphors and their narratives of teaching?
3. To what extent do the Clean Language questions allow participants to reflect on the metaphors representative of their teaching experiences?

Attention is also drawn in determining the relevance and significance of the metaphors expressed and conveyed by participants with regards to underlying narratives inherent in the metaphors expressed by participants. These metaphors are analysed to determine the deeper cognitive schemas and narratives that locate and inform academics' teaching practice.

The context of the study centred on the HE sector. This sector was chosen due to recognising how reflective practice is encouraged within the profession, though not a mandatory requirement within the sector. Chan and Lee (2021) specifically stress the lack of focus on reflective practice within HE via the following quote:

*“Current literature on reflective practice has focused on its uses in primary and secondary education, as well as in teacher, medical and language education; little has been done in context of higher education” (p. 2).*

The lack of emphasis on reflective practice within HE rallies against the proposed benefits of reflective practice in allowing academics to think, evaluate and examine their professional judgements, enhance teaching practice, student learning, and promote personal and professional development (Ashwin & Boud, 2020). Furthermore, the absence of the mandatory need to reflect on practice within HE has led to a lack of direction of how academics

could reflect on their teaching practice and result in academics referring to popular cyclical models of reflection (Kolb, 1984; Gibbs, 1988) to reflect on their teaching practice. This lack of direction in how to facilitate reflective practice within HE is further exasperated via a scenario whereby academics are trained as researchers and scientists who may not be required to complete pedagogical qualifications (Chan & Lee, 2021). However, the willingness of academics' commitment to research to promote effective teaching practices, my familiarity of working in the sector and the availability of a purposive sample of academics willing to participate in the study, aided in further promoting the motivation for focusing the study within a HE setting.

A purposive sample of 11 academics working across various disciplines (see section 3.2.1) within the HE sector was interviewed as part of this study. In keeping with the phenomenological approach, the use of interviews allowed participants to identify the relevance and significance of the metaphors they use to describe their teaching practice (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006).

With regards to the research questions, combined use of qualitative and quantitative research methods was used as detailed below:

1. **What are the dominant metaphors used in the way academics recall, reflect and describe their experiences of teaching?** – data captured via the use of open interviews and analysis of interview transcripts
2. **What are the relationships between academics' use of metaphors and their narratives of teaching?** – determined by analysis of findings and further corroborated via focus group discussion
3. **To what extent do the Clean Language questions allow participants to reflect on the metaphors representative of their teaching experiences?** – evaluated via analysis of questions asked by interviewers, the distribution of questionnaire after completion of research interviews and focus group discussion with participants

A more detailed discussion on the relevance and significance of the research methods used within the study can be found in section 3.2 of the Methodology chapter.

## **1.6 Contribution to Knowledge**

The key strands of this thesis – storytelling within reflective practice, metaphors, narratives and application of the Clean Language questions – make a contribution to knowledge in four ways:

This research investigates an approach to reflective practice not previously studied within the context of how HE academics could reflect on aspects of their teaching practice or how reflective stories and the metaphors referred to by academics within the stories of their teaching practice link to how they conceptualised their teaching experiences (see chapters 4, 5 and 7 for further details). Within the study, this emerges by identifying the dominant metaphors referred to by academics to reflect on their teaching practice and by interpreting the significance of these metaphors in terms of the narratives the metaphors represent within broader teaching and reflective practice contexts.

From a methodological viewpoint, the study evaluates the use of the Clean Language questioning model to complete qualitative phenomenological research interviews. Historically, the Clean Language model application has been traditionally entrenched within the fields of counselling, psychotherapy and coaching disciplines. While Lawley and Small (2018), Lawley (2017) and, Tosey (2011) recognised the potential of the use of the Clean Language model as a research method, further studies were required into its potential and efficacy within a research context. This thesis adds to the empirical evidence supporting the extended use of the Clean Language model in alternative contexts (see chapters 6 and 7).

Theoretically, the relevance of Lakoff and Johnson's (1980; 2003) theory of conceptual metaphors in the telling of stories (of personal experiences) within the realm of narrative studies reinforces the role of metaphors in conveying a greater understanding, specifically with regards to the work of McAdams (2006), and McAdams and McLean (2013) on narrative identities and represents a range of broader values and beliefs in relation to Schwartz's (2012) theory of Universal Values.

Practically, the study sees the development of a new model of reflection based on the research findings. This is a model of reflection based on empirical evidence of how academics conceptualise their experiences, that acknowledges the complexity and individual nature of the reflective practice, adopting a model of reflection that allows for the individual agency

through an exploration of metaphors and the use of the Clean Language questioning model (see section 7.3 for further details). The model of reflection would also help to provide a method of reflection and encourage reflective practice within a HE setting, where there is no obligatory requirement to reflect on practice.

## **1.7 Structure of the Thesis**

This thesis comprises seven chapters. Each chapter includes an introduction that gives an overview of the chapter and how it contributes to the study, and ends with a summary discussion of the key themes and issues relevant to the research.

This introductory chapter establishes the rationale and context of the study. It details the research questions and ends with an overview of the structure of the thesis and its subsequent chapters.

Chapter 2, the Literature Review, identifies and discusses the most significant ideas and issues relevant to the research: storytelling, reflection, the use of metaphors, narratives and the Clean Language model. With these elements in mind, chapter 2 focuses on discussing 'the aim and role of stories and reflection in conceptualising experiences', 'the use of metaphors in understanding experiences' and 'exploration into the narratives behind metaphor', and the utilisation of the 'Clean Language' model as broad themes and subheadings of the Literature Review chapter. By adopting a questioning approach to exploring the key themes, the chapter evaluates earlier studies and discusses writing that identifies points of convergence and divergences in the literature relevant to the research.

Chapter 3, the Methodology chapter, discusses the underpinning philosophies, approaches, strategies and choice of research study methods. The chapter explores and details issues associated with research methodology, methods, validity, sampling, ethics and data analysis. The chapter summarises the relevance and appropriateness of the methods used to complete the study and how these could be evaluated against the research questions.

The examination of the findings and the analysis of data are discussed over a series of three chapters. Chapter 4 identifies the dominant metaphors participants used to recall and reflect on their teaching practice, focusing on determining the source and target domains of these metaphors. Chapter 5 discusses the relationships between academics' use of metaphors and their narratives of teaching by identifying the conceptual metaphors emerging from the

analysis of the data and the narrative frames the metaphors represent. Chapter 6 considers the effectiveness of the Clean Language questions in allowing the participants to reflect on their teaching practice in relation to the research findings. Within each of the findings chapters, data collected from both the one-to-one interviews, questionnaires and the focus group were considered together to stress the appropriateness and limitations of the significant findings of the study and, where relevant, to discuss the themes linked to the literature review in order to locate the findings within the broader context of the research questions and study.

Finally, chapter 7, the Conclusion, summarises the extent to which the study has effectively addressed the research questions and reiterates the nature of the work's original contribution. The limitations of the research are also discussed, in addition to an evaluation of the relevance and appropriateness of the methods used to complete the study.

## Chapter Summary

In introducing the thesis, this chapter appreciates how the value of reflective practice and the importance of telling stories of experiences contrast with how teachers are encouraged to reflect on their teaching practice predominantly via process-driven cyclical models (e.g., Kolb, 1984; Gibbs, 1988). Specifically, within the HE sector, HE academics are not mandated to reflect on practice and hence lack direction of how to employ academic reflective practice approaches; a notion further expanded on by acknowledging how metaphors conveying a story could be studied as meaningful units that give insights into academics' narratives of their teaching practice and elucidate participants' frames of processing and teaching values.

The significance of metaphors in the communication of ideas and the pervasiveness of metaphors in everyday conversation is highlighted within the chapter and helped to inform the first research question, particularly with regard to Lakoff and Johnson's (1980; 2003) theory of conceptual metaphors being symbolic and representative of a person's cognitive schemas and conceptual systems. Within this study, the significance of metaphors within the reflective practice context, was explored to encourage HE academics, through interviews, to reflect on aspects of their teaching practice and determine their narratives for teaching.

The emergent quality of narratives' ability to give valuable insights into how individuals framed and processed phenomena within this study was the focus of the second research question. The exploration of the relationships between academics' use of metaphors and their narratives

of teaching was explored by analysis of conceptual metaphors referred to by participants against Tompkins and Lawley's (2006) PRO frames, McAdams and McLean's (2013) theory of narrative identities, and Schwartz's (2012) theory of Universal Values.

The research specifically employed a questioning technique known as the Clean Language questioning model as a research method to interview participants to encourage them to reflect on their teaching experiences and explore conceptual metaphors symbolic of their teaching practice. The Clean Language questioning model was specifically developed to give clients the space and opportunity to express themselves and allow researchers to explore participants' metaphors via a codified set of questions (Appendix one) developed by Lawley and Tompkins (2000), and Sullivan and Rees (2008). To further explore and evaluate the use of the Clean Language questioning model within a research context, this study employed the use of Clean Language questions when interviewing participants about their reflections on their teaching practice and helped inform the third research question.

The three concepts of the study, the use of metaphors, analysis of conceptual metaphors to determine participants' narratives of teaching and the use of the Clean Language questions, helped structure the chapters of this thesis. The three concepts are referred to in the same order to formulate the research questions, align with the themes explored as part of the Literature Review chapter, and subsequently discuss the study's findings within chapters 4, 5 and 6.

## Chapter 2 – Literature Review

The following chapter explores and discusses the relevance and significance of the key concepts informing the thesis and the conceptual framework of the study. Four key concepts were identified as entities to review in order to address the research questions and to help locate the study's conceptual framework. Those concepts were:

- 2.1 Exploration of stories within the context of reflective practice
- 2.2 The significance of metaphors referred to within a story in conveying insights and understanding
- 2.3 The interpretation and significance of the narratives embedded within a story
- 2.4 The use of the Clean Language questioning model to locate and explore metaphors

These concepts will be referred to as themes to structure the following literature review. The first theme within the chapter (2.1) contends that stories are integral to how individuals reflect on teaching experiences and how recounting a story frames and conceptualises the way in which phenomena associated with teaching experiences are perceived and interpreted. The second theme (2.2) explores how metaphors help convey a story and are symbolic and significant in conveying the deeper aspects of the cognitive processes regarding how individuals reflect on their experiences. The third theme debates the use of narrative research to gain a broader understanding of how stories, as narratives, may impact a person's thoughts, feelings and behaviours (2.3). Section 2.4 reviews the application and relevance of the Clean Language questioning model as an integral element of the research method used to explore the metaphors uttered by participants during the research interviews, and later evaluated as the third research question of the study.

Finally, the chapter concludes with a discussion of how the above themes informed the conceptual framework and identified how the concepts investigated connected to the study and aligned with the research questions (Leshem & Trafford, 2007).



## 2.1 Exploration of Stories Within the Context of Reflective Practice

Within everyday lives, people tell stories of their experiences, a common phenomenon whereby:

*“We rely on stories to sort out the world ... storytelling is a universal habit, a part of our common humanity ... we discover in stories ways of saying and telling that let us know who we are” (Meek, 1991 cited in Burchell & Dyson, 2000, p. 437).*

Through the stories of our experiences, individuals understand their lives (Garnet et al., 2018) as stories can act to raise awareness of a person’s thoughts, feelings and behaviours (Ollerenshaw & Creswell, 2002). Furthermore, stories can covertly communicate a person’s values, beliefs and understanding of the world around them (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Ollerenshaw & Creswell, 2002). These ideas of how stories of our experiences have more profound significance are of key relevance to this study and tie into the notion of how stories can confer meaning on people’s lives and act as a ‘narrative’ through which they think, perceive, imagine, behave and make choices (Polkinghorne, 1989; Moen, 2006). Moen (2006) further elaborates this by saying how narrating our stories can be pivotal in helping individuals appreciate and understand their everyday experiences by providing a lens through which experiences are construed, interpreted, contextualised and conceptualised. These different facets of stories are further stressed by Lynch (1991), who suggests stories:

*“grow out of life, reflects it and enters into dialogue with it. All life is in a story ... there we find our experience confirmed, challenged and broadened [by the stories of our experiences]” (p. 5).*

In considering the importance of telling stories, this study is situated and focused on telling stories of experiences as an act of reflection of experiences. More specifically, how the metaphors referred to within the story have significance in informing academics’ broader teaching narratives.

The recalling and telling of individual stories of teaching experiences are cited as a crucial ingredient needed to aid personal and professional development within education (Surgenor, 2011). The act of recounting experiences actively encourages practitioners to ponder, analyse and question their experiences and decisions, and a process often referred to as ‘reflective practice’ (Pollard, 2008; Ashwin & Boud et al., 2020). The value and need to adopt reflective practices within education has been put forward by Pollard (2008), who draws attention to how teachers, as part of their practice, are continually required to manage dilemmas in and out of

the classroom and ponder over the 'inner discomforts' they experience in their teaching, a term used by Brookfield (1987) to describe aspects of teaching practice that appear incongruent or problematic. Pollard (2008) also identifies how the need to raise self-awareness and explore values and beliefs as critical aspects of the reflective process, particularly by adopting an open-minded, reflective mindset, can lead to a more practical approach to enhancing teaching practice. Furthermore, the link between stories and reflective practice has been emphasised by a range of authors. For example, Schön (1988), a key proponent of the theory of reflective practice, emphasises the need to utilise stories as 'objects of reflection' rather than regard them as a by-product of reflection within the reflective process. As an act of reflective practice, stories have significance in enabling individuals to understand and conceptualise their experiences (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Ollerenshaw & Creswell, 2002; Bold, 2012). Within the context of this thesis, the link between the telling of stories of teaching experiences and reflective practice can be explained by Armstrong's (2020) analogy of scaffolding as a metaphor for locating storytelling within a reflective practice context. A scaffold, generally referred to as a structure used to aid the construction of buildings, can be considered as stories used to aid reflective practice. The process of recounting experiences as a story can be seen as the raw materials on which aspects of reflective practice processes can be understood in keeping with Schön (1988), who emphasises the need to utilise stories as 'objects of reflection', rather than regard them as a by-product of the reflective process. Furthermore, the process of recalling and the telling of individual stories of their teaching experiences moves away from following a structural approach to reflective practice advocated and encouraged by cyclical models of reflective practice (i.e., Kolb, 1984; Gibbs, 1988) towards a more naturalistic conversational approach to reflecting on experiences (Guo, 2021). Therefore, within this thesis, the process of telling stories of experiences is seen as the prime source of encouraging reflection, and, in keeping with the first research question of this study, exploring the relevance and significance of the metaphors referred to in telling a story.

The act of reflecting on and exploring storylines and narratives underpinning a story can help inform the way academics make decisions and lean towards particular ways of being and behaving. Jääskelä et al. (2017), in referring to agency as a way individuals can engage in autonomous or self-defined actions that are meaningful to them, help to identify a notion whereby the stories academics tell can inform and give insights into the choices, approach to teaching and ways of working with students they adopt within their teaching practice. Awareness and reflection into the stories that inform this cyclical process can act as a catalyst and be considered a learning process that transforms the way academics teach and adapt

their own teaching practices (Ashwin & Boud, 2020). Thinking of stories as narratives that could be explored and examined to encourage greater awareness and agency is an idea in keeping with Pollard's (2008) suggestion of considering how teachers' teaching roles, perceptions and personal biographies can be enhanced via reflective practice, given the breadth of opportunities afforded by exploring stories and narratives as part of the reflective process. Within the scope of this study, of particular importance is how the stories of the experiences academics tell themselves can give insights into and inform their teaching practice.

To understand and appreciate the emphasis and importance placed on promoting reflective practice within education and the context of this study, it is necessary to acknowledge the early work of Dewey (2008) in the 1930s, which helped to establish the contemporary concepts of reflective practice and further reinforced by the work of Schön (1983; 1987), which helped to establish the importance of reflective practice in encouraging personal and professional development within education and other allied professions today. Dewey's (2008) fundamental distinction between 'routine action' and 'reflective action' provided the initial stimulus whereby reflection formed a unit of analysis of experiences and the stories people tell. For Dewey (2008), reflective action is distinguished as a way of being where reason and emotion are engaged to holistically reflect on and respond to problems, instead of 'routine action' guided by tradition, authority or impulse. Within the context of this study, Dewey's concept of reflective action specifically focused on the use of metaphors referred to by individuals when reflecting on experiences and formed a key theme and concept of this study.

Since Dewey (2008) and Schön (1983; 1987) further popularised the concept of reflective practice, various authors have emphasised particular elements of the reflective process to promote reflective practice. Broadly, these approaches distinguish between components promoting routine/dialogic and critical reflection (Dewey, 2008; Schön, 1987); cyclical process-driven models of reflection (Kolb, 1984; Gibbs, 1988); and, finally, those encouraging a questioning approach to examine experiences (Brookfield, 1995; Revans, 2017). Of these approaches, the use of cyclical models of reflection, predominantly by Kolb (1984) and Gibbs (1988), appear to dominate education's reflective landscape. This gives rise to two issues that need to be acknowledged and considered regarding this study: firstly, relating to adopting a structured/cyclical process-based approach to reflection, and, secondly, the quality of the reflections resulting from the use of these reflective methods. With regards to adopting a structured/cyclical process-based approach to reflection, the prevalence of models advocating

a sequential approach to reflection, such as those promoted by Kolb (1984) and Gibbs (1988), run contrary to Boud and Walker's (1998) criticism of process-driven models, which encourages a mechanical reflect on-demand approach, primarily as a solitary activity in keeping with rigid stages of the models to reflection, is at odds with the practice of reflection advocated by Schön (1987). Secondly, the pervasiveness of the reflect on-demand culture promoted by structured models of reflective practice restricts and impacts the quality of reflections due to the level of awareness and critical analysis needed to review and appraise experiences objectively at different stages of the reflective process (Surgenor, 2011). Additionally, several models of reflective practice also fail to acknowledge the value of dialogue and interaction, which, when purposeful, can maximise the learning to be gained via discussion with others (Hoffman-Kipp et al., 2003). Moreover, Bulman and Schutz (2008) identify how not acknowledging the specific distinctions and nuances of how people think and learn differently are further limitations of extant approaches and models of reflective practice.

These criticisms of cyclical models of reflection within this study are offset via a focus of moving away from adopting process-driven models of reflective practice promoted by Kolb (1984) and Gibbs (1988) to encourage participants to recount their experiences of teaching as stories and specifically explore the metaphors referred to in telling a story as an aspect of reflective practice. This process of encouraging reflection via stories is aided by the use of interviews and the Clean Language questions, whereby academics would be encouraged to freely reflect on their practice and allow participants to engage in dialogue with the interviewer, as proposed by this thesis. Furthermore, this study's focus, exploring the value of metaphors uttered within the stories academics tell of their teaching practice, encourages a move away and counters the use of cyclical process-driven models of reflection as articulated by Boud and Walker (1998) and Surgenor (2011).

In summary, the value of telling stories of experiences within this study is acknowledged in aiding understanding and, within a teaching context, is seen as an act of reflective practice. The ability for stories to confer meaning, whereby consistent storylines and narratives could be explored, can give insights into and inform practice, and helps feed into the first research question linked to exploring the relevance and significance of metaphors referred to in the telling of stories. This approach to the telling of stories as a way of scaffolding reflective learning can help counter criticism of traditional cyclical process-driven models of reflection.

## **2.2 The Significance of Metaphors in Conveying Insights and Understanding**

Studies into metaphors overlap across a range of disciplines. For example, over time, metaphors have been examined and researched for relevance and significance in the use of words, language, meaning, etc., across various contexts, including philosophy, psychology, sociology and cognitive linguistics. An integral focus of this thesis rests on the concept of metaphors being symbolically significant and representative of a person's thoughts, and suggests that, where metaphors are utilised to convey a story, they may give insights into the narratives of how experiences are interpreted and perceived (Carpenter, 2008). Within the thesis' context, this theme builds on the conceptual framework in discussing the relevance of metaphors as a key concept and corresponds with how the metaphors referred to by academics, while reflecting on their teaching practice, can give insights into their narratives for teaching. The theme briefly explores definitions and the prevalence of metaphors in everyday life, and in expressing thoughts in order to stress the importance of researching metaphors. The theme progresses to focus on considering how Lakoff and Johnson's (1980; 2003) seminal work into how conceptual metaphors mirror and give insights into individuals' conceptual systems is in keeping with the focus on researching academics' conceptual metaphors of their teaching practice. Finally, the theme concludes by exploring how theories of analysing and mapping metaphors informed the analysis of this study's findings and notes some caveats associated with researching metaphors.

The word metaphor can be traced back to the Latin word 'metaphora' and Greek word 'metapherein', with 'meta' referring to being beyond or over, and 'pherein' denoting 'bring or bear'. This etymology denotes how a metaphor can carry meaning beyond the literal and refer to a new or different meaning (Battino, 2005). A contemporary definition of metaphors from the Oxford Dictionary presents metaphors as: "A figure of speech in which a word or phrase is applied to an object or action to which it is not literally applicable" and "A thing regarded as representative or symbolic of something else". Therefore, in keeping with the historical roots of the word metaphor and dictionary definitions of metaphor, this study, via its research questions, explores how the metaphors referred to within stories symbolically represent academics' teaching practice and 'brings to bear' how they conceptualise their teaching practice.

The interest and importance of studying metaphors lie in appreciating the pervasive and ubiquitous presence of metaphors in everyday language, and metaphors' significance in giving

insights into an individual's conceptual systems. For example, Geary (2011) suggests how people could, on occasions, utter up to six metaphors a minute. This is a claim for which Tosey et al. (2013) concluded some evidence exists, as metaphors are more likely to be used when an individual, challenged by limitations of vocabulary, resorts to metaphors to draw on what is familiar to express aspects of experience that they may find difficult to articulate (Barry et al., 2009). Yob (2003) adds to this by drawing attention to how a metaphor might be employed when "one wants to explore and understand something esoteric, abstract, novel or highly speculative" (p. 134) and further emphasises how metaphors can simplify the understanding of concepts, facilitate communication, and rationalise and illuminate conceptual thought. Metaphorical analogies are significant in conveying how individuals perceive phenomena, rationalise how they make sense of the world within social and cultural contexts, and communicate this understanding within a personal and professional setting. The degree and frequency of the comparisons and associations conveyed by metaphors and the conceptualisations of their experiences can give insights into, inform and reinforce a person's thoughts, and generate new ideas. Geary (2011) specifically stresses this link between metaphor and thought via the following quotation:

*"There is not an aspect of our experience not moulded in some way by metaphor's almost imperceptible touch ... Metaphorical thinking – shapes our view of the world and is essential to how we communicate, learn, discover and invent" (p. 3).*

Geary (2011) here helps to emphasise an appreciation of metaphors' pervasive presence in everyday language. The significance of metaphors to convey a more profound understanding of a person's thoughts helped form the bedrock of this study into participants' use of metaphors. This is primarily with regards to exploring the value of conceptual metaphors' ability to raise awareness and give insights into participants' thoughts, schemas (Grove, 1996; Battino, 2005; Kövecses, 2010) and narratives (Moen, 2006; Squire et al., 2014) into their teaching practice; which, within this study, are linked to the second research question studying how elements and attributes of metaphors represent the broader narratives of how HE academics conceptualise their experiences of teaching (see section 1.3 for further details).

Initially, the interest in exploring metaphors centred on appreciating and analysing the language and prose of metaphors. This meant examining precisely how words and semantics conveying metaphors substitute, compare and offer analogies to understand concepts. Of fundamental interest to this study is the role of metaphors in conceptualising thoughts; a trajectory in the study of metaphors first muted by Ortony's (1979; 2008) publication of

*Metaphor and Thought*, marking a 'cognitive turn' wherein Ortony (1979; 2008) claimed metaphors are a matter of thought and create meaning, distinct from the everyday semantic meanings of metaphors. Ortony's (1979) initial work lay the foundations of postulating the role of metaphors signifying thoughts and was closely followed and furthered by Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) seminal work *Metaphors We Live By*, advancing the contemporary understanding of the role of metaphors and introduced the theory of conceptual metaphors as a way of understanding how thoughts are communicated via metaphors. Primarily, the work of Lakoff and Johnson (1980), introducing the role of conceptual metaphors, has been instrumental and referred to in defining and understanding the importance of metaphors in conveying an understanding of a person's conceptual system, and, within the context of this study, academics' perceptions and conceptualisations of their teaching practice.

Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) theory of conceptual metaphors posits the universal roles metaphors have in people's lives by stressing how:

*"Not just in language but in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical. The concepts that govern our thought are not just matters of the intellect. They also govern our everyday functioning, down to the most mundane details. Our concepts structure what we perceive, how we get around in the world, and how we relate to other people" (p. 3).*

This pioneering view of the conceptual role of metaphors, a move away from the traditional linguistic views of metaphors, echoes the dominant discussions surrounding the role of metaphors today. Primarily, establishing the popular definition of metaphors as "describing one thing in terms of another", Lakoff and Johnson (1980, p. 5) identify how metaphors are used to simplify understanding of an unfamiliar notion or explain a state, events or a concept with aspects that are more familiar. They argued that metaphors, far from being a set of linguistic phrases, represent aspects of a person's thoughts. More importantly, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) claimed both thought processes and human conceptual systems are metaphorically structured and propose "that if we are right in suggesting that our conceptual system is largely metaphorical, then the way we think what we perceive and what we do every day is a matter of metaphor" (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 3). Therefore, Lakoff and Johnson suggest that the linguistic words and phrases used to express an idea through metaphor mirror and express the person's conceptual system and are fundamental in structuring how individuals think about abstract events and concepts (Gibbs, 2017). Saban (2006) further emphasised this view:

*“Far from being a figurative device or simply an elliptical simile, metaphors structure our perception, thoughts and actions. For better or worse, they fundamentally affect our way of conceptualising the world and reality whether we are aware of this phenomenon or not” (p. 299).*

Lakoff and Johnson’s (1980; 2003) seminal work on conceptual metaphors has been instrumental in driving this thesis via recognising metaphors as being more than simply expressing one thing in terms of another (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 5) but also symbolic of a person’s conceptual system, and also functioning as a lens through which preferred perceptions of phenomena are expressed and give preference to specific ways of thinking and behaving (Cook-Sather, 2003; Saban, 2006; Gibbs, 2017). However, in researching metaphors, it is important to consider the constraints of exploring and analysing metaphors, and the potential drawbacks of researching metaphors as caveats of this study. Gibbs (2017) asserts the need to acknowledge significant debates in the study of metaphors regarding the premise and controversy surrounding the link between the analysis of metaphors and inferences about a person’s thoughts. For example, Weade and Ernst (1990) contend that a significant drawback of studying metaphors lies in how metaphors are selective. They represent a part, but not the whole, of the phenomena they describe (p. 133) and stress how metaphors only represent elements of an experience. Furthermore, while analysing the metaphors used by individuals can give insights into their thoughts and beliefs, Trick and Katz (1986) argue how the interpretation given to a metaphor, both by the person conveying the metaphor and the listener, depends on the meaning attached to the specific characteristics of the metaphor at a particular time, and question, therefore, whether the use of a specific metaphor has any more significance to the person employing them as they do to the researchers analysing and interpreting them. This is a view supported by Perrin (1987), who states how:

*“Metaphors open us to experience in specific ways and closes us in others. It invites us to participate in the constitution of reality while at the same time barring us from the consideration of rival alternatives” (p. 265).*

Hence, any analysis of metaphors within a research study requires careful consideration of the context and the interpretations attached to the metaphor to avoid presenting a lack of rigour in the analysis of metaphors. Carpenter (2008) elaborates by stressing how “at best, metaphors illuminate, at their worst, they distort and obscure” (p. 281) and result in “casting shadows” on findings potentially trivialising or betraying the essence of the phenomena being researched. Within this study, to help counter criticisms of exploring the significance of



metaphors, the interpretation of metaphors as part of the coding and analysis of the interview transcripts is safeguarded via the specific focus on identifying and mapping the metaphors referred to within the interview transcripts against Kövecses' (2010) list of 'source' and 'target' domains in preference to the subjective interpretation of a specific metaphor uttered by participants. Furthermore, participants verified the findings for relevance and significance individually, and via subsequent focus group discussion reflecting on the findings (further discussed within sections 3.2.4, 4.4 and 5.2). Additionally, identifying the narratives of academics' teaching practice emerging from the metaphors comprises a cumulative analysis of the primary conceptual metaphors identified from the analysis of the findings and not discrete scrutiny of the metaphors uttered by individual participants. Thus, this safeguards to some extent against criticism by Trick and Katz (1986), Perrin (1987) and Carpenter (2008) relating to the dangers of incorrectly interpreting metaphors conveyed by individuals.

In keeping with the conceptual theory of metaphors being symbolic of a person's conceptual system, by extension, academics' metaphors of their teaching experiences represent the conceptualisation of their teaching practice and give insights into their teaching narratives within this study's context. Similarly, the metaphors referred to by academics when reflecting on their teaching practice can frame and guide their approach to teaching (Martínez et al., 2001), where effective teaching practice assumptions mirror the language frame and metaphors chosen to convey experiences (Saban, 2006). For example, when an academic's conceptual metaphor of effective teaching mirrors and is framed around a 'factory' metaphor this conceptualisation of their teaching may perceive students as the 'raw material', the curriculum as production guidelines and assessments as output and quality control checks of the production line (Botha, 2009). Alternatively, Martínez et al. (2001) offer a conceptual metaphor whereby, if teachers framed their teaching practice as being a 'captain' in their teaching role, it might imply the presence of elements of authority and control in steering the direction of a ship (i.e., students). Within this study's context, this notion of conceptual metaphors' potential to frame academics' narratives of their teaching practice helped form the premise of this study and the first research question into identifying the dominant metaphors used in the way academics recall, reflect and describe their experiences of teaching, and relationships between academics' use of metaphors and their narratives of teaching.

Language, and how people use language, explicitly and implicitly communicate their underlying values and beliefs about the experience, and potentially, in relation to academics, their teaching practice (Yero, 2010). The value of exploring the language used to describe

experiences via metaphor, within the context of this study, specifically the metaphors referred to by academics to reflect on their teaching practice, is in keeping with Lakoff and Johnson's (1980; 2003) theory of conceptual metaphors' ability to communicate and convey the underlying conceptual systems which go on to inform academics' teaching practice. More specifically, Mahlios et al. (2010) further propose the need to research the metaphors representative of teachers' values and beliefs about their teaching to identify the larger constructs through which they organise their thinking and plan their teaching actions (Cook-Sather, 2003). Studies have further examined and reinforced the ability of metaphors to convey preferences towards ways of thinking. For example, Thibodeau and Boroditsky (2011, 2013, 2015) and Steen et al. (2014), investigating the role of metaphors and thoughts, researched how an individual's perception of concepts was influenced by the use of metaphors to describe the concept and concluded how evidence exists regarding metaphors' ability to guide the interpretation of a phenomenon. Within these specific studies, the example used to demonstrate metaphors' ability to frame and influence phenomenon referred to how participants' concepts of perceiving 'crime to be a beast' and 'crime to be a virus' influenced how the sample surveyed, viewed and responded with ideas of how to manage crime. These studies determined that those adopting the 'crime is a beast' metaphor resulted in participants identifying aggressive solutions to managing crime compared to the more progressive solutions put forward by participants framing crime as a virus. The notion of framing concepts, and the potential these frames may have on contextualising and conceptualising phenomena, have been adopted within this study with regards to analysing the interview transcripts to determine the frames adapted by participants while reflecting on aspects of their teaching practice (see section 2.3 for further details).

The anatomy of metaphors and how metaphors precisely "describe one thing in terms of another" (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 5) need examining to inform the analysis of metaphors as part of this study's research methodology, and in order to explain the coding decisions taken to analyse the interview transcripts (see section 3.3 of the Methodology chapter for further details). Understanding the inference contained within a metaphor and how one concept is understood in terms of another provides a starting point for understanding and analysing metaphors (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003; Geary, 2011). For example, Lakoff and Johnson (2003) initially referred to the term 'embodied metaphors' to describe the ways metaphors are conveyed via an analogy drawing on the notion of experiences being conceptualised in terms of senses and bodily perceptions (warm-cold, in-out, front-back, up-down, etc.). These embodied metaphors illustrate how individuals communicate their

understanding of phenomena regarding how they perceived and how they experienced the phenomena, and, of interest to this study, also insights into how experiences have been interpreted and understood (Gibbs, 2017).

The inferences contained within a metaphor were initially explored by Richards in 1936 in his *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* via the phrases ‘tenor’ (renaming of a subject) and ‘vehicle’ (analogy associated with the abstract thought being expressed). These terms help promote the concept of exploring the composition of a metaphor by mapping each one through the words and phrases used to convey a specific metaphor and comparing that with the concept being expressed in order to give insights into individuals’ conceptual systems due to the range of possibilities of determining the inferences within metaphors, a well-defined process of mapping tenor, vehicle and insinuations of a metaphor needed to be established to examine metaphors as part of this study, and, further, given the challenge of determining how inferences are mapped in the analysis of metaphors, detailed within section 3.3 and elaborated in Appendix seven. Lakoff and Johnson (2003) further extend the need to examine metaphors, promoting the necessity to understand and analyse the words used to convey a metaphor. They refer to the term ‘container’ to describe the symbolic meaning attached to a metaphor by an individual as elements of a metaphor that could be explored and examined for relevance and significance. Kövecses (2010), building on the notion of metaphor ‘containers’, categorised the anatomy of a metaphor in terms of ‘source’ and ‘target’ domains, whereby ‘source domain’ refers to the variables (predominantly a concrete, physical or tangible element) used to describe a concept, and the ‘target domain’ (more abstract in nature) identifies the concept being conveyed by the source domain. In keeping with Lakoff and Johnson’s (1980) definition of metaphors “describing one thing as another” (p. 5), the source and target domains describe the projection of one corresponding schema on to another. The designation of source and target domains is a process that can be mapped to aid understanding and analysis of a metaphor and simplify the process of dissecting the anatomy of a metaphor (Moser, 2000; Lakoff & Johnson, 2003; Kövecses, 2010). Within this study, the concept of source and target domains was referred to and used to map the metaphors in the interview transcripts when identifying the conceptual metaphors representative of participants’ teaching practice. More specifically, the categories of ‘source’ domains identified by Kövecses (2010) consist of those pertaining to the use of the human body, health, animals, plants, buildings, machinery, sports, money, food, temperature, light/darkness, forces, movements, etc.

Similarly, Kövecses' (2010) target domains were categorised as those relating to emotions, thoughts, behaviour, relationships, communications, life/death, desire, morality, society, politics, economy, religion, etc. (see Appendix seven for a complete list of Kövecses' (2010) source and target domains used as codes within this study). References to Kövecses' (2010) 'source' and 'target' domains were integral in being referred to as the initial codes to isolate and map participants' conceptual metaphors within the interview transcripts and aided in determining the broader narratives of how HE academics conceptualise the narratives of their teaching experiences. Furthermore, the decision to refer to Kövecses' (2010) list of source and target domains rests on Lakoff and Turner's (1989) 'invariance principle', whereby the need to maintain the inference of a metaphor is preserved in the analysis of metaphors (cited in Gibbs, 2017). Within this thesis, given the range of variables available to analyse component elements of a metaphor, this aided in mapping the inferences of a metaphor between a significant range of source and specific target domains linked to the context of the study. However, recognition related to the difficulties in identifying, categorising and capturing the extensive range of source and target domain and metaphors uttered by individuals within the context is acknowledged. Therefore, the use of Kövecses' (2010) source and target domains as codes in the analysis of the data remained flexible to allow for the addition and analysis of supplementary source or target domains uttered by individuals not covered by Kövecses' (2010) original list of domains.

In summary, within this study, conceptual metaphors are deemed to be symbolically significant and representative of a person's thoughts and conceptual systems (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; 2003), and within the context of this study, academics conceptualise their teaching practice. While criticism exists into the relevance of exploring and analysing specific metaphors (Trick & Katz, 1986; Weade & Ernst, 1990; Gibbs, 2017), the pervasiveness of metaphors in everyday life (Geary, 2011) and metaphors' ability to convey and inform insights (Cook-Sather, 2003; Saban, 2006; Mahlios et al., 2010) have informed the focus of this study.

In determining the inferences of the conceptual metaphors, Kövecses' (2010) list of source and target domains aided in simplifying the process of dissecting a metaphor and from which frames and narratives of conceptual metaphors referred could be determined.

### **2.3 Reading (the Narratives) Between the Lines**

As discussed in section 2.1, stories are pivotal in helping individuals understand and appreciate the complexity of everyday experiences and have the capacity to confer meaning on people's lives. More specifically, of interest to this study is how the meaning attached to a story and the conceptual metaphors used to convey a story can act as a 'narrative' through which individuals think, perceive, imagine, interact, make choices and behave (Moen, 2006). Exploring stories and the metaphors used to express a story can give insights into how individuals interpret and frame experiences, and uncover the underpinning narratives influencing a person's conceptual systems and actions (Squire et al., 2014).

In keeping with research question two – “What are the relationships between academics' use of metaphors and their narratives of teaching?” – the following theme briefly explores how definitions of narratives apply to this study before surveying the different approaches to researching narratives and the need for approaches to researching narratives to be fit for purpose and correspond to the methods of analysing narratives employed by this study. In acknowledging the subjectivity associated with researching narratives, the theme concludes by examining how this study managed issues linked to the interpretation of working with narratives.

Given the depth and breadth of differences within approaches to researching stories and the narrative they convey, it is important to locate the definition of narratives identified with the research question in order to understand how narratives align with this study. Considerable diversity exists as to what a narrative is, resulting in a lack of consensus on what constitutes research into narrative stories. As a starting point, acknowledging the differences between a story and a narrative helps advance the understanding of the narratives embedded within stories, and this study's context and focus on exploring academics' reflections of their stories about their teaching practice. As initially discussed within section 1.2, Squire et al. (2014), citing the work of early Russian linguists, refer to the terms 'fabula' and 'syuzhet' to distinguish between a story and a narrative, where a 'fabula' denotes the factual description of events in contrast to the reflective recalling of an event signified by a 'syuzhet'. This distinction between a 'fabula' and 'syuzhet' aids in drawing a contrast between analysing the specific content of a story against the structure and substance of a story described by Squire et al. (2014), as organised, plotted, interpreted accounts of events and termed as a 'narrative'. The distinctions between a fabula and syuzhet tie with Bruner's (1990) notions of how individuals interpret personal experiences in terms of stories and two modes of thought, namely paradigmatic and

narratives. Bruner (1990) recognised how experiences are comprehended through reasoned analysis, empirical observations and facts within paradigmatic modes of thinking. By contrast, narrative modes of thoughts and experiences are not explained in terms of facts but rather stories of intentions and actions. More recently, Kahneman (2012), in keeping with notions of differences between a fabula and syuzhet, and Bruner's (1990) concept of paradigmatic and narrative modes of thoughts, coined the phases 'system 1' and 'system 2' thinking to differentiate between automatic modes of thinking (i.e., system 1) against a thoughtful subjective approach to making choices and decisions of experiences (system 2). In taking account of and furthering the distinction between a 'fabula' and 'syuzhet', paradigmatic/narrative and system 1/2 modes of thoughts within elements of research into narratives, suggest the scope of research into a narrative's focus on understanding how individuals interpret and attach meanings to their stories. They tell of their experiences, broadly in keeping with Bolton's (2005) notion of how stories and the meaning attached to a story help individuals make sense of and organise their lives. Bold (2012), in providing a more contemporary definition of narrative, loosely defines narratives as being structured around events (phenomena experienced by individuals at a particular time and context) and reflecting the sense they and the narratives make of their lives. In the absence of a generally agreed definition of research into narratives, the common denominator evident within the above examples is the need to make sense of phenomena by analysing the critical role stories play in people's lives. Moen (2006) succinctly and concisely highlights this by asserting:

*"As we make our way through life, we have continuous experiences and dialogic interactions both with our surrounding world and with ourselves. All of these are woven together into a seamless web, where they might strike one as being overwhelming in their complexity. One way of structuring these experiences is to organise them into meaningful units. One such meaningful unit could be a story, a narrative" (p. 59).*

Within the context of this study, advancing Moen's (2006) notion of referring to 'meaningful units', and specifically stories and narratives as a way of making sense of complexities of understanding experiences, the metaphors used to convey the story of experiences are considered as the 'meaningful unit' worthy of consideration and exploration as part of this study's second research question into what the relationships are between academics' use of metaphors and their narratives of teaching. The focus on determining academics' narratives of teaching as part of this study further stresses the significance of exploring metaphors, as indicated within section 2.2, while the stories academics tell of their teaching experiences correspond to a 'syuzhet' (Squire et al., 2014) and incorporate elements of narrative modes of

thought (Bruner, 1990), and system 2 thinking (Kahneman, 2012). More specifically, in combining these elements, this study adopts a definition of research into narratives as focused on developing an understanding of how metaphors (i.e., meaningful units) within a story aid in reflecting participants' narratives of their teaching practice to analyse the significance of the metaphors referred to by participants within interview transcripts and the narratives they represent.

In keeping with the second research question, this study focuses on research into narratives centred on analysing data to determine academics' narratives of their teaching practice, in contrast, to the use of narrative research as a method of inquiry. In studying, analysing and interpreting narratives, approaches to determining narrative within research studies, as with other methods of inquiry, need to be fit for purpose and justified as an appropriate method and methodology to study a phenomenon (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Bold (2012) stresses that a process should be in the researcher's mind before commencing the research and requires a consistent approach to analysing data at all stages of the research (Riessman, 1993; Czarniawska, 2004). However, this process is complicated by the extensive range of approaches and interests in researching aspects of a narrative. For example, approaches to research into narratives could include phenomenology, grounded theory and ethnography to understand the context of a phenomenon (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

Furthermore, the foci and interest in studying narratives could concentrate on examining a range of variables, for example, how individuals think and feel (Chamberlayne et al., 2000); the way narratives are performed, shaped and co-constructed for and by different audiences (Georgakopoulou, 2007); or how narratives are situated within a context or associated with social identities (Riessman, 2008; Salmon & Riessman, 2013). Given the diverse range of approaches and variables available to analyse narratives, Clandinin and Connelly (2000) call for and stress the need for narrative approaches to be fit for purpose. Therefore, within the context of this study, in adopting an interpretive and classical phenomenological approach to this study (see section 3.1.1 for further details) to answer Moustakas' (1994) question: "What have they (the participant) experienced in terms of the phenomenon?", was addressed by identifying the meaningful units (i.e., the conceptual metaphors emerging out of the interview transcripts), to interpret and determine the narratives representative of participants' conceptualisation of their teaching experiences.

A range of theoretical approaches to analyse and interpret narratives were considered as part of this study in keeping with Gudmundsdottir's (2001) notion of using theories and frameworks to safeguard against the open analysis and interpretation of data into a narrative. For example, initially, Lieblich et al.'s (1998) early work on identifying narrative elements (holistic, categorical, content and form) was deliberated on as possible codes to analyse the interview transcripts. Morson's (1994) concept of temporal coherence of narrative via the terms 'back shadows', 'side shadows' and 'foreshadowing' to denote how the telling of a story casts shadows over the temporal elements of a narrative was further considered with regards to how temporal coherences could inform broader influences of narratives. Given this study's links with the Clean Language model, Tompkins and Lawley's (2006) concept of framing metaphors as expressing a 'problem', 'remedy' or 'outcome' (PRO) was also reviewed as potential methods of identifying frames of reference conveyed by a conceptual metaphor. Elliott (2005), in advancing Morson's (1994) work on temporal coherence of narrative, further identified the 'meaningful' and 'social' elements of a narrative to denote the inherent complexity of how different facets of a narrative interweave in creating an understanding of experiences for both the narrator and audience for whom the narrative is intended were also considered as possible method of analysing and interpreting narratives. From a storytelling perspective, Booker's (2004) seven basic story plots and Dan Harmon's story circle (Fechter, 2021) were also briefly considered as possible approaches to determining narratives from the analysis of data. McAdams and McLean's (2013) work on 'narrative identities' was also evaluated as an approach to analyse the findings, given that 'narrative identities' theory focuses on determining the impact stories have on the thoughts and actions of individuals. Finally, Mahlios et al.'s (2010) notion of how metaphors represent overt and covert values and beliefs that teachers hold about themselves, and about aspects of their teaching practice, aided in reviewing the relevance of Schwartz's (2012) Universal Values Theory as an approach to determining the values expressed within participants' conceptual metaphors. In reviewing the relevance of these theories to this study, key considerations around the need for the theoretical lens to function as code to analyse and interpret data, identify inferences and form conclusions in keeping with research questions, acted as a filter in reviewing theories of narrative research that could be applied to this study.

After some consideration, McAdams and McLean's (2013) Narrative Identity theory was adopted as the primary theoretical lens to analyse the data to determine academics' narratives of their teaching practice. McAdams and McLean's (2013) theory of narrative specifically appealed and lent itself to this study due to the theory's ability to act as frames to identify and



solidify the link between the conceptual metaphors and the narratives they represent via the list of seven Narrative Constructs (to denote how narrative meaning can be constructed via an analysis of stories) helping to establish a coding strategy for the interview transcripts with regards to how metaphors framed participants' narratives of their teaching practice (see Appendix eight). Goffman (1974), an early pioneer of the theory of framing, described how the act of placing frames around concepts and arguments consciously and unconsciously layers a schema over the way experiences are perceived, interpreted and, of importance to this study, understood by individuals (Borah, 2011). This notion of identifying frames acting as schemas through which experiences are conceptualised, further ties with Thibodeau and Boroditsky's (2011, 2013, 2015) and Steen et al.'s (2014) studies into how people's perceptions of concepts were impacted by the use of specific metaphors to describe the concept (see sections 2.2 and 3.3.1 for further details). Additionally, the similarities in viewpoints between the theory of narrative identities and significance of reflective stories are evident within McAdams' (2006) quotation referring to narratives as "an internalised and evolving cognitive structure or script that provides an individual's life with some degree of meaning and purpose" (p. 11), drawing on the premise of how people naturally tell stories of their experiences that impact on their thoughts and behaviour (as previously discussed in sections 2.1 and 2.2 of this chapter). Within this storytelling process, narrative choices are made whereby individuals construct the story to fit their interpretations of the experience and existing cognitive schemas. The disparate shared stories aid in crafting a narrative identity – in itself a schema – communicating to others who they are, how they came to be and where they envision themselves (McAdams & McLean, 2013), and are explored further within the findings of this thesis (see chapter 5). This premise regarding individuals constructing stories of their interpretations of experiences against existing schemas also corresponds to Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) theory of conceptual metaphors, whereby metaphors used to describe the experience are symbolic of deeper cognitive schemas and conceptual systems. Within this study, it is important to note how McAdams' (2006) theory of 'narrative identities' differs from traditional notions of studies into academic identities, which typically centre on studies and writing into being an academic and working in academia, and the dynamic complexities of working within the sector (Clegg, 2008; Billot, 2010). McAdams' (2006) use of the word 'identities' denotes a focus on the psychology of life stories, and how these convey to themselves and to others who they are, how they came to be and where they think their lives may be going in the future (McAdams & McLean, 2013). Within the context of this study, McAdams and McLean's (2013) theory of Narrative Identity is extended to denote how the

reflective stories academics tell of their practice are symbolic and representative in giving insights into aspects of their teaching practice and not notions of study into being an academic and working in academia. To avoid confusion with the use of the term 'identities' within this thesis, McAdams and McLean's (2013) theory of Narrative Identity Constructs will be referred to as 'Narrative Constructs' within the following chapters.

To gain a deeper understanding of the narratives emerging from the conceptual metaphors, in addition to McAdams' (2006; 2013) Narrative Constructs, further layers of analysis into participants' narratives of their teaching practice were considered with reference to Tompkins and Lawley's (2006) PRO model and Schwartz's (2012) theory of Universal Values helping to provide additional codes of analysis of the interview transcripts, and identify the frames and narratives representative of participants' teaching practice (see section 3.3.1 and chapter 5). The use of Tompkins and Lawley's (2006) PRO model assisted in identifying broad frames representative of the metaphors referred to by participants in a bid to determine how participants perceived and framed their experiences. Tompkins and Lawley's (2006) use of three broad variables, indicating a clear delineation of how individuals may construe their experiences as a conundrum, challenge, obstacle or set (i.e., problem), or a solution, answer or a resolution (i.e., remedy), or an aim, purpose, goal or ambition to achieve (i.e., outcome) aided in giving initial insights into how participants conceptualised their experiences and stories of their teaching practice. The decision to refer to Schwartz's (2006) Universal Values list was taken because the model identified a list of comprehensive recognisable values and the model's ability to understand the motivations impacting behaviour, thus allowing a deeper exploration into the participants' narratives of teaching practice.

In studying how stories and the conceptual metaphors referred to within stories inform narratives, three key issues impacting the inferences drawn from the analysis of narrative needed to be considered to help consolidate the conclusion drawn from the findings. Namely, issues linked to appreciating the expression of a narrative, the perception of a narrative and the interpretation involved in analysing academics' narratives of their teaching practice (Riessman, 2008; Squire, et al., 2014).

Regarding the expression of a narrative, Bold (2012), in coining the term 'representative construction', emphasises how stories are subject to decisions made by the narrator to present aspects of themselves and their story in keeping with their schemas and expectations, and, in doing so, present difficulties in determining the 'narrative voice' of the participants. The telling

of a story does not happen in isolation but in the audience's proximity and context where the narrative is conveyed and is further influenced by how aspects of the story are generalised and deleted due to memory limits. An individual's values, beliefs, previous experiences, levels of creativity and language further distort and create distance between facts and fiction of a narrative. Therefore, the analysis of narratives needed to consider the impact of factors linked to narrative expression and completed within the study by corroborating the findings with participants individually and via focus group discussions (see section 3.3 for further details).

In working with perceptions of narratives, it is important to note how stories in themselves are not representative of reality, an essential element of narrative research emphasised by Squire et al. (2014), who state: "your stories about your life are not the same as the life you live" (p. 110). Moen (2006), in citing Jerome Bruner, further distinguishes between a 'life lived' (what happened), a 'life experienced' (thoughts, feelings, images, sensations, etc.), and a 'life told' (narrative of the life lived to a particular audience and context) to underline the differences between what happened and the story of what happened, which Moen (2006) refers to as 'facts', 'fallacies' and 'fiction', whereby 'facts' refer to events believed to have occurred, 'fallacies' describe how those facts were lived and experienced by individuals and 'fiction' considered as how facts and fallacies are construed and woven together in keeping with a person's conceptual system and cognitive schemas. Therefore, when researching narratives, "there are blurred lines between what is said and unsaid, what is heard and not heard, what is analysed and not analysed" (Squire et al., 2014, p. 99). These 'blurred lines', within the context of this study, needed to acknowledge the differences between facts, fictions and the subjectivity linked to academics' stories of their teaching practice and taken into account by acknowledging how conclusion drawn from the analysis of the findings cannot be generalised to a broader population, but limited to giving insights into the narratives of the participant surveyed, and elude to how other academics may have similar perceptions of their teaching practice. The caveats associated with the differences between a 'life lived', a 'life experienced' and a 'life told' are further discussed as part of the conclusion of this study with regards to the narratives emerging from the findings.

The interpretation and analysis of narrative data are further complicated by the meaning attached to a story by both the narrator and those involved in examining the narratives to determine the dominant 'narrative voice' (Squire et al., 2014). Bold's (2012) use of the term 'representative construction' could equally apply to the role of the researcher analysing narratives, and how the narratives concluded from analysis of the findings by the researcher,

potentially could be distant from the original 'narrative voice' implied by the participant (Gudmundsdottir, 2001; Squire et al., 2014). Andrews et al. (2013), as mentioned previously, further stress the need for researchers to interpret and analyse narratives to guard against the tendency to identify cause and effect patterns by not acknowledging the complexities, ambiguities and differing versions of reality inherent in the narration or interpretation of narrative data. This subjectivity involved in the interpretation of narrative data has been cited by Gudmundsdottir (2001) and Moen (2006) as issues whereby narrative researchers need to validate the claims established in the analysis of the narratives (Bleakley, 2005) – especially concerning the influences and the co-construction of the narratives resulting from the analysis of the data. This is a process also referred to as 'restorying' by Ollerenshaw and Creswell (2002) to describe the practice of gathering stories and analysing data to construct a narrative representative of participants' experience in keeping with Squire et al.'s (2014) assertion of the need to identify the dominant internalised script of the stories. Sometimes it is also known as the narrative or 'master voice' permeating across the narratives and is considered to detail the narratives emerging from the research findings. With regards to how the gap between the expression, perception and interpretation of the story can result in a vast range of understandings of a narrative, the need exists to determine and clarify the interpretation of the narrative emerging from the analysis of the data by reference to a theoretical narrative framework to interpret and determine the narrative voice emerging from the findings (Gudmundsdottir, 2001; Squire et al., 2014). Within this study, this was managed by isolating the dominant conceptual metaphors emanating from the interview transcripts, which were explored in relation to Tompkins and Lawley's (2006) PRO model, McAdams and McLean's (2013) Narrative Constructs and Schwartz's (2012) theory of Universal Values frames, as discussed earlier to determine the relationships between academics' use of metaphors and their narratives of teaching.

In summary, the above themes identify how, in the absence of agreed definitions of narratives and research into narratives, this study draws on the distinctions between a 'fabula' and 'syuzhet' to distinguish between how stories, and the way a story is expressed via metaphors, can be studied to determine how academics make sense of their teaching experiences. Within this thesis, this study adopts a definition of research into narratives as focused on 'developing an understanding of how metaphors within a story (i.e., meaningful units) to aid in reflecting an understanding of participants' narratives of their teaching practice' to inform the second research question linked to determining relationships between academics' use of metaphors and their narratives of teaching.

In considering the diversity and range of approach, and researching narratives and theoretical lenses to analyse and interpret narratives, McAdams and McLean's (2006) narratives identity theory was referred to due to the theory's ability to offer a method of both coding the interview transcripts and a method of interpreting the findings to determine the narratives representative and symbolic of metaphors referred to by participants, which was in keeping with Lakoff and Johnson's (1980; 2003) theory of conceptual metaphors, and relevant to the frames of references used to interpret the findings and to form conclusions. Furthermore, a deeper level of analysis and insight into frames of reference and narratives emerging from the findings was provided by Tompkins and Lawley's (2006) PRO model and Schwartz's (2012) Universal Values Theory.

In analysing narratives, key issues linked to appreciating the influence of perception, expression and interpretation of a narrative have all been considered and countered by isolating the dominant conceptual metaphors emanating from the interview transcripts, as well as a broad-based approach to determine the narrative voice via the use of an appropriate theoretical lens as discussed above.

## **2.4 The Use of the Clean Language Questions**

This theme introduces the Clean Language questioning model to locate the use of the model within this study. Further to the introduction of the development of the Clean Language model within section 1.4 of the thesis, this section gives an overview of the model, explaining how the application and use of these Clean Language questions, specifically the Clean Language syntax, were addressed as part of this study. Finally, regarding the use of Clean Language questions within interviews, the use of Lawley's (2014) *Protocol for Validating the 'Cleanness' of an Interview* to evaluate the use of the Clean Language questions as part of this study and the third research question is reviewed and discussed within this section.

While the origins of the Clean Language model lay in the observations of David Grove's therapeutic work with clients, many of the contemporary advocates of the Clean Language movement have earlier links with the field of Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) given the shared interest between the NLP and Clean Language model in working with and developing people. Hence, comparisons between Clean Language and NLP questioning models (O'Connor & Seymour, 1994; 2002), amongst other similar models such as Gendlin's (1982)

Focusing approach and Cooperrider et al.'s (2007) Appreciative Inquiry model, have been made. However, Clean Language is distinguished from other questioning models by focusing on the role of metaphors in analysing experiences and perceptions in ways other models do not.

Over time, the Clean Language model has evolved, developing theories associated with self-awareness and therapeutic change work. For example, 'Symbolic Modelling' (Lawley & Tompkins, 2000), 'Clean Space' (Lawley & Way, 2017) and the 'Listening Space' (Hartley, 2020) are amongst the more prevalent theories utilising the role of metaphors and Clean Language within personal development and therapeutic settings. In particular, Lawley and Tompkins (2000) developed the theory of 'Symbolic Modelling' as "a process which uses Clean Language to facilitate people's discovery of how their metaphors express their way of being in the world – including how that way of being evolves" (p. 23). Symbolic Modelling is a means of identifying and exploring an individual's 'metaphor landscapes' through Clean Language questions, based on the notion that all metaphors contain 'symbols' that have significance for individuals at both a conscious and unconscious level. The concept of 'metaphor landscapes' suggests that metaphors reflect mental models and a map of the world through which a person interacts with their everyday experiences, and it links to the theory of conceptual metaphors developed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980; 2003). The Clean Space (Lawley & Way, 2017) theory, in keeping with the Clean Language model, aims to remove the influence of the facilitator/interviewer within the conversation, but with the added element of utilising the physical space around a person as a further avenue from which to explore their metaphors and perception of the world. The 'Listening Space' model developed by Hartley (2020) aimed to combine the exploration of metaphors with mindfulness to raise self-awareness and experience of the world. While both 'Clean Space' and the 'Listening Space' have their origins within a therapeutic setting, they have more recently been utilised within a coaching context, though not as a research interviewing method. As the use of the 'Clean Space' and the 'Listening Space' models fall outside the remit of the research questions, they have not been considered or utilised as part of this study. However, the use of the Clean Language questions, originating from the work of David Grove and central to the Clean Language model, was of key interest in the study in a bid to explore the metaphors expressed by participants to help cover the first research question: "What are the dominant metaphors used in the way academics recall, reflect and describe their experiences of teaching?" Within the context of this study, the phrase 'Clean Language questions' is used to differentiate and distinguish how the study focused on the use of the Clean Language list of questions, and not

the term 'Clean Language model', identifying the other strands of the model discussed above. Furthermore, in defining research boundaries, it is important to note how this study wholly focused on utilising the Clean Language questions within researching the interviewing context. Therefore, the emergence of additional branches of the Clean Language model, such as Clean Space (Lawley & Way, 2017) and Listening Space (Hartley, 2020), was not considered and is outside the remit of this study.

Although the Clean Language model and theory have their origins in psychotherapy and the work of David Grove, the model has since evolved and is popular within coaching contexts (Dunbar, 2017; Way, 2013) and as a facilitation method for working with groups (Walker, 2014), and, of particular interest to this study, as a social sciences research method and a potential phenomenological research tool (Tosey, 2011; Lawley & Small, 2018). Within this study, Clean Language's emphasis on metaphors was especially relevant to the first research question, probing: "What are the dominant metaphors used in the way academics recall, reflect and describe their experiences of teaching?" Specifically, the Clean Language model also promotes a conversational approach to reflection promoted by Hoffman-Kipp et al. (2003) and Guo (2021), and acknowledges how the presence of the metaphors conveyed within a discussion are symbolic in communicating conscious and unconscious thoughts associated with reflecting on a phenomenon (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003; Yob, 2003; Ho, 2005; Saban, 2006).

Central to the Clean Language model is the use of the Clean Language questions used by David Grove and latterly codified by Lawley and Tompkins (2000), and therefore these questions needed to be relevant and appropriate within the context of the research interviews. Loftus (2005), cited in Lawley (2014) via their research studies, identified how a question was asked and why the words used had overt and covert influences on the participants' memories. The view was that a change in a single word within the question could affect or 'contaminate' how a person would respond to the question. Thibodeau and Boroditsky (2011, 2013, 2015) concurred and expanded to suggest how the presence of a metaphor further influenced the frame of a question and impacted how participants responded to a question. The work of David Grove and the Clean Language model acknowledge the possible effects, and 'contamination' an interviewer's wording of a question can have on the participants and, therefore, the model aims to minimise, if not eliminate, an interviewer's influence and assumptions on the issues discussed. By encouraging interviewers and facilitators to listen and respond to participants' responses without allowing their reactions, judgement,

expectations, values and beliefs to impact the dialogue, the Clean Language questions allow participants to determine metaphors unfettered by Loftus' (1975, 2005) concerns. Furthermore, the Clean Language model also acknowledges how the metaphors conveyed within a discussion are symbolic in communicating the conscious and unconscious thoughts of phenomena and conceptual systems (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003; Yob, 2003; Ho, 2005; Saban, 2006).

However, diversity exists in the range and number of Clean Language questions promoted by various authors. For example, while Lawley and Tompkins (2000) identify nine core Clean Language questions, Sullivan and Rees (2008) promote 12 core Clean Language questions and the potential of 20 other 'specialised questions'. More latterly, Rees (2016) encourages the use of two lazy Jedi questions, with the term 'jedi' metaphorically representative of how the 'force' of the Clean Language questions can be channelled through the use of two dominant Clean Language questions (i.e., "What kind of X (is that x)?" and "Is there anything else about x?"). Alternatively Hartley (2020) identifies four questions linked to the new Lighthouse Coaching model to simplify the use and application of the Clean Language questions. Thus, suggesting how the use and application of the Clean Language model and questions is not an exact science and that practitioners are encouraged to be creative in using the model in relation to meeting the needs of those being interviewed within the context and aim of the specific interview. After some deliberations, Sullivan and Rees' (2008) 12 core questions were used to complete the research interviews as part of this study and the coding categories for the analysis of the interview transcripts, based on Sullivan and Rees' (2008) list of questions, offered a middle ground that categorised the questions into Developing, Sequence and Source, and Intention Questions (see Appendix one), which allowed for a more structured, yet straightforward way of employing the use of the questions during the research interviews. Furthermore, Sullivan and Rees' (2008) list of core questions mirrored the questions listed by Lawley and Tompkins (2000), and also Hartley's (2020) variations in the use of Clean Language questions.

While a definitive manual of how to apply the use of the Clean Language questions does not exist, the application of the model consists of the use of a range of Clean Language questions (Appendix one), repeated several times to direct participants' attention towards the metaphor used to convey an experience, allowing it to be explored while discouraging the inferences which might potentially emerge in the interviewer's responses to participants' answers. A process referred to as a 'syntax' (to denote an arrangement of phrases asked in a specific



sequence and manner) indicates where a strong preference exists within the Clean Language community in employing the Clean Language questions. The syntax comprises of the formula (as listed below), which an interviewer would follow in responding to what the participant has to say:

**And ...** *(repeat clients' words and gestures)*

**and when ...** *(some/select words and gestures)*

**[ask a Clean Language question]**

*(Sullivan & Rees, 2008, p.127)*

The use of a specific 'syntax' can result in a mechanical approach to applying the Clean Language model, and, to mitigate this, there is a necessity for good rapport, while skilled use of the interviewer's tone of voice is encouraged to add variety to how Clean Language questions are asked. The use of the Clean Language syntax within a specific research context has been debated within the Clean Language community and in professional social media forums, particularly in relation to criticism of the repetitiveness in the way in which the syntax is employed and the recognition that this could result in a mechanical approach in the application of the Clean Language model. While a lack of agreement and consensus of the use of the syntax exists, Lawley (2014), as part of the social media discussion into the use of the syntax, acknowledged how a move away from the pure form of applying the syntax would make more sense. This is a view further elaborated by Meese (2014), who, as part of the same online discussion, stressed how the aim of the discussion/interview could have a bearing on the use of the syntax, for example, the use of the syntax in its pure form might be beneficial if the focus of the discussion was for the client to become more aware. More pragmatic use of the syntax could be employed where the aim of the discussion was for the researcher/interviewer to become more closely acquainted with the client's comprehension and understanding of experiences. Evidence from the current study's pilot interviews confirmed how employing the 'syntax' within the confines of a research interview could prove counter-intuitive in building rapport with the participants, and therefore was not employed within the research interviews completed as part of this study.

Within a research context, and regarding the third research question – “To what extent do the Clean Language questions allow participants to reflect on the metaphors representative of their teaching experiences?” – the need existed to identify measures to evaluate the effectiveness of the use of Clean Language questions. Lawley (2014), acknowledging the issues around evaluation of the use of Clean Language questions, presents criteria and a

*Protocol for Validating the 'Cleanness' of an Interview.* In the absence of other potential evaluation measures, Lawley's (2014) protocol was adopted by this study to determine the extent the questions asked during the research interviews were 'clean', given the detailed criteria proposed for determining the cleanness of a question and building on adopting a uniformed approach in measuring the effectiveness of Clean Language interviews. Lawley's (2014) protocol precisely consists of measuring Clean Language questions against the following criteria:

- **Classically clean:** a Clean Language question that substantially refers to the interviewee's words, without introducing the interviewer's own words, concepts, opinions, metaphors, etc.
- **Contextually clean:** a 'clean' question tailored to the interviewee's experiences and may introduce words related to the context and purpose of the research or interview.
- **Mildly/potentially leading:** ask questions and/or introduce words not used by the interviewee, are metaphorical or have a discernible impact on the interviewee.
- **Strongly leading:** interviewer uses words, concepts, opinions, metaphors, etc., not referred to by the interviewer and has a discernible impact on how the interviewee responds.

While there may be some subjectivity which exists in determining how accurately a question can be considered 'clean', the formulation of criteria, against which Clean Language questions can be measured, aids in validating the 'cleanness' of interviews regarding the questions asked, while acknowledging how the use of the Clean Language questions varies in relation to the context of the discussion. Considering the criteria as a continuum of Clean Language questions within a research or therapeutic setting, Lawley (2014) suggests that a rate of 90% (approx.) of questions asked should be either 'classically clean' or 'contextually clean' within an interview for it to be considered 'clean'. A measure of the cleanness of the interview against which the findings and analysis of the interview transcripts within this study were compared.

It is important to note, however, that Lawley (2014) is keen to stress how the *Protocol for Validating 'Cleanness' of an Interview* presents an attempt to establish an empirical research strategy using the Clean Language model and questions, and is not a defined criterion into the use of the Clean Language questions. Hence, this study interrogated Lawley's (2014) protocol alongside its other findings while acknowledging that a lack of empirical research appears to exist into the validity of the Clean Language model's use. Within a specific context, this study attempts to address this and to contribute to the developing research base around

the use of the Clean Language model across a range of contexts that is evident within the Clean Language community. This base is more evident within networking communities such as the 2014 and 2015 International Clean Language Conferences' 'Research Sandbox' events and, more recently, the annual online 'Metaphorium' forum founded by Judy Rees and subsequently facilitated by Sharon Small. Additionally, Lawley (2021) identifies nearly 100 publications that link to the use of the Clean Language model to establish further the validity of the Clean Language questions' use across a range of contexts. However, a cursory survey of these publications suggests how, amongst a selection of doctoral-level studies incorporating the use of the Clean Language model, much of what has been written about the Clean Language model originates from advocates of the model as opposed to a critical analysis of research into the validity and application of the model, especially within a research context.

In summary, in identifying the importance of exploring metaphors as part of this study, the Clean Language model, and specifically the Clean Language questions (see Appendix one), help to establish a framework for completing the research interviews given the Clean Language questions' focus and ability to identify and probe metaphors. More specifically, the use of the Clean Language questions as a research method helped to inform the third research question: "To what extent do the Clean Language questions allow participants to reflect on the metaphors representative of their teaching experiences?"

Given the Clean Language origins in therapeutic practice, adjustments are needed to use the Clean Language questions within the research interview context. This is specifically given the issue linked to the repetitive use of the Clean Language syntax, related to the requirement for interviewers to continually repeat specific phrases to elicit and explore participants' responses. Drawing on Lawley (2014) and Meese's (2014) discussions on using the Clean Language syntax, a more flexible use of the syntax was adopted during the research interviews completed as part of this study.

To address the thesis' third research question into identifying the value of using the Clean Language questions in enabling participants to reflect on the metaphors representative of their teaching experiences, in the absence of any other measures, Lawley's (2014) protocol was used to evaluate the research interviews' effectiveness as part of this study. By adopting Lawley's (2014) criteria, this study builds on the growing number of postgraduate and doctoral studies using the Clean Language questions in different contexts.



## **2.5 Three Pieces of a Jigsaw – the Conceptual Framework and Chapter Summary**

In studying aspects of the role and use of metaphors within reflective stories, narratives and the Clean Language questioning model within this chapter, a conceptual framework was developed and utilised to stress how the different concepts link together into a coherent study and summarise the Literature Review chapter (Thomson, 2018).

While differences exist as to definitions and explanations of what constitutes a conceptual framework, Ravitch and Riggan's (2017) observation of a conceptual framework comprising of "an argument about why the topic one wishes to study matters" (p. xv), and Miles and Huberman's (1984) definition of a conceptual framework consisting of "the researcher's map of the territory being investigated" (p. 33) succinctly explain the underlying purpose of developing a conceptual framework to underpin this study. Specifically, the relationship between key concepts and the theoretical lens employed to research these concepts, as well as how this informed parts of the research design, analysis of findings and interpretation of conclusions (Wald & Daniel, 2020), is discussed further below.

Taking into account Ravitch and Riggan's (2017) need for a conceptual framework comprising of "an argument about why the topic one wishes to study matters" (p. xv), it is important to acknowledge McAdams' (2009) notions of how a study into personality traits, behaviour characteristics, motivations, etc., while helpful, lacks insight and understanding of how individuals themselves have understood, interpreted and conceptualised their experiences, and how this in turn informed their learning and development. Therefore, this study into researching the conceptual metaphors symbolic and representative of academics' narratives of their teaching practices, sought to investigate and give an insight into understanding academic perceptions of their teaching practice within the context of storytelling, reflective practice and narratives in keeping with contributions to knowledge discussed in section 1.6.

### **2.5.1 The key concepts**

Within conceptual frameworks, Wald and Daniel (2020) stress the need to go beyond definitions of concepts to determine the characteristics and attributes of the concepts to be examined. Three varied concepts were explored in this literature review and study: the metaphors embedded within reflective stories, the Clean Language questioning model, and narratives, all in keeping with the research questions. Within these three concepts, it was key to move beyond definitions and exploration, and acknowledge the role of metaphors in being

symbolic and representative of how academics interpreted and conceptualised their teaching experiences (Lawley & Tompkins, 2000; Kövecses, 2010; Geary, 2011). This could be accomplished, specifically, by drawing on Lakoff and Johnson's (1980; 2003) seminal work on conceptual metaphors signifying how metaphors represent a person's underlying schema and conceptual systems which relates to the aspect of the study informing the first research question: "What are the dominant metaphors used in the way academics recall, reflect and describe their teaching experiences?"

In determining the relationships between academics' use of metaphors and their narratives of teaching (research question two), the concept of 'stories' conferring meaning on people's lives and acting as a narrative (McAdams, 2006) has been key to informing how this study examines the significance of metaphors in conveying the deeper meaning of schema underpinning academics' teaching practice.

The focus on exploring participants' metaphors within the study was completed via the Clean Language model (Lawley & Tompkins, 2000; Sullivan & Rees, 2008) as a research interviewing tool given the model's specific focus and emphasis on probing metaphors. Thus, the opportunity to evaluate the Clean Language model with regards to its effectiveness in allowing participants to express and examine their metaphors formed the second concept of this study and feeds into the third research question: "To what extent do the Clean Language questions allow participants to reflect on the metaphors representative of their teaching experiences?"

## 2.5.2 Relationships between the concepts

From a theoretical perspective, considerations were given to how theories discussed within this chapter informed the relationships between the concepts, underpinned the research and acted as a lens to analyse the data in developing the conceptual framework.

The glue binding the three concepts of metaphors, Clean Language model and narratives together within this thesis consists of a belief or assumptions that connect the various ideas and notions (Miles et al., 2014). This, as mentioned previously, consisted of appreciating the value of metaphors as being symbolic and characteristic of a person's conceptual systems (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; 2003). This is particularly significant regarding how stories of personal experiences, or within the context of this study, the metaphors used by academics

to reflect on their teaching practice, can give insights into how experiences are perceived and interpreted and inform future practice (Carpenter, 2008).

Within the conceptual framework, concepts linking to narratives follow Bolton's (2005) and Salmon and Riessman's (2013) notion of how stories and the meaning attached to a story help individuals make sense of and organise their lives. Within the context of this study, the significance attached to a story focuses on exploring conceptual metaphors, as the 'meaningful units' which Moen (2006) alludes to in identifying how individuals understand and structure experiences of teaching from an analysis of the interview transcripts (see sections 2.2 and 3.3 for further details). This process of analysing conceptual metaphors to identify the inherent narratives within them feeds into Mahlios et al.'s (2010) theory of how metaphors represent overt and covert beliefs teachers hold about themselves and aspects of their teaching practice (Yero, 2010), and hence gives insights into covering the second research question linked to identifying relationships between conceptual metaphors and the narratives of teaching they represent.

The narratives emerging from the conceptual metaphors aimed to draw on the premise of how people naturally tell stories of their experiences (as previously discussed in sections 2.1 and 2.2), and how the conceptual metaphors used to convey a story give insights into narratives inherent within academics' stories and reflections of their teaching experiences. Analysis of the conceptual metaphors to ascertain the narratives contained within them is further discussed below regarding the theories referred to as a lens to interpret and analyse the findings, and establish the narratives underpinning the conceptual metaphors referred to by participants to reflect on their teaching practice.

In locating the use and relationship of the Clean Language model within the conceptual framework, the metaphors expressed by participants were drawn out and explored further via the Clean Language questions (Lawley & Tompkins, 2000; Sullivan & Rees, 2008). The Clean Language questioning model, specifically developed to explore metaphors, initially within the therapeutic setting, and latterly as a qualitative research method used to complete the research interviews, was chosen given the model's novel ability to extract and explore the relevance and significance of metaphors referred to by participants when reflecting on their teaching practice (see section 2.4 for further details).

### 2.5.3 The theoretical lens

An exploration and analysis of the inference within a metaphor to determine the key conceptual metaphors helps establish the starting point for identifying and analysing metaphors expressed by participants within the interview transcripts. The analysis of the metaphors elicited during the research interviews referred to the work of Kövecses' (2010) source and target domains list to identify the dominant metaphors used in the way academics recall, reflect on and describe their experiences of teaching in line with the first research question of this study. Principally, due to Kövecses' (2010) list presenting a structured process and mechanism through which to code and categorise the metaphors uttered by the participants as part of the content and thematic analysis of the data by isolating the expression of a metaphor (source domain) and the inferences they convey (target domains).

Interpretation and analysis of the relevance and significance of the key conceptual metaphors, to determine the narratives within them, were analysed through the theoretical lens of Tompkins and Lawley's (2006) PRO model, McAdams' (2006; 2013) Narrative Constructs and Schwartz's (2012) theory of Universal Values to identify the frames and narratives representative of and informing academics' conceptualisation of their teaching practice. In acknowledging the diversity existing within different narrative research approaches, as well as the need for narrative research studies to be fit for purpose (Riessman, 2005; Bold, 2012), this study adopted a three-pronged approach to the analysis of conceptual metaphors, which helped to situate the findings and establish generic narrative of academics' conceptualisation of their teaching practice (see section 3.3 and chapter 5 for further details).

Analysis and evaluation of the Clean Language questioning model, to cover the third research question, consists of coding the interviewers' use of Sullivan and Rees' (2008) list of Clean Language questions asked during the research interviews to elicit and probe participants' metaphors and determine the popularity of the Clean Language questions used by the interviewers. Furthermore, Lawley's (2014) *Protocol for Validating the 'Cleanness' of an Interview* was referred to in order to analyse the effectiveness of the Clean Language model within this study (see section 2.4 and chapter 6 for further details).



#### 2.5.4 Integrating elements

Leshem and Trafford's (2007) call to recognise the conceptual framework's role in integrating concepts to scaffold research and inform the research methodology and the broader contextual implications of the study was also considered in formulating the conceptual framework.

The theories described above were referred to and used to analyse the data, interpret the findings and help consolidate the conceptual framework. For example, Sullivan and Rees' (2008) list of Clean Language questions was used as the primary method of questioning participants as part of the research interviews and also coded against to determine the main Clean Language questions asked to assess the third research question probing the extent the Clean Language model allowed participants to reflect on the metaphors of their teaching practice. Kövecses' (2010) list of source and target domains was also referred to as codes to complete content and thematic analysis of the key conceptual metaphors representative and symbolic of participants' teaching practice in keeping with the first research question linked to identifying the dominant metaphors used by academics to recall, reflect and describe their experiences of teaching. Finally, Tompkins and Lawley's (2006) PRO model, McAdams and McLean's (2013) Narrative Constructs and Schwartz's (2012) theory of Universal Values were also used to code and analyse the conceptual metaphors emerging out of the analysis of the interview transcripts, and further referred to identify and interpret the narratives underpinning and informing participants' narratives of their teaching practice.

Within a wider context, this study is located within the role of storytelling as a mode of reflection and examines the possibility and feasibility of exploring conceptual metaphors (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980) to promote and aid approaches to reflective practice, specifically within the context of HE academics' reflections of their teaching experiences. In doing so, this study acknowledges how traditional approaches of reflective practice taught within education lean towards the use of process-driven cyclical models of reflection (e.g., Kolb, 1984; Gibbs, 1988) and have some limitations linked to not appreciating the dynamic way in which individuals learn (Boud et al., 1985), by adopting a one-size-fits-all approach to reflective practice (Johns, 2000), and requiring practitioners to reflect-on-demand (Boud & Walker, 1998). Limitations of traditional models of reflection countered by this study focus on exploring conceptual metaphors via a free-flowing conversational approach to reflecting on experiences. The key conclusions are drawn from the value elicited by probing metaphors within a reflective context

and how the findings of the study potentially develop an alternative model of reflection in a move away from traditional process cyclical models of reflection.

Figure 1 below summarises the conceptual framework and how the three varied concepts connect to inform the research questions and give a theoretical lens to research the key concepts of the study.

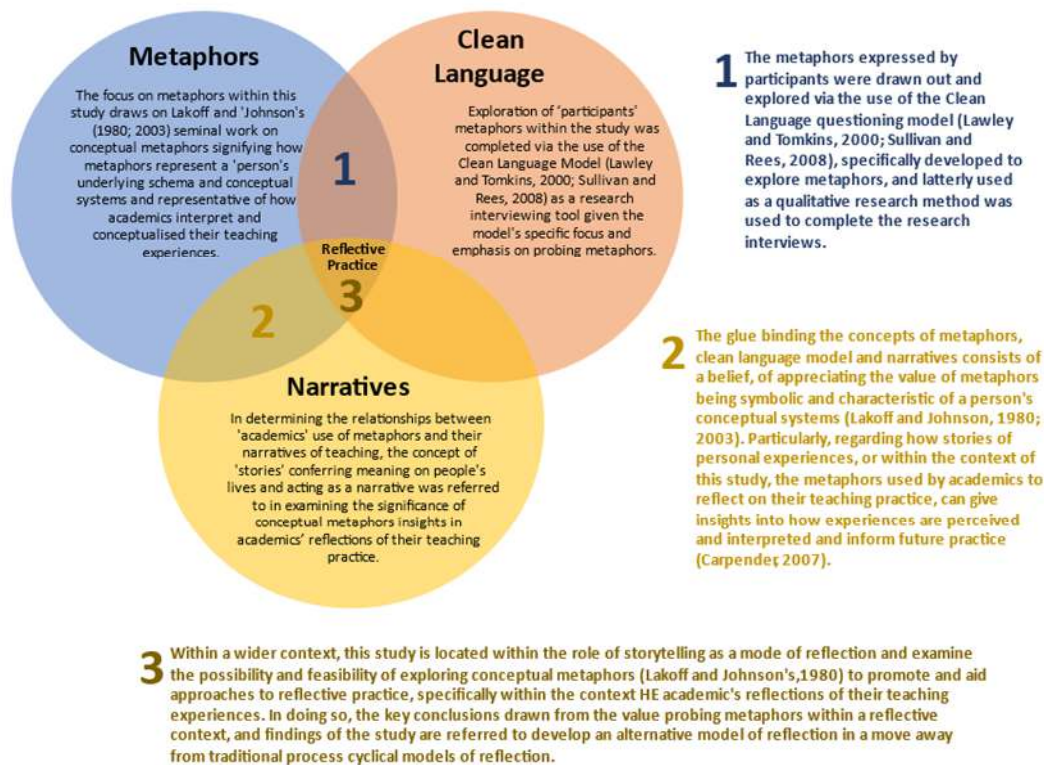


Figure 1 – Summary diagram of Conceptual Framework

In summary, the study's conceptual framework can be understood by drawing on Thomson's (2018) metaphorical wall painting analogy to denote how specific elements of the study combine and link together within the thesis. Within the painting, this study, as an exercise in exploring reflective pedagogy approaches used to reflect on teaching practice, surveys the metaphors uttered by participants as central to painting with the finer details highlighting the nuances of the metaphors' source and target domains (Kövecses, 2010) to identify participants' conceptual metaphors. Furthermore, part of the painting shows how the Clean Language questions was used to elicit and explore metaphors referred to by participants within

the research interviews, and evaluated against Lawley's (2014) protocol. From a distance, the painting communicates and tells the story of the 'narratives' underpinning the painting and the stories told by the metaphors used by participants to reflect on their teaching practice. Specifically, in relation to Lawley and Tompkins (2000), McAdams and McLean (2013), and Schwartz's (2006) theoretical models discussed earlier to identify how HE academics frame aspects of the teaching practice and the narratives the conceptual metaphors convey. Finally, the study's finding identified how reflective pedagogy and academics' self-awareness could be further advanced and gave rise to the development of the model of reflective practice in keeping with the conclusions drawn from the study.

## Chapter 3 – Methodology

The following Methodology chapter details how issues linked to research paradigms, methodology, methods, sample and analysis were considered as part of this study.

The chapter commences by exploring how different research paradigms helped underpin the research methodology and methods adopted by the study (section 3.1). The chapter then progresses to detail the choice and relevance of the research methods chosen, the appropriateness of the sample and details of the pilot survey completed to trial elements of the research methods (section 3.2). The data analysis and coding decisions referred to in scrutinising the data against the research questions and issues linked to the validity and reliability of the findings follow in section 3.3. Finally, the importance of adhering to relevant ethical guidelines and principles to undertake a study responsibly and transparently are discussed within section 3.4.

### 3.1 Research Paradigms – The Starting Point

Miller and Brewer (2003) describe how the word paradigm, within research contexts, refers to how diverse research communities adopt different research methodologies and methods to complete a study in keeping with their preferred lenses for seeing the world. In determining a research paradigm consistent with the research questions, Burrell and Morgan (1992) suggest it is necessary to establish the 'ontological' and 'epistemological' positions wherein a study is situated (Sparkes, 1992, p. 12). Ontology, referring to an exploration of reality, determines explicitly whether the reality investigated exists externally to the individual or is a product of individual consciousness. It is categorised as being either realist – referring to the existence of a single reality/truth; or relativist – whereby multiple subjective realities are acknowledged and impacted by context (Sparkes, 1992; Saunders et al., 2012). On the other hand, epistemology examines reality in terms of how knowledge is understood and categorised as either positivist – leaning towards notions of knowledge being measurable via quantitative deductive approaches; to interpretive – whereby knowledge is subjective and influenced by context and likely to embrace inductive qualitative methods of research (Crotty, 1998). Given that the research questions in this study focus on exploring metaphors, referred to by individuals both consciously and unconsciously, a relativist ontology and interpretive epistemology for this study were adopted. Lakoff & Johnson (1980), in their key text *Metaphors We Live By*, debate the polar opposite between objective and subjective rationality

represented by metaphors, and reject the objective account of metaphors being solely linked to the literal aspect of language, and in place stress:

*“Since the categories of our everyday thought are largely metaphorical and our everyday reasoning involves metaphorical entailments and inferences, ordinary rationality is therefore imaginative by its very nature” (p. 193).*

Hence, Lakoff & Johnson (1980) contend how variables linked to everyday individual experiences, such as emotional responses, aesthetic appreciation and personal awareness, cannot easily be understood objectively, but via metaphors that convey and give insights into the subjectivity of the individual articulating the metaphor and understood by the process of creative comprehension by those interpreting the metaphor. Thus, by adopting a relativist ontology and interpretive epistemology, the fluid and dynamic use of metaphors by individuals in explaining concepts and phenomena they experience acknowledges how the notion of reality is subjective, intuitively constructed and shaped by the metaphors chosen, as well as being further impacted by the context in which metaphors are narrated to others. However, the variables inherent within metaphorical utterances may be identified, as indicated by Kövecses (2010), by the vehicle used to convey a metaphor (i.e., source domain) and by the message the metaphor intends to convey (i.e., target domain) (see sections 2.2 and 3.3 for further details).

By embracing a relativist ontology and interpretive epistemology, this study adopts an inductive methodology and a phenomenological research approach to address the research questions and to explore how the metaphors referred to by HE academics, while reflecting on their experiences, inform their teaching narratives. The decision to adopt a phenomenological research approach was taken after considering how other inductive research approaches (e.g., symbolic interaction, realism, etc.) did not lend themselves to studying lived experiences or bring to the fore the interpretations and perceptions individuals attach to their experiences and, potentially, their metaphors of teaching. Furthermore, phenomenological research focuses on the study of direct experiences, in contrast to an external objective analysis of an issue, and Lester’s (1999) notion of how individuals can gain knowledge via reflection aided in reinforcing the use of a phenomenological approach to the interpretive research for this study in keeping with the research questions of the thesis. More specifically, adopting a phenomenological research approach tied with the focus and the research questions of the study, whereby academics were required to discuss and explore aspects of their teaching

practice, in keeping with definitions of phenomenological research which centre on the need to understand lived experiences of participants (Creswell, 2009).

### 3.1.1 Embracing a phenomenological approach to the study

In adopting an interpretive phenomenological approach to this study, consideration was given to the range of phenomenological strategies that exist to ensure that the approach chosen was fit for addressing the research questions. While Grbich (2012) initially describes how the work of Edmund Husserl gave rise to the 'classical phenomenological' approach to research, Creswell (2013) further identifies two other approaches to phenomenological studies, namely 'hermeneutic' and 'empirical' phenomenology, also referred to as 'transcendental' or 'psychological' phenomenology (Moustakas, 1994). The classical view of phenomenology advocates an exploration of phenomena with a group of individuals who have experienced a phenomenon via qualitative research methods, with the researcher 'bracketing' themselves out of the study to identify and classify meaningful quotations into themes to develop a 'textual description' of 'what' the participants experienced and a 'structural description' of how they experienced the phenomena (Moustakas, 1994; Creswell, 2013). Van Manen (1997) defined hermeneutical phenomenology as "oriented towards lived experiences and interpreting the 'texts' of life" (p. 4) and promoted a research process whereby the researcher actively interprets the lived experiences of the participants. Finally, empirical phenomenology focuses on 'describing' the lived experiences of the participants, where the researcher, in as far as possible, would 'transcend' the data captured in an attempt to ensure 'everything is perceived freshly, for the first time' (Moustakas, 1994, p. 34). For this study, the combined classical and hermeneutical phenomenological approaches to research are congruent with the research questions, in exploring how academics reflected on aspects of their teaching practice via qualitative research methods, with a specific focus on identifying the metaphors uttered by academics to determine 'what' and 'how' they 'experienced' their teaching practice. The classical view of phenomenology, in advocating an exploration of phenomena with a group of individuals who have experienced a phenomenon, aided in classifying and categorising meaningful metaphors referred to by participants into themes to develop a 'textual description' of 'what' the participants experienced and a 'structural description' of how the textual descriptions translated to convey conceptual metaphors of participants' lived experience of their teaching practice. This research approach also aligns with Creswell's (2013) suggestions of using qualitative research interviews, as adapted by the study, when researching lived experiences within a phenomenological research approach.

The key phenomenological question asked by Moustakas (1994), referring to identifying “what have they (the sample) experienced in terms of the phenomenon?” was addressed within the study and linked to the bracketing process promoted by Moustakas (1994) and Creswell (2013) using the Clean Language questions (Lawley & Tompkins, 2000; Sullivan & Rees, 2008), in keeping with the Clean Language model premise of how ‘dirtying’ a conversation by questions loaded with interpretations and assumptions (of the interviewer) could negatively influence the discussion and outcomes of conversations with participants (see sections 2.4 and 3.2.2 for further details). The use of the Clean Language questions further helped address the disadvantages associated with the use of phenomenological approaches, whereby the use of an open-ended inductive approach to qualitative interpretive research is cited as an issue whereby an impressionistic and subjective focus on the research may be misplaced due to the inherent dangers of misrepresentation and interpretations resulting from researcher biases impacting the eventual findings reported (Bryman & Bell, 2015).

Further limitations of using the phenomenological approach centre on the articulation and ambiguities existing within the language used to describe and reflect on a phenomenon (Ochieng, 2009; Noon 2018). Specifically, with regard to how participants’ ability to identify and describe their experiences, express thoughts and feelings associated with an experience and the vocabulary referred to by participants could impact the findings of phenomenological studies. Within this study, the sample of experienced academics (see Appendix three) who were able to identify and confidently explain, examine, and deliberate over their teaching practice aided in the study’s data collection process and assist in countering the limitations of articulating experiences within phenomenological studies.

Noon (2018) further notes how phenomenological studies are prone to tensions searching for representative connections and themes in analysing the data. An issue acknowledged within this study whereby the vast diversity and variety of metaphors participants could refer to while reflecting on their experiences needed to be considered. However, the use of specific codes linked to identifying metaphors and determining the inference of the conceptual metaphors helped to regulate the analysis of the findings in keeping the research questions (see Sections 2.3, 3.3.1 and Appendices seven and eight for further details)

Additionally, difficulties in replicating the research findings conducted via interpretive approaches due to participants’ inferences associated with varying responses at any given time, the diversity of sample and context, and a lack of standards and measures to follow and

compare findings against, hinder in making generalisations from phenomenological studies. Therefore, it is important to stress how findings and inferencing emanating from this research cannot be generalised to a broader population and instances. However, the rigour in completing the research will stem from articulating the participants' narrative and their stories and reflections of their teaching practice, as discussed further in sections 3.3.2 and 7.4. In acknowledging how phenomenological studies may not facilitate generalisable finding, this study's value can be determined by the research contribution to knowledge listed in sections 1.6 and 7.2.

### 3.2 The Research Approach and Methods

In determining the methodological approach and use of research methods to complete this study, table 1 summarises the use of different research methods against the research questions, which are subsequently discussed further within this section.

Table 1 – Use of Research Methods and Analysis against the research questions

Research Questions	Research Methods	Method of Analysis
What are the dominant metaphors used in the way academics recall, reflect and describe their teaching experiences?	Interviews Focus group	Content analysis of interview and Focus Group transcripts
What are the relationships between academics' use of metaphors and their narratives of teaching?	Focus group	Content and thematic analysis of interview and Focus Group transcripts
To what extent do the Clean Language questions allow participants to reflect on the metaphors representative of their teaching experiences?	Questionnaire Focus group	Content analysis of interview and Focus Group transcripts Quantitative Analysis of questionnaire findings

Table 1 identifies how the data collection process utilised three research methods to help compile and analyse the findings. Firstly, the research interviews conducted with the participants and subsequently transcribed consisted of the primary data, which were coded according to the coding decisions described in section 3.3.1. The initial findings emerging out the interview transcripts were corroborated via completion of a focus group with the participants and completion of the questionnaire to determine participants' reflections of being interviewed as part of the study and the use of the Clean Language questions to complete the interview.



In keeping with a phenomenological research methodology, the research methods used within this study consisted primarily of ideographic qualitative research methods, namely interviews and focus group discussions. A vital benefit of using ideographic qualitative research methods is the depth and richness of the data gained via interpretive approaches due to interviews and focus groups' ability to give the findings an emergent quality. Furthermore, interviews allow studies to be steeped within a context due to analysing the phenomena experienced by participants and giving the findings some authenticity by noting 'coherence' (see section 3.2.2 for further details). The use of a questionnaire, distributed to participants on completion of the research interview, was aimed at gaining an insight into participants' reflections of being interviewed as part of this study and corroborating the findings from the analysis of the interview transcripts (further discussed within section 3.2.3).

The study's data analysis stages systemically reviewed the interview transcripts to ascertain metaphors initially, code the meaning behind the significant phrases, and then identify the conceptual metaphors to determine how participants have experienced and reflected on their teaching practice. This is a process Moustakas (1994) termed 'horizontalisation' to stress the researcher's attempts to develop 'clusters of meaning' of significance and to form 'textual descriptions' of participants' experiences and a 'structural description' of the phenomena, leading towards a composite description of the 'essence' (also referred to as essential, invariant structure) of the phenomena (see section 3.3 for further details). Specifically, with regards to the analysis of the data emerging from the use of the research methods against the research questions, open interviews were completed and analysed via content analysis, against Kövecses' (2010) source and target domains (see Appendix seven) of the metaphors referred to by academics to identify the dominant metaphors referred to within the interviews to cover the first research question. The second research question – "What are the relationships between academics' use of metaphors and their narratives of teaching?" – was determined by content and thematic analysis of interview transcripts, against Lawley and Tompkins' (2000) PRO model, McAdams and McLean's (2013) Narrative Constructs and Schwartz's (2012) Universal Values list, and further corroborated via a focus group discussion convened after coding analysis of interview transcripts. Finally, the third research question aimed at identifying "To what extent do the Clean Language questions allow participants to reflect on the metaphors representative of their teaching experiences?" consisted of content analysis of interview transcripts against Sullivan and Rees' (2008) list of Clean Language questions, a questionnaire distributed to participants after the research interviews and further

followed up by a focus group discussion with participants to discuss their reflections and evaluate their participation in the interviews.

### 3.2.1 Sampling

In determining the sample for a study, Robinson's (2014) holistic approach to considering a range of variables aided in identifying a suitable sample of participants to contribute to the study. These variables consist of considering the sampling universe (population), sample strategy, size and source of the sample.

Initially, with regards to Robinson's (2014) suggestion to determine the sampling population and strategy, the decision to select a homogenous sample of similar participants (i.e., academics teaching within a HE setting), in preference to a heterogeneous diverse sample, was taken as an inclusion criterion in keeping with Smith et al.'s (2009) assertion that phenomenological research needs to remain contextualised within a defined setting. Hence, regarding this phenomenological research, the sampling strategy consists of adopting a purposive sampling approach to survey participants who had experience and were able to reflect on the phenomena to be examined. Therefore, Yardley's (2000) assertion of the need to ensure the suitability and validity of the sample chosen was considered by only interviewing participants who were employed as lecturers or senior lecturers in a post-92 university across a range of disciplines (education, health and business) and were willing to participate in the study as demonstrated by the completion of the Participant Consent Forms (see Appendix two). Sampling criteria linked to age, gender, location, institution, etc. were not considered in the selection of participants as the research questions and the methods of analysis did not distinguish or require a comparison of these variables.

In determining the sample size for this study, Creswell (2007) proposes a sample size of six participants for phenomenological studies, while Morse (2000) suggests sample sizes of six to ten participants as being practical and credible when completing phenomenological research studies. Therefore, the selection of a sample of 12 participants to complete this study exceeded Creswell (2007) and Morse's (2000) recommendations in order to allow for possible attrition of participants and to ensure sufficiency of data to be collected and analysed without losing the individuality required for phenomenological studies. The 12 lecturers initially approached to participate in this study matched Polkinghorne's (1989) requirement to select individuals who have all experienced the same phenomena when completing phenomenological research studies, were knowledgeable and able to openly and candidly

discuss and reflect on their teaching practice in keeping with the criteria put forward by Yardley (2000). Furthermore, Marshall et al. (2013) recommend identifying a sample size in keeping with the time and resources available to complete a study. Therefore, of the initial sample size of 12 participants, only 11 participants were interviewed and followed up via a focus group discussion as part of this study because of practical limitations. However, concerns linked to interpreting findings from surveying a small sample of 11 participants need to be acknowledged (Mason, 2018). Given the sample size and the research focus on exploring participants' metaphors, the research findings cannot be generalised or deemed to apply to a broader academic population due to the number of participants and the diversity and range of metaphors that might emerge when conveying a phenomenon. This is an issue that needs to be borne in mind regarding the conclusions made from the findings (Marshall et al., 2013) and acknowledged as a caveat and a limitation of the findings, which will be further discussed and addressed as part of the conclusions within chapter 7.

In sourcing the sample to participate in the study, colleagues and associates known to the researcher were initially approached to participate in the research, in line with the purposive sampling strategy used to determine the sampling universe and size. Further participants were located via chain-referrals, whereby existing participants were invited to identify additional colleagues and acquaintances who may welcome the opportunity to participate in the study. Considerations pertaining to ensuring participants were fully aware of the implications of being surveyed as participants in a study and the ethical boundaries governing their involvement are further detailed in section 3.4 of this chapter. Appendix three details the profile of the sample of the academics who agreed to participate in the study regarding their subject specialism, level of teaching experience within HE and those who participated in the focus group meeting. The diversity of the participants' backgrounds, and experience of teaching in HE, as shown in Appendix three, identifies how the purposive sampling approach resulted in recruiting participants who matched Smith et al.'s (2009) and Yardley's (2000) criteria for selecting participants, and Creswell (2007) and Morse (2000) suggestions for the number of participants need to complete phenomenological studies.

It is also important to acknowledge how some of the participants identified as part of the purposive sample to contribute to the study were, on occasion, work colleagues of the researcher due to initially being approached to participate in the study. McEvoy (2002) states that this issue may hinder a study due to established relationships between the researcher and colleagues. However, given the study's focus on allowing HE academics to narrate the

stories of their teaching experiences, Fielding's (1994) view that participants may respond more favourably to researchers who are like themselves reinforced the appropriateness of this decision. Furthermore, using a second interviewer, who was not previously known to the participants to interview six out of the 11 participants, helped counter the criticisms McEvoy (2002) put forward regarding interviewing participants known to the researchers. Section 3.3.2 further details the conduct and relationship between the two interviewers. The share of interviews completed by each of the two interviewers is detailed in Appendix three.

### 3.2.2 The research interviews

In considering the approach to completing the participant interviews, Whiting's (2008) four-step process of completing research interviews comprising a rapport-building phase, an exploration phase, participative/cooperative and concluding phases helped provide a broad framework. For example, in this study, a rapport-building phase informed the initial introduction to the interviews and the completion of a Participant Consent Form (see Appendix two) by establishing the scope and boundaries of the interviews and allaying participant fears. The main thrust of the interviews focused on the 'exploration' and 'participative' phases via the use of the Clean Language questions to identify participants' metaphors and explore the significance the metaphors had in conceptualising their teaching practice experiences. However, it is important to note that the 'cooperative' phase of the interview would be incongruent with the use of the Clean Language questioning model, the focus of which is on keeping conversation 'clean' by not 'dirtying' the discussions by allowing interviewers' values, beliefs and interpretations of the issues to impact on the questions asked during the interviews. Hence, it is important to stress that Whiting's (2008) four-step process only informed a framework and did not provide an agenda for completing the research interviews. Particular attention was also given to concluding the interview to ensure that participants were emotionally comfortable with the issues discussed and the interview's conduct before its end.

The 'Clean Language' questions were used to probe and explore the metaphors participants referred to in reflecting on their practice and determining the narratives underpinning their practice's conceptualisation (see section 2.4 for a more detailed discussion of the Clean Language model). Three key factors led to employing the Clean Language questions to interview and probe participants. Firstly, Bullough et al. (1992), Pajares (1992) and Mahlios et al.'s (2010) notion of how teachers hold beliefs that influence not only how they teach but also how they interpret their experiences of teaching stress the importance of exploring metaphors representative of the schemas underpinning teachers' thoughts and behaviours

(Cook-Sather, 2003). Therefore, the Clean Language questions' specific emphasis and interest in exploring metaphors was especially relevant for this study's research method and interviewing tool. Secondly, the potential offered by the Clean Language questions focuses on allowing participants to freely discuss their teaching experiences without being confined by the structures of the traditional cyclical models of reflection promoted by Kolb (1984), Gibbs (1988), etc. helped to support the use of the Clean Language questions to complete the research interviews. Furthermore, the use of the Clean Language questions, in allowing researchers to probe participants' metaphors, aided in reinforcing the use of open interviews as a key research method given the concentration and richness of data that could be collected via the use of interpretive qualitative interviews (Leedy & Ormrod, 2015).

As a questioning method, using the Clean Language questions aided the 'bracketing' process referred to within phenomenological studies by acknowledging possible inferences and contamination of the interviewer's subtle wording of questions on participants' responses (Grbich, 2012). The 'bracketing' process is considered key to creating the meaning of everyday phenomena and should be considered when interviewing participants within phenomenological studies. 'Bracketing', the process whereby a conscious attempt is made to avoid subjective interpretation of the phenomena by putting aside values and beliefs that could intrude in understanding the true nuances and structures of a phenomenon, was aided via the use of the Clean Language questions (Lawley & Tompkins, 2000; Sullivan & Rees, 2008). By aiming to minimise the impact of the interviewer's questions and interpretations, the Clean Language questions 'bracket' out the interviewer's role, which is solely to listen to participants' responses without interpreting or influencing the discussion. This allows participants to relay various metaphors according to their perception and conceptualisation of a phenomenon. It also strove to counteract Loftus' (2005) concerns regarding the overt and covert influences interviewers' questions can have on a discussion.

Two researchers completed the interviews in a bid to manage time and resources in the completion of the research interviews. The synchronicity between the two interviewers was assured via initial discussions regarding Whiting's (2008) interview framework and regular debriefings and discussion of the research interviews. Furthermore, using the Clean Language model as a questioning technique and interviewing tool required the researchers to be skilled in using the model and its focus on what is present and presented (Lawley & Tompkins, 2000; Sullivan & Rees, 2008). Both interviewers developed these skills by

completing a minimum of Modules 1 and 2 of the Clean Language certification courses, thus assuring a level of competence in using the Clean Language questions.

Regarding managing the domestic arrangements of completing the research interviews, participants were given a choice and flexibility regarding the interviews' location and timing. Video conferencing tools (e.g., Skype, Zoom) were used when necessary to complete online interviews. Using a Dictaphone helped free the interviewers from making written notes and provided a record of each interview for transcription purposes. The potential effect an audio-recorder could have on participants' contributions to the interview discussions was acknowledged, with time being taken initially to confirm participants' willingness to be audio-recorded formally with the completion of the Participant Consent Forms (see Appendix two), and again informally before the interviews.

Bryman and Bell (2015) identify the key criticisms of interpretive qualitative interviews with regards to the reliance and impact of the questions asked during the research interviews on the findings, and the impact researcher biases and interpretation may have on the conclusions drawn from the analysis of the interview transcripts. Such criticisms were in part countered by using the Clean Language questions' specific focus of asking minimal questions in order not to 'dirty' the conversations by interviewer inferences and interpretations of the participants' responses (see section 2.4 for further details on the application and use of the Clean Language questions). Researcher bias was further mitigated in the analysis of the interview transcripts whereby specific pre-defined codes consisting of Kövecses' (2010) source and target domain codes (see Appendix seven) were initially used to identify the metaphors mentioned by participants while reflecting on aspects of their teaching experiences (see section 3.3 for further details of the data analysis process employed to review the interview transcripts).

### 3.2.3 Questionnaire evaluation of the interview and Clean Language questions

To identify the extent the Clean Language questions allowed participants to explore metaphors of their teaching experiences (research question two), participants were asked to complete a short questionnaire to reflect on their experiences of completing the research interviews. The use of a questionnaire (see Appendix 11) to complete an initial analysis of participants' reflections of the research interviews stems from the questionnaire's ability to remotely collect participant views about the use of Clean Language questions within the research interview in

a time-efficient way (Brace, 2013). However, limitations exist in using such questionnaires since responses depend on a participant's interpretation of the questions asked. This was countered by completing a follow-up focus group (attended by seven participants) to elaborate and air their views on the conduct of the research interview, the use of the Clean Language questions and the metaphors identified as symbolic of their narratives of their teaching practice.

Lietz (2010) argues that consideration needs to be given to the composition of a questionnaire and the wording of questions within a questionnaire. For this study, the ease of completing the structured questionnaire was aided by using questions consisting of a mix of five-point rating scales and open-ended comment boxes, and ensuring the wording of the questions was in keeping with participants' understanding of the issues discussed (see Appendix 11). The use of online questionnaire distribution and data collection software helped produce an easy-to-complete questionnaire that allowed participants to respond via point-and-click functions.

Regarding the composition of the questionnaire, an account was taken of Lietz's (2010) assertion to ask general before specific questions to help enhance questionnaire comprehension. This comprised generic thoughts and feelings about the research interviews being probed before more detailed questions and the omission of personal classification questions (age, gender, etc.) to ensure anonymity and/or the non-completion of the questionnaire due to fear of disclosure. Issues regarding the length of the questions, wording and order have been further cited by Lietz (2010) as matters that could negatively impact the significance and relevance of the data collection via questionnaires. Lietz (2010) further stresses the need for the wording of a question within a questionnaire to be kept short and within the range of 16-20 words a question (Oppenheim, 1992). Appendix 11 shows that ten out of the 11 questions fulfilled the sentence length recommendations put forward by Oppenheim (1992), with only the final question requesting participants' further comments and recommendations about broader issues being slightly longer.

Many questionnaire participants are not likely to want to expend too much energy in completing a questionnaire. Thus, care was taken to ensure all questions were carefully worded and struck a balance between using a range of open and closed questions. Additionally, Foddy (1993), cited in Lietz (2010), coined the term 'question threat' further to emphasise how levels of complexity, poor wording, use of hypothetical questions, negatively worded questions and the need to qualify an answer as factors contributing to creating a

climate of fear that could negatively impact on the completion of the questionnaire. 'Question threats' were considered via a pilot of the questionnaire with willing colleagues who were not part of the final sample, which resulted in minor amendments being made to the wording of some questions, including the use of a five-point rating scale which allowed respondents to give a 'somewhat' answer to questions where they might feel ambivalent in response to the questions asked.

While helpful in allowing the rapid collection of quantifiable data within a condensed time frame, the use of a questionnaire poses challenges in limiting the level and depth of data that the completion of a short questionnaire could collect. Hence, to further corroborate the findings of the questionnaire, a focus group of participants was convened to probe the authenticity of the responses given and assess the use of the Clean Language questions as a research interviewing tool in more depth.

### 3.2.4 Use of focus group

The focus group, attended by seven out of the 11 participants (see Appendix three) who were available to join the meeting, was primarily guided by the research questions focused on gauging the value of metaphors in contextualising narratives of their teaching practices and evaluating the use of the Clean Language questioning model. It aimed not to infer, generalise or seek explanations, but to allow participants to expand on the questionnaire's initial findings and, in doing so, to gain a greater understanding of participants' perceptions of completing the research interviews via informal group discussions (Parker & Tritter, 2006). Participants unable to attend the focus group meeting were given opportunities to view and comment on the preliminary analysis of the findings.

A key component of fruitful focus group discussions rests on the researcher's ability to facilitate discussions amongst the participants by managing the group dynamics, ensuring all participants fair contribution and accepting all views expressed (Freeman, 2006; Xerri, 2018). Therefore, care was taken to ensure the focus group discussion remained focused, was not leading and flowed from asking general to specific questions about the emotions and thoughts attached to completing the research interviews. Given focus groups' potential to generate unexpected disclosures by participants and resulting confidentiality issues, participants were reminded of the BERA (2018) Code of Ethics (see section 3.4 for further details), and participants' consent was sought before commencing the focus group discussions.



Freeman (2006) asserts the need to carefully consider the size and selection of participants chosen to contribute to a focus group. While variations exist regarding focus groups' size – 6-12 participants (Freeman, 2006) or 3-8 participants (Gill et al., 2008) – there is consensus that a focus group needs to be populated by participants who have experienced a common phenomenon and are willing to contribute and share their experiences via group discussion (Parker & Tritter, 2006). The use of a pre-existing group, consisting of a total of 11 participants, who had initially been interviewed as part of this study, ensured the focus group comprised of participants with shared knowledge and familiarity of being interviewed as part of this study, and they were willing to reflect on and contribute the experiences within the confines of recommended group sizes for informal focus group discussions (Gill et al., 2008).

### 3.2.5 Pilot surveys

In keeping with Creswell's (2007) suggestion of the need for the research interviews to have inherent validity, two pilot interviews were completed to explore issues related to using the Clean Language questions, and the value and validity of the data collected before the actual research interviews. This consisted of two interviews with two colleagues who were happy to volunteer as respondents to determine the value of using the Clean Language questions within a research context and a pilot survey to determine the potential of exploring academics' metaphors of their teaching experiences.

The two pilot interviews with respondents lasted 30 approx. minutes on average. They were audio-recorded, transcribed by a professional transcription service company (see Appendix four – sample interview transcript) and analysed to determine the application of the Clean Language questions within the research interview context and potential adaptations that needed to be made to use the Clean Language questions before the actual research interview with participants.

Analysis of the pilot interview consisted of determining the depth and level of use of Clean Language questions and attempts to identify metaphors referred to by respondents to reflect on their teaching experiences. A debriefing further followed this analysis of the interview transcripts with respondents to determine their reflections on being interviewed as part of the pilot study.

The debrief discussions with the respondents involved discerned that, while neither of the respondents was familiar with or had previous knowledge of the Clean Language model or

questions associated with the model, it was encouraging to hear respondents state that they “*were surprised by the depth of the questions asked*” and how they felt “*able to develop the conversations and metaphors in their own way*”. Respondents further confirmed how using the Clean Language questions (see Appendix one) aided in steering the interviews towards identifying and exploring metaphors during both the pilot interviews. Hence, any initial anxieties regarding using Clean Language questions within a research context were allayed before the commencement of the complete study.

However, both the respondents reported they found the questions asked at times to be “*mechanical and repetitive*” and “*disrupt the flow of the interview*”. These statements and interviewer observations suggest how the use of the ‘Clean Language syntax’ (i.e., the mode and manner in which the Clean Language questions are asked) seemed incongruent and, at times, hindered the discussions’ flow. This issue of using the Clean Language syntax was further explored via online discussions within the LinkedIn ‘Clean Language and Symbolic Research Group’, drawing contributions from principal authors from within the Clean Language community, including James Lawley. The combination of the feedback from the pilot interviews and summary of the online discussions with the Clean Language community concluded that using the Clean Language syntax is ideally suited within a therapeutic context but does not necessarily lend itself to use within coaching or a research methodology context. Therefore, as part of the actual research interviews, the use of the Clean Language syntax was not employed within the research interviews to move the interview towards a more conversational style of interviewing and to enable the researcher to ask questions to verify the value and importance of the metaphors referred to by the participants.

In addition to the pilot interviews, to determine academics’ ability to refer to metaphors to describe and conceptualise aspects of their teaching experiences, a small-scale email survey was completed, whereby 20 academics were asked to respond to the questions:

When I’m teaching at my best, it is like [respondent response]?

On an off day, my teaching is like [respondent response]?

These questions were compiled with the research questions in mind to establish the potential relevance and significance of metaphors to convey deeper insights into academics’ conceptualisation of their teaching experiences. The survey resulted in 13 academics responding to the email request, (see Appendix five for sample responses) whereby the

answers to the questions were analysed to identify themes inherent within the metaphors used by academics to describe “When they are teaching at their best” and how they perceive their teaching to be like “on an off day”.

An analysis of the responses identified metaphors akin to being a ‘*rock star*’, ‘*actor*’, ‘*performer*’ and ‘*host of a party*’ used to describe academics’ perceptions of when they are teaching at their best and ‘*performance*’, ‘*engaged*’, ‘*connection*’, ‘*enthuse*’ and ‘*inspire*’ as a way of describing their actual teaching practice. Similarly, with regards to the question “On an off day, my teaching is like?”, ‘*walking through treacle*’, ‘*hit and miss*’ and ‘*uphill hike*’ were identified as metaphors to describe the ‘*disjointed*’, ‘*frustration*’, ‘*pulling*’ and ‘*effort all the way*’ emotions attached to aspects of their teaching practice. Hence, confirming the ease with which academics could draw on metaphors symbolic of their teaching practice’s conceptualisation.

The findings of this small-scale pilot survey were reported as part of a paper delivered at the Association of Neuro-linguistic Programming Research Conference titled *Metaphors We Teach By: An exploration into how HE lecturers reflect on and conceptualise their experiences of teaching via metaphors* (Karolia & Burton, 2012). The presentation of the paper was well attended and received, indicating a good level of interest in the paper and the research study (see Appendix six for a copy of the PowerPoint presentation slides). The range of questions asked by the delegates attending the presentation, including noted Clean Language author Wendy Sullivan (Sullivan & Rees, 2008), and delivery of subsequent poster presentation during the 2014 International Clean Language Conference (Karolia, 2014), further reinforced the significance of exploring the use of the Clean Language questions within a research context.

In summary, the two-pilot survey completed before the actual research interviews suggested that Clean Language questions could be used by researchers interviewing participants to identify and explore the metaphors that they use to describe their teaching experiences within a research context. However, the effectiveness of this process necessitated a modification of the standard Clean Language syntax more commonly used in therapy.

### 3.3 Data Analysis

Elo and Kyngäs' (2008) stages of reviewing transcripts were employed to analyse the research interviews as part of this study, given how their procedural approach to analysing qualitative data fitted the research methods adopted for the study. The stages, consisting of 'preparation' (selecting/deciding on a unit of analysis), 'organising' (open coding and analysis of categories) and 'reporting' (write-up and dissemination of findings), aided in establishing the link between the need for a comprehensive approach to select codes representative of metaphors to commence the initial content analysis of the interview transcripts. Elo and Kyngäs' (2008) stages of reviewing interview transcripts further enabled computations of data and categorisation of themes attributing meaning and informing the issues researched. This is a process Charmaz (2014) metaphorically describes as the bones of the analysis (via coding of data) and helps to assemble the working skeleton (the theme), generating an understanding of the phenomena examined. In considering the working skeleton and bones of analysis for this study, a combination of content and thematic approaches to analysing qualitative data was used to examine the transcripts of the research interviews via the use of NVivo data analysis software (Squire et al., 2014). Vaismoradi et al. (2013), in their discussion of the differences between 'content' and 'thematic' methods of analysis, describe content analysis as a "systematic coding and categorising approach used for exploring copious amounts of textual information unobtrusively to determine trends and patterns of words used, their frequency, their relationships and the structures and discourses of communication" (p. 400). In contrast, 'thematic analysis' is defined as "a method of identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 79). Hence, within the context of this study, 'content analysis' aided in facilitating the identification of metaphors uttered by academics to describe aspects of their teaching practice and 'thematic analysis' of the metaphor aiding in the analysis of the narratives representative of metaphors appearing out of the initial content analysis of the interview transcripts. However, it is important to acknowledge considerable overlap in employing 'content' and 'thematic' analysis methods.

The decision to employ a joint 'content' and 'thematic' approach to the analysis of the interview transcripts was further reinforced by the critical distinction as to whether the underpinning aim of the research was inductive or deductive. Given the research questions' focus on determining the dominant metaphors academics employ to reflect on their teaching practice, and on evaluating the use of the Clean Language questions within a research context, the use of a deductive method of analysis was employed in keeping with the existence of pre-

determined codes to aid the initial analysis of the interview transcripts (see section 3.3.2 below for further details). Where there exists a lack of knowledge of the phenomena being analysed, the use of 'inductive' approaches of analysis, whereby themes emerge from a review and examination of the data, is apt and in keeping with research questions aimed at identifying the dominant metaphors in academics' description of their teaching practice (research question one), and the relationships between academics' use of metaphors and their narratives of teaching (research question two).

The analysis of the interview transcripts to determine the trends and patterns of phrases and metaphors referred to by participants was completed with the assistance of NVivo qualitative data analysis software. NVivo was specifically employed to complete the content analysis of the interview transcripts to identify metaphors referred to by participants, and thematic analysis of the conceptual metaphors emerging from the findings, to determine and give an insight into participants' narratives of their teaching practices via the codes further discussed below in section 3.3.1.

### 3.3.1 Coding decisions

As part of Elo and Kyngäs' (2008) 'preparation' stage of analysis, consideration was given to selecting codes to analyse the interview transcripts. Coding, also referred to as 'indexing', 'categorising' or 'identifying themes' (Gibbs, 2008), within the context of qualitative research studies, helps to establish the 'critical link' between the captured data and the explanation of its meaning (Charmaz, 2006). However, care needed to be exercised in the selection of the codes as stressed by Saldaña's (2009) phrase: "if it moves, code it" (p. 13), to highlight the endless range of codes that could be referred to analyse data, thus emphasising how the identification of codes to analyse data is not an exact science given the limitless coding possibilities that exist. Furthermore, Sipe and Ghiso (2004) correctly note how "all coding is a judgement call" (p. 482), accentuating how care needs to be exercised in the choice of codes representative of the research questions; in preference to the researcher's perceptions or personal interests, which may function as a lens, and potentially filter and contaminate the interpretations and analysis of the data.

In adopting a content and thematic approach to data analysis for this study, key decisions regarding determining the codes for analysing the interview transcripts acknowledged Mason's (2018) assertion of the need to refer to theories in identifying pre-determined concept-

driven codes in preference to data-driven codes (Gibbs, 2008). More specifically, with regards to the first research question – “What are the dominant metaphors used in the way academics recall, reflect and describe their experiences of teaching?” – the codes referred to in analysing the interview transcripts consisted of Kövecses’ (2010) list of metaphor source and target domains. Kövecses’ (2010) list was referred to in the first instance as codes to analyse the interview transcripts by academics reflecting on their teaching practice. This is primarily due to most of the ‘source’ and ‘target’ variables being uttered by participants linking to Kövecses’ (2010) source and target domain list.

The definitions of codes consisting of locating the ‘source’ and ‘target’ domains are:

**Source domain:** referring to the expression of a metaphor via variables (predominantly concrete/physical, tangible concept) used to describe a concept consisting of either a word or a phrase – codes denoting possible source domains initially comprised of those identified by Kövecses (2010).

**Target domain:** refers to the inference of a metaphor, where the ‘concept’ (idea) conveyed by the source domain corresponds to the target domains.

Kövecses’ (2010) work on a comprehensive list of source and target metaphor domain categories (listed within Appendix seven) helped to provide a base starting point whereby the interview transcripts were filtered to identify metaphors and the vehicles used to communicate the metaphors (see section 2.2 for further details). Given the unlimited range of codes available to analyse interview transcripts, care was taken to consider how the decision to employ one set of codes over another represents a judgement call on the researcher’s part, impacting the findings and conclusions drawn from the analysis of the interview transcripts (Sipe & Ghiso, 2004). Therefore, additional source domain coding categories of colours, communications, faith/religion, food, good/bad, materials/equipment, person/people, place/location, senses, shapes, sizes/measures, text/stories, tools/machines and transport metaphors were coded as part of the analysis of interview transcripts. The identification and addition of these coding categories demonstrate the breadth and depth of metaphors referred to by participants to convey experiences and limitations of the list of source domains originally proposed by Kövecses (2010). The range of 13 target domain categories initially identified by Kövecses (2010) proved restrictive in their application in not acknowledging the varied levels of interaction and engagement between experiences and the metaphors used to convey the experiences, thus not allowing sufficient identification of the patterns and themes from the

findings. Consequently, possible additional codes to supplement Kövecses' (2010) list of target domains was explored by reference to Lakoff et al.'s (1991) Master Metaphor List and NLP logical levels of learning (O'Connor & Seymour, 1994; 2002). These lists were referred to as a basis of the mapping process between the source and target domains given the limited range of target domains originally identified by Kövecses (2010). A decision was made to broadly refer to the NLP levels of learning (O'Connor & Seymour, 1994; 2002) as additional coding categories in preference to Lakoff et al.'s (1991) Master Metaphor List, which only groups conceptual metaphors within categories consisting of events, structures, mental events and emotions. The NLP logical levels of learning consist of analysing individuals' experiences via additional categories consisting of:

1. Identity
2. Values and beliefs
3. Capability
4. Behaviour

In addition to the mapping of source to target domains offered by NLP logical levels of learning, the decision to refer to them was further reinforced by the simplistic, holistic and identifiable categories of the levels to understand the various interacting elements of experiences, and referred to as thematic codes to allow for more thorough mapping of source to target domains. A further 'emotions' category was added to the list of target domains by identifying how some metaphors expressed by the participants referred to feelings and emotions associated with an experience, thus adding another layer of coding of the interview transcripts to gain deeper insights into the links between the metaphors' source and target domains. Once the conceptual metaphors were identified via the analysis of the interview transcription following Kövecses' (2010) source and target domains, the final stage of analysis consisted of determining the narratives representative of participants' teaching practice.

As with other methods of inquiry, narrative approaches to research need to be fit for purpose and justified as an appropriate methodology and method to investigate phenomena via a consistent and uniformed approach to analysis (Riessman, 1993; Czarniawaska, 2004; Bold, 2012). Bold (2012) suggests these elements should be uppermost in a researcher's mind before starting research to ensure that narrative analysis gives an authentic and genuine account of the lived experience permeating across the stories internalised by participants (Squire et al., 2014). A range of possibilities exists to identify the narratives permeating

through stories. For example, narratives could be analysed to identify how individuals think and feel (Bruner, 1984, cited in Moen, 2006); the way narratives are shaped and co-constructed for and by different audiences (Georgakopoulou, 2007); or how narratives are situated within the sphere of performance, context or social identities of meaning (Riessman, 2008; Salmon & Riessman, 2013). As discussed within section 2.3, McAdams and McLean's (2013) Narratives Identity theory was adopted as the primary theoretical lens to analyse the data to determine academics' narratives of their teaching practice against the seven Narrative Constructs helping to establish a coding strategy for the interview transcripts as listed in Appendix eight.

In a bid to gain further and deeper insights and analyse the narratives symbolic of conceptual metaphors expressed by participants as part of this study, and, as discussed within section 2.3 of the literature review, in addition to McAdams and McLean's (2013) Narrative Constructs, the premise underpinning conceptual metaphors was analysed via reference to Tompkins and Lawley's (2006) PRO model and Schwartz's (2012) theory of Universal Values as codes to determine the primary values and beliefs supporting the metaphor. See section 2.3 for further details of the variables attached to Tompkins and Lawley's (2006) PRO model, McAdams and McLean's (2013) Narrative Constructs and Schwartz's (2012) theory of Universal Values used as coding categories and also listed in Appendix eight. The use of the above theories of analysing and interpreting narratives would be congruent with Riessman's (2008) notion of the need for research into narratives to give an insight into the stories people tell of their experiences, or, within the context of this study, academics tell of their teaching practice, as opposed to the linguistic analysis of a story, aspects of personal identity or agents for social change. Furthermore, this study takes on-board Andrews et al.'s (2013) suggestion to move away from the tendency to identify cause and effect patterns in the analysis of narrative by referring to the range of theoretical lenses discussed above to determine academics' use of conceptual metaphors within the stories of their teaching practice.

Regarding the third research question to identify "To what extent do the Clean Language questions allow participants to reflect on the metaphors representative of their teaching experiences?", Sullivan and Rees' (2008) list of Clean Language questions (see Appendix one) was used as codes to identify the interviewer's 'Clean' questions within the interview transcripts. The use of the core Clean Language questions referred to by Sullivan and Rees (2008) was used to complete the interviews and code the interview transcript given how questions listed by Sullivan and Rees (2008) were most commonly recognised as 'Clean'



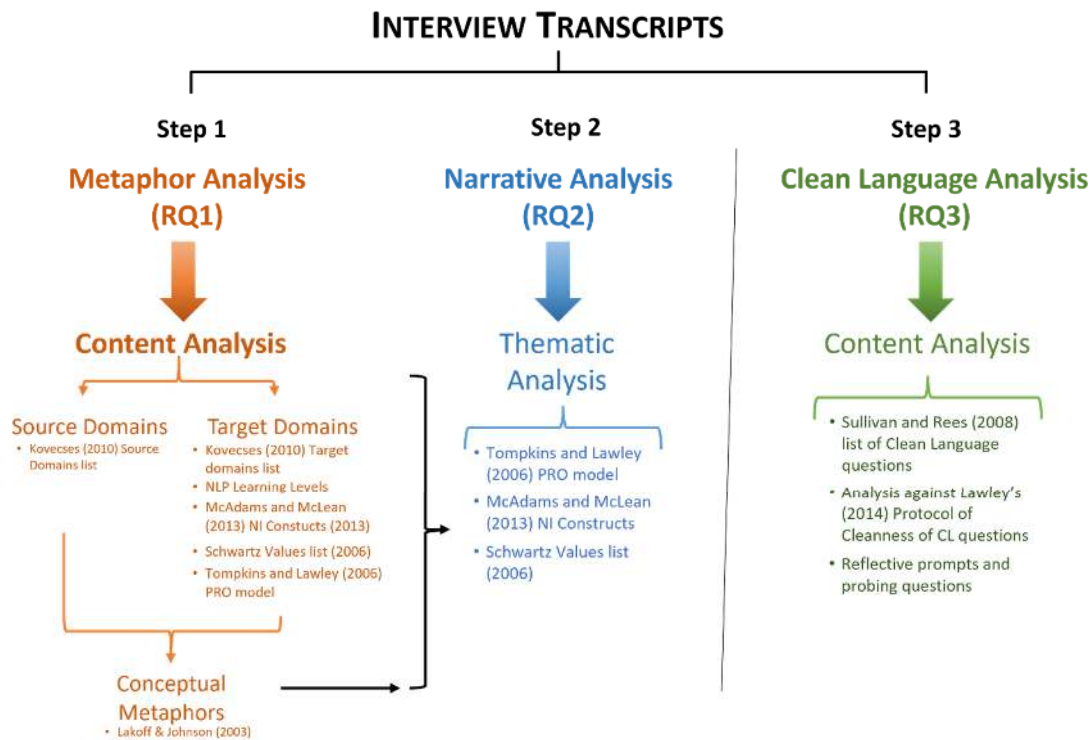
questions within the Clean Language community. Furthermore, Lawley's (2014) *Protocol for Validating 'Cleanness' of an Interview* was applied to the research interviews' Clean Language questions as previously discussed within section 2.4.

The decision to use Lawley's (2014) criteria came from recognising how the criteria allowed for evaluating the Clean Language model in different contexts and away from the pure form of Clean Language used within a therapeutic setting. The use of these criteria also helped to keep some uniformity in the evaluation of the Clean Language questions and further add to the growing number of empirical research studies into the use of the Clean Language questions against measures referred to in other similar studies, albeit within different contexts (see section 2.4 for further details of the Clean Language model and questions).

The preliminary analysis of the initial interviews identified the use of additional questions asked by the interviewer not matching the protocol definitions supplied by Lawley (2014), but deemed significant in contributing to the interview in allowing participants to discuss and explore their experiences more comprehensively. Therefore, a coding category named 'Reflective response' was added and evaluated as part of the interview analysis by identifying summary and paraphrasing responses by interviewers. Furthermore, on occasion, the interviewer asked questions for clarification to prompt and further explore a response in more depth. Therefore, the addition of code to identify a 'Probing question' aided in more comprehensively evaluating and measuring the complete set of questions asked by the interviewer.

The process of completing the coding analysis of interview transcripts is summarised in figure 2 below and discussed in more depth in the following paragraphs.

Figure 2 – Interview Transcripts Coding Process Summary



Within this study, the key consideration in analysing the interview transcripts was the need to isolate the metaphors symbolic of participants' narratives and the first step completed as part of the interview transcripts' process. The metaphors referred to by academics in reflecting on aspects of their teaching practice form the bedrock of this study and align with Mahlios et al.'s (2010) suggestion of the need to research metaphors representative of teachers' values, beliefs and prior experiences in order to identify how academics conceptualise their experiences of their teaching practice. The focus on discerning the dominant metaphors within the interview transcripts further aided in determining the 'appreciative systems' referred to by Schön (1987) to describe how teachers frame their experiences and Moen's (2006) assertion of how stories provide a lens, which could be explored, and function as a narrative frame influencing the way individuals think and behave (Squire et al., 2014). The metaphors within the interview transcripts were coded, via the use of Nvivo software, against a content analysis of Kövecses' (2010) list of metaphor sources and target domains. Incorporating the additional source and target domains in the analysis of the interview transcripts further aided the

identification of conceptual metaphors (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003) expressed by the participants (see sections 2.2 and 2.5.3 for further details).

The next stage in the analysis of the metaphors consisted of a thematic analysis of the metaphors to determine the key conceptual metaphors emerging from metaphors referred to by participants within the interview transcript. The thematic analysis to identify the conceptual metaphors consisted of searching for patterns and categories appearing out of the initial content-coding analysis of the interview transcripts. Patterns – the search for repetitive, regular or consistent occurrences of action/data that appear “more than twice” (Saldaña, 2013, p. 5) – were viewed via a lens linked to the work of Lakoff and Johnson (1980; 2003) to determine the conceptual metaphors emerging out of the dominant metaphors expressed by participants in reflecting on aspects of their teaching practice.

To solidify and explore the narratives representative of participants' use of conceptual metaphors, as part of the second research question, the next step in the analysis process consisted of a deeper thematic analysis of conceptual metaphors. This further level of thematic analysis involved scrutiny of the conceptual metaphors against Tompkins and Lawley's (2006) PRO model, McAdams and McLean's (2013) Narrative Constructs and Schwartz's (2012) theory of Universal Values (see sections 2.3 and 2.5.3 for further details).

Finally, the third step of the analysis process comprised an analysis of the questions asked by the researchers to determine the depth and level of the use of the Clean Language questions within research interviews (research question three). This process of evaluating the use of the Clean Language questions consisted of coding every question asked by the research interviewers against Sullivan and Rees (2008) list of Clean Language questions. Questions not considered as a Clean Language question were coded and categorised as either reflective prompts or probing questions (see Appendix one and nine). To benchmark the depth, each Clean Language question asked by the interviewers was 'clean', analysis and evaluation of the Clean Language questions used during the interviews were coded against Lawley's (2014) Protocol for Evaluating the 'Cleanness' of an Interview. The listed metaphor and Clean Language coding categories (see Appendix four and five) helped complete the initial content analysis of the interview transcripts and were followed by thematic analysis of the codes to determine the narratives representative of academics' teaching practice. These are reported within the findings and conclusion chapter of the thesis, and examples of the interview transcripts' coding by both the researchers can be found in Appendix 10.

However, the conduct of the research identified limitations in the use of the original codes selected to analyse the interview transcripts, not giving a thorough enough insight into the broader narratives needed to address the research questions. Therefore, using the NLP logical levels of learning helped provide a broad framework against which a range of codes was used to analyse the interview transcripts to give deeper insights into research questions. More specifically, against the NLP learning levels, the research interviews were additionally coded via the theoretical framework listed below:

1. Capability and behaviour – Lawley and Tompkins' (2006) PRO framework categories
2. Narrative Constructs – McAdams' (2013; 2016) Narrative Identity theory
3. Values and beliefs – Schwartz's (2012) Universal Values list

The use of the above codes allowed for a more defined and precise analysis of the data and identifying participants' narrative voices (Squire et al., 2014) and reported in keeping with the research questions in the chapters that follow.

### 3.3.2 Research validity

Sparkes (1992) notes that a proposition is true if it consistently corresponds with other propositions and reinforces findings from research completed via interpretive approaches. However, addressing the concerns associated with phenomenological research studies necessitates consideration of the validity of the research against the diversity existing in determining the criteria associated with measuring research validity for qualitative studies. To ensure the findings of research studies are meaningful, accurate and credible, Leedy and Ormrod (2015) stress the need to consider the validity of the chosen research methods. With regards to this study, phenomenological research focuses on analysing text sourced from interviews with participants. As such, the truth underpinning reflected account of stories cannot be determined or generalised via definitions linked to validity, reliability and replications referred to within positivist approaches to research. As an alternative, Moreno (2002) asserts the need to develop a deeper understanding of the storied evidence, not to identify what happened, but to determine the narrative attached to a phenomenon experienced, as interpreted by participants. Hence, and as acknowledged by the study, it is impossible to make generalisations or broader inferences from the findings and conclusions drawn from the research, other than implying how the findings may inform relevant discussions.

Reflections and stories of personal experiences do not happen in isolation but in proximity to the context and audience expectations. They are further influenced by how stories are generalised and deleted due to limits of memory, and distorted via levels of creativity and the language used to convey the story. Furthermore, by extension, narratives are construed as being 'fiction' (Moen, 2006) in how they are recalled and narrated, and compounded by inferences and censored self-disclosure by the narrator who may only present aspects of themselves and their story deemed to be in keeping with the audience's expectations. Hence, concepts linked to validity, reliability and replications of research within narrative studies may appear problematic in relation to the standard definition of these terms within research studies. In countering these inferences, Bold (2012) asserts that within narrative research, reliability can be found in exploring how the data represents and re-creates the phenomena experienced by persons, which was borne in mind to stress the validity of the stories told by participants of their teaching experiences.

McDonald et al. (2019), in their discussions of the need to consider inter-rater reliability within qualitative studies cite how reviewing and confirming observations and findings with participants and others involved in the research process, can assist in determining inter-rater reliability of a research project. Therefore, within this study, the use of two researchers assisted in determining the relevance and significance of the research interviews via regular meetings between the two researchers to reflect on their experiences of completing interviews, the use of the Clean Language questions within the interview, initial observations of findings emerging from the interviews, and the metaphors referred to by participants within the research interviews. This process of regularly conferring and reflecting on experiences of completing the research interviews helped ensure a consistent uniformed approach to completing the research interviews. Furthermore, McDonald et al.'s (2019) recommendation to confirm the findings with participants to raise the inter-rater reliability of the qualitative research project was implemented by sharing initial findings of the analysis of the interview transcripts with participants individually and further corroborated via the focus group discussions.

The subjectivity involved in the interpretation of narrative data has further been cited by Gudmundsdottir (2001) and Moen (2006) as issues linked to the analysis of narrative, which illustrates the need for narrative researchers to reflect on, acknowledge and validate the claims made, and the instability of the truths established via the analysis of interview transcripts. Specifically, regarding the impact of personal biases and judgement on interpretation and

focus of texts by researchers in accurately mirroring the substance and essence of the meaning attached to a phenomenon by participants. Initially, these threats to validity were addressed by reviewing the conclusions drawn from the analysis of the data via a focus group discussion (as discussed within chapters 4-6) with participants following the analysis of the interview transcripts as suggested by Polkinghorne (2007) and Moreno (2002). It is further acknowledged how the process of coding interview transcripts is subjective regarding linking source data (participant utterances within interview transcripts) to the coding analysis of the data. Therefore, it is important to recognise the limits associated with generalising to broader contexts the claims made from analysing the data and these caveats are further acknowledged within the thesis.

### **3.4 Ethics**

Ethics in research, as in most aspects of life, pertain to doing good and avoiding harm, and within the world of research aim to balance the competing demands of studying a phenomenon against protecting the safety, privacy and rights of participants (Orb et al., 2001).

The BERA Code of Ethics (2018) was reviewed to ensure all stages of the research process and participants' safety, rights and privacy were considered before and during the completion of the study. The BERA (2018) guidelines require that "educational research should be conducted within an ethic" (p. 5) of safety for participants contributing to the survey by ensuring they know their rights and responsibilities. Hence, voluntary informed consent, referring to a willing agreement to participate in a survey, was assured by the completion of a Participant Consent Form (see Appendix two) in keeping with the BERA (2018) guidelines regarding minimising harm, avoiding undue intrusion, obtaining informed consent, and showing courtesy and respect to the research participants' willingness to contribute to the study. Furthermore, the Participant Consent Form also informed participants of how they have a choice in agreeing to be involved in the study, including having the right to withdraw at any stage of the research process given the sensitivity of the personal 'stories' participants may recount and reflect on during the research interviews.

BERA (2018) guidelines regarding privacy and data storage were also adhered to in order to ensure participants' rights to confidentiality and anonymity. All data linked with completing the research and analysis of data ensured participants were only identified via pseudonyms with

typed records and referred to directly or indirectly at any stage of the research process. Further care was taken to ensure the secure storage of data aligned with BERA (2018) guidelines via the use of password-protected access to all USB and hard drives used to store confidential participant data.

Each of the above considerations was conveyed to the participants via Mertens' (2020) recommendation to brief research participants before a survey, especially as the study sets out to explore the participants' thoughts and emotions attached to their reflections of their teaching practice, and analyse and report them in the public domain (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2005). The briefing consisted of talking participants through the Participant Consent Form and detailing how their rights and privacy will be maintained before confirming their agreement to participate in the study by signing the form.

The BERA (2018) recommendations to afford participant anonymity and privacy were maintained via the use of aliases in reporting the findings and giving participants open access to the audio-recording and transcription of the interviews they were able to request their withdrawal at any stage of the research process.

## **Chapter Summary**

In keeping with this study's focus on exploring metaphors to identify the dominant narratives representative of academics' teaching practice, relativist ontology and interpretive epistemology paradigms underpin this study's research methodology and methods. By adopting a relativist ontology and interpretive epistemology, this study adopted an inductive methodology and phenomenological research approach in keeping with research questions intended to explore how the metaphors referred to by HE academics, when they reflect on their experiences, inform their narratives of teaching. The use of the phenomenological research approaches and, more specifically, the combined classical and hermeneutical phenomenological approaches, were employed as being the most appropriate in the context of the study's research questions, which focus on identifying the metaphors uttered by academics to determine 'what' and 'how' academics 'experienced' their teaching practice (Moustakas, 1994), with the researcher 'bracketing' themselves out of the study via the Clean Language model's avoidance of 'dirtying' conversations via inferences of interviewer judgements and assumptions.

In keeping with the use of phenomenological research methodology, the research methods used within this study consisted of ideographic qualitative research methods, namely interviews and subsequent distribution of a questionnaire and focus group discussion aligning with the research questions as listed below:

1. **What are the dominant metaphors used in the way academics recall, reflect and describe their experiences of teaching?** – data was captured via the use of open interviews and analysis of interview transcripts
2. **To what extent do the Clean Language questions allow participants to reflect on the metaphors representative of their teaching experiences?** – evaluated via the distribution of a questionnaire after completing research interviews and focus group discussion with participants
3. **What are the relationships between academics' use of metaphors and their narratives of teaching?** – determined by analysis of findings and further corroborated via focus group discussions

More specifically, a sample of 12 participants was chosen for the survey, although only 11 eventually participated, in keeping with Robinson's (2014) suggestions to consider sampling universe, size, source and strategies for choosing participants.

The research methods consisted of open interviews to complete the study, aligning with the phenomenological research methodology, the research questions and the use of the Clean Language questions. A broad-based approach to structure and domestic arrangements of the interview was considered by following Whiting's (2008) approach to completing the research interviews. The third research question aimed at evaluating the use of the Clean Language questions and examining the conceptual metaphors emergent from the interview findings were addressed via a post-interview questionnaire and focus group discussions. Each method links to the appropriate research question. Analysis of the interview transcripts was completed by a mix of content and thematic methods of analysis: content analysis to identify the conceptual metaphors referred to within the research interviews and level of Clean Language questions asked by the interview; and thematic analysis to determine the narratives inherent within the conceptual metaphors identified.

The content analysis of the interviews to identify the conceptual metaphors was completed by the analysis of participants' metaphors against Kövecses' (2010) list of source and target



domains. Content analysis of the Clean Language questions asked was compared to Sullivan and Rees' (2008) list of Clean Language questions and Lawley's (2014) *Protocol for Validating 'Cleanness' of an Interview*. Lastly, the narratives representative of academics' metaphors of the teaching practice were determined by reference to McAdams and McLean's (2013) theory of narrative identities in the first instance.

At all stages of the research process, ethical issues were borne in mind by adhering to the BERA (2018) Code of Ethics guidelines to avoid harm, undue intrusion, safety and anonymity of participants, and completing of the necessary Participant Consent Form to ensure voluntary participation was agreed to in partaking in the study.

## Chapter 4 – Analysis of Findings into Participants’ Use of Metaphors to Reflect on Teaching Practice

The findings into the dominant metaphors emerging from the analysis of interview transcripts are reported in this chapter. These findings primarily stem from:

*“Collecting examples of linguistic metaphors used to talk about the topic...generalising from them to the conceptual metaphors they exemplify and using the result to suggest understandings or thought patterns which construct or constrain people’s beliefs or actions”  
(Cameron & Low, 1999, p. 88).*

The above quotation illustrates the process followed in analysing the interview transcripts in keeping with the three research questions to identify the dominant metaphors used in the way HE lecturers recall, reflect on and describe their teaching experiences. The insights gained from this analysis are detailed below, and the account commences with reporting on the metaphors referred to by participants (i.e., the source domains) and the messages the metaphors intend to convey (i.e., target domains), the identification of the primary conceptual metaphors emerging from the analysis, and the relevance and significance of these conceptual metaphors in informing the study.

The chapter commences by noting the observations made from the content and thematic analysis of the metaphors (section 4.1) and continues by recounting the analysis of identifying the leading ‘source’ and ‘target’ domains coded from the interview transcripts (sections 4.2 and 4.3). Finally, section 4.4 comprises a discussion of the implications of the dominant conceptual metaphors expressed by participants.

A deeper thematic analysis of the relationship between academics’ use of metaphors and their teaching narratives in relation to the second research question is discussed in chapter 5.

### 4.1 General Observations Emerging from the Analysis of Findings

An initial observation from the review of the interview transcripts identified the use of metaphors over similes in the way participants reflected on aspects of their teaching practice. Saban’s (2006) distinction of how similes compare one thing to another in contrast to Lakoff & Johnson’s (2003) definition of metaphors as describing “one thing in terms of another” (p. 5) was evident within the coding of the interview transcripts, specifically via phrases conveying

significance, correlations, parallels, similarities and likeness in the metaphors referred to by participants reflecting on their teaching practice. Some participants within the focus group explained how the use of metaphors over similes during the interviews was representative of the greater level of thinking and reflection into aspects of their teaching practice stemming from the extensive encouragement within teacher training courses to become 'reflective practitioners' (Schön, 1983). This was a phenomenon in which participants appeared to be well-versed and familiar with the need to reflect in order to enhance practice within education.

Probing the use of metaphors during the focus group discussions, some surprise was expressed by participants at their level of the use of metaphors via comments:

*"didn't appreciate how often we talk in metaphors" [Participant 2]*

*"I would need to read through the interview transcript again carefully, but my general impression was the issues discussed and metaphors explored were significant" [Participant 3]*

These comments and subsequent focus group discussion mirror Geary's (2011) claim to the popularity of metaphors to convey phenomena and stories, though not to the extent of Geary's (2011) further claim of how individuals could utter up to six metaphors a minute. This is primarily due to the uncertainty of the context in which the claim is made, since Geary's study likely referred to everyday conversations, in contrast to research interviews and the use of Clean Language questions as a research method. However, participants within the focus group concurred with Tosey et al.'s (2013) review of the 'six metaphors a minute' claim by suggesting it depends on circumstances, since individuals are likely to resort to the use of metaphors to convey concepts that they are unable to express in other ways (Barry et al., 2009).

## **4.2 Analysis of Source Domains**

This section commences with an account of the analysis of the metaphors referred to by participants in relation to the list of Kövecses' (2010) source domains against which the interview transcripts were mapped and analysed. The discussion into the relevance and significance of the primary conceptual metaphors emerging from this analysis of source domains is further debated within section 4.4.

A total of 818 source domains were coded from the research interviews across 29 categories, primarily drawing on Kövecses' (2010) list of source domains and supplemented by some additional source domains not covered by Kövecses' (2010) original list shown within Appendix seven.

The analysis of the source domains (via NVivo qualitative analysis software) used to express a metaphor, interestingly identified a significant pattern whereby metaphors consisting of four dominant source domains were continuously referred to by participants while reflecting on aspects of their teaching practice. Source domains allied to metaphors referring to 'movement and directions', 'place and locations', 'senses' and 'nature and environment' (in order of popularity) together consisted of 52.2% of all source domains coded, with the remaining 25 categories combining to represent only 47.8% of source domains coded (see Appendix 12 for further details). Therefore, these findings show how, despite the extensive range of metaphorical source domains available to participants to reflect on their practice, a narrow bank of source domains was continually and consistently referred to by the participants interviewed. This suggests a pattern whereby participants continually conceptualised their teaching within the realms of orientational and geographical metaphors of movement, locations and self-awareness of their actions. Lakoff & Johnson's (2003) notion of conceptual metaphors, whereby an abstraction is represented via a concrete concept, was evident in matching source and target domains within the interview transcripts. However, the conceptions of container, entity and substance metaphors, referred to by Lakoff & Johnson (2003) as categories of metaphors, were not readily identifiable within mapping the source and target domains of the metaphors used in this study. This reinforced the use of Kövecses' (2010) broad range of source domains categories as relevant coding classifications since they extended beyond the container, entity and substance source domains, and proved more appropriate in coding the interview transcripts by identifying and specifying the metaphors referred to by participants within the research interviews.

A more thorough examination of the four popular metaphors referred to by participants identified source domains implying 'movement and directions' ranked highly, with 19.19% of all source domains quoted being associated with metaphors indicating movement.

Examples included:

*"I'm compelled to keep going up the mountain" [Participant 1]*

*"That is really what's driving me to reflect" [Participant 2]*

*"You just run with what you have used" [Participant 3]*

*"I just keep it spinning, and it may not be going in the right direction, but I keep it spinning" [Participant 3]*

Closely linked to the widespread use of 'movement and directions' source domains to express a metaphor were domains representative of 'place and locations' (15.53% of all metaphors quoted). Further investigation of the 'place and locations' source domains identified a distinct lack of specific or known locations in preference for abstract non-representational places or locations within the metaphors referred to by participants, for example:

*"There are little places all the way along the path" [Participant 1]*

*"I'm stuck in a rut" [Participant 2]*

*"I don't actually think that I will get to that point" [Participant 3]*

*"I've never quite got there" [Participant 6]*

Allied to the use of 'movement and directions' and 'place and locations' metaphors were source domains representative of 'senses' (10.15% of all source domains coded) and 'nature and environment' (7.33% of all source domains); examples of which are listed in table 2 below:

Table 2 - Examples of Coded Sense and Nature/Environment Domains

<b>'Senses' source domains</b>	<b>'Nature and Environment' source domains</b>
<i>"When I'm in a rut, I can't see and can only see in a straight line" [Participant 2]</i>	<i>"At the moment, it's quite rocky" [Participant 1]</i>
<i>"I did have a vision of sliding down the mountain" [Participant 1]</i>	<i>"Survey the whole landscape" [Participant 2]</i>
<i>"I recognise the piece of music" [Participant 8]</i>	<i>"there's like this big mountain in front of me" [Participant 1]</i>
<i>"Thinks they're out of tune, in other words, does anybody want some clarification" [Participant 8]</i>	<i>"Well, I suppose still waters throughout" [Participant 10]</i>
<i>"Feel my way at the moment" [Participant 1]</i>	<i>"you're calm you think clearly, there's no fog" [Participant 10]</i>
<i>"I think it's that sense of knowing that I'm getting confidence" [Participant 9]</i>	<i>"Like a ray of sunshine really" [Participant 9]</i>

In probing the relationships between 'movement and directions' and 'place and locations' metaphors with participants within the focus group, they unanimously identified and agreed on a clear link whereby 'place and locations' source domains were symbolic in representing the presence of outcomes, either in the form of personal aims or formal curriculum objectives. These phenomena were further expanded by discussions within the focus group whereby participants correlated how 'movement and directions' source domains and metaphors symbolised how they constantly strived towards enabling their students to meet set learning objectives and, to a lesser extent, their personal goals.

Secondary to the use of 'movement and directions' and 'place and locations', source domains linked to 'senses' and 'nature and environment', upon further analysis, were summarised as being linked to personal observations or actions, instead of other external factors, and in doing so demonstrate a degree of awareness of how locus of control extends only to themselves with regards to the decisions and actions they take within the classroom while teaching. Sharing this observation with participants within the focus group discussions revealed insights into the level of self-awareness and criticality that participants employed when reflecting on aspects of their work within the classroom while teaching. All the participants within the focus group concurred on how they continually aimed to improve their teaching practice and further linked this to the notion of reflective practice and being a reflective practitioner (Schön, 1983). On probing how participants specifically acted out the role of being a reflective practitioner, the focus group discussions revealed a myriad of strategies primarily linked to cyclical models of reflections espoused by Kolb (1984) and Gibbs (1988). They stressed how these models were used as a broad framework to reflect on practice as opposed to strictly adhered to and followed. Probing the use of the reflective models by Kolb (1984) and Gibbs (1988) by participants further determined how participants concurred with the limitations of these models, discussed within section 2.1, and thus identify with the interest in exploring metaphors and the Clean Language questions, as an alternative approach to reflection proposed by this study.

### **4.3 Findings Target Domains**

To determine and identify the messages being conveyed by a metaphor, the mapping and coding of the source to target domains consisted of matching the metaphors broadly to the NLP logical levels of learning (O'Connor & Seymour, 1994; 2002) consisting of environment,

behaviour, capabilities, values, beliefs, emotions and identity to help establish a starting point towards determining the concepts being conveyed by a metaphor (see section 3.3.1 for further details). The Clean Language PRO frames by Tompkins and Lawley (2006) were further used to determine the participants' perceptions of the frame surrounding metaphors (see sections 2.3 for further details).

A total of 674 target domains were coded within NVivo across the NLP learning levels, the analysis of which identified a trend whereby metaphors referred to by participants during the research interviews were predominantly linked to abstract concepts of 'behaviour', 'emotions' and 'environment', as represented by 71.16% of all coded target domains (see Appendix 13 ). Examples of the use of 'behaviour', 'emotions' and 'environment' target domains referred to by participants are shown in table 3 below:

Table 3 - Examples of Coded Behaviour, Emotions and Environment Target Domains

<b>Behaviour</b>	<b>Emotions</b>	<b>Environment</b>
<i>"I was too accommodating" [Participant 1]</i>	<i>"Feel just a little bit jaded" [Participant 2]</i>	<i>"I'm in an okay place" [Participant 1]</i>
<i>"I've got to get up there to get to it" [Participant 1]</i>	<i>"but I find it mentally draining" [Participant 2]</i>	<i>"It's quite barren, and there's very little vegetation around" [Participant 1]</i>
<i>"Being sharp enough to pick everything up" [Participant 4]</i>	<i>"In a bit of a bouncy mood" [Participant 6]</i>	<i>"Feel I've kind of plateaued a bit here" [Participant 2]</i>
<i>"I'm trying to perform rather than being myself" [Participant 10]</i>	<i>"that put me on edge slightly" [Participant 10]</i>	<i>"that isn't a good place to be" [Participant 2]</i>
<i>"I don't think I ever really got off the starting blocks" [Participant 2]</i>	<i>"I'm feeling a real buzz" [Participant 6]</i>	<i>"room is like a little sanctuary where they can be themselves" [Participant 10]</i>
<i>"That is really what's driving me to reflect" [Participant 2]</i>	<i>"Well that it feels a bit flat perhaps" [Participant 5]</i>	<i>"They might be there somewhere in the background" [Participant 9]</i>

The analysis of the target domains was compared against Tompkins and Lawley's (2006) PRO frames to determine the broader narratives expressed by a metaphor and to balance the way 'problems' and 'remedy' target domains were predominately represented within the metaphors voiced by participants over 'outcome' domains. More specifically, from an analysis of 251 source domains, which were coded against the PRO categories, the dominant use of problem

(40.64%) and remedy (41.04%) target domains overshadowed the use of outcome (18.33%) frames expressed within the metaphors referred to by interview participants.

These findings suggested and were further corroborated by the focus group discussions of participants expressing the importance of achieving their personal aims and formal curriculum learning objectives, as signified by the 'outcome' (PRO frame) when considering their teaching holistically, but within the classroom focus on 'remediating' situations and challenges when working with students.

Furthermore, focus group participants also linked the level of critical self-reflection into their practice to the concept of reflective practice and linked this to how their PGCE or similar studies placed a strong emphasis on reflection and being a reflective practitioner (Schön, 1983), though not wholly in keeping with the framework of models espoused by Kolb (1984) or Gibbs (1988).

#### **4.4 Discussion Points Emerging from the Analysis of Findings**

The act of mapping source domains to target domains was aided by focusing on interpreting the generalisations and inferences of the conceptual metaphors identified via an analysis of the interview transcripts. Battino's (2005) suggestion of the need to identify "patterns that connect" was borne in mind to give an insight into the conscious and subconscious conceptual structures through which experiences are reflected and could be understood in the analysis of metaphors and the mapping of the source to the target domain (Botha, 2009). Reddy's (1979) influential work on 'conduit metaphors', mentioned by Lakoff and Johnson (2003), explored the notion of ideas being referred to as 'objects', linguistic terms as 'containers' and communication between these being a 'conduit' to the sender to digest and interpret, also aided in stressing the congruence necessary between the mapping of the source and target domains, and the intended message embedded within a metaphor. Within this study, Kövecses' (2010) source and target domains were employed as initial codes to analyse the metaphors and helped to simplify and identify the conduit of the metaphors expressed and the choice of containers referred to by participants interviewed in expressing a metaphor. Therefore, in the analysis of metaphors, either via discussions or qualitative research study, the importance of having a starting point in mapping and determining inferences of metaphors aids both the process of reflective practice and understanding of how experiences are



perceived and conceptualised. Within this study, the value of Kövecses' (2010) source and target domains, and supplementary coding variables added, was evident in enabling the fluent mapping analysis of metaphors referred to by participants, with the coding strategies adopted corresponding to the 'invariance principle', which Gibbs (2017) refers to in describing the importance of preserving consistency of mapping of source to target domains in identifying and analysing conceptual metaphors.

However, Kövecses (2010) identifies and cautions how the mapping and pairing of source domains to target domains could be problematic given the vast range of ideas and concepts (i.e., target domains and source domains), and the potential to identify arbitrary, as opposed to precise, conceptual metaphors when linking source to target domains. Issues evident in the analysis of metaphors within the interview transcripts were evident, and, therefore, an open-ended and broad approach to referring to a broad range of source domains was used to avoid a restrictive and arbitrary approach to the analysis of metaphors with additional source domains (see section 4.2 for further details). This was included as part of the analysis when the range of source domains identified by Kövecses (2010) was limited in its breadth. Furthermore, mapping source domains to target domains, due to the subjectivity involved, required rigour in the analysis of the metaphors to avoid the finding 'casting shadows' on the conclusions formed and potentially presenting a flawed, distorted or obscure understanding of the conceptual metaphors identified (Cook-Sather, 2003). Establishing rigour in the analysis was also managed by adopting narrow lists of target domains (as identified in section 4.3), allowing for a more precise mapping of source to target domains and identifying conceptual metaphors. For example, Participant 2's utterance "*I don't think I ever really got off the starting blocks*" could be matched to 'movement', 'location' or 'travel' source domains and further complicated by potentially being linked to 'behaviour', 'thoughts' or 'feelings' target domains. Given the potential subjectivity involved in the identification and interpretation of metaphors uttered by participants, Schmitt (2005) argues that a process of analysing metaphors should give some consideration to the triangulation of findings. This process, Armstrong et al. (2011) stress, can be established by allowing participants to review and input into the analysis of the findings at varying stages of the research process. This was achieved by allowing participants to review and reflect on the interview transcripts, both individually and collectively within a focus group, and to comment on the pattern themes emerging from the analysis of the interview transcripts. Thus, the significance of verifying the inferences drawn from the source and target domains is important in accurately determining the intentions and meaning of the conceptual metaphors with participants.

Finally, the mapping of source and target domains was further aided by the researchers' professional and vocational understanding, and experiences of teaching within a range of HE settings. The analysis of the interview transcripts was also undertaken by a researcher, who, as an experienced academic, was able to interpret and map the metaphors being conveyed by the participants by being culturally and socially embedded in the world of academia and able to contextualise the message behind the source and target domains of the metaphors expressed (Schmitt, 2005).

As reported in section 4.2, a closer examination of the metaphors analysed within the interview transcripts revealed a pattern in the prevalent use of metaphors expressing movement and locations, for example:

*"It feels like there's a flow to what I'm doing" [Participant 7]*

*"Your mind is darting around from point to point" [Participant 10]*

However, it is important to note that the common understanding of a metaphor within everyday language differed within a teaching context and hence needed to be considered in keeping with the context of the discussion. For example, a participant's metaphor *"that it feels like there's a flow to what I'm doing" [Participant 7]*, within the broader discussion of the research interview, referred to a measure of satisfaction in working with students while teaching. Similarly, *"your mind is darting around from point to point" [Participant 10]* related to aspects of the participant's level of productivity and the concentration needed to manage competing demands. Therefore, within the analysis of metaphors as part of the study, a specific focus on detecting and categorising broad conceptual metaphors, which were further confirmed during the focus group discussions, was made in concluding the analysis of interview transcripts.

In analysing the expression of the metaphors uttered by participants, a trend emerged whereby Lakoff and Johnson's (2003) categories of structural (where a concept being conveyed is structured and can be mapped to another concept), orientational (groupings of systems) and ontological (physical objects or substances) classifications were evident. For example, a pattern where concrete aspects of experiences were described more in relation to structural metaphors (e.g., *"being stuck at the top of that mountain" [Participant 2]*, *"like you're not in control, you're just riding the wave" [Participant 10]*), and thoughts and feelings via orientational metaphors (e.g., *"that I've got to climb I've got to get up there myself" [Participant 1]*, *"at the moment they're all up in the air" [Participant 4]*). The universality of the orientational

metaphors describing positive elements of a phenomenon labelled as being on a 'high' or having an upward trend and harmful elements described via shallow, downwards trending terms was also evident within participants' metaphors. Common elements of metaphors Kövecses (2010) also refers to as 'image schema' metaphors, where broad elements of a structure represent a concept conveyed and contrast with a narrow mapping of source to target domains represented by structural metaphors. Hence, specific and universal patterns were apparent in the expression of metaphors, reflecting aspects of the phenomenon regarding behaviour predominantly expressed via structural metaphors, and cognitions and emotions utilising orientational metaphors. The use of specific categories and classifications referred to within metaphors highlights an important distinction of relevance in the popularity of elements, whereby the common understanding of concepts exists (i.e., positive and negative elements of experiences described as terms of high vs low, or colours representing dark and light). These patterns of reflection on experiences could be utilised by facilitators to aid the reflective process by referring to structural metaphors when discussing aspects of practice within the reflective process and orientational metaphors when exploring thoughts and emotions.

The implications of the popularity of the movement and location source and target domains were reinforced via feedback from the focus group discussion reporting experiences in terms of travelling between two points of interest as symbolic of representing a heavy focus on the need to cover curriculum assessments and to meet students' needs. This prevailing mindset reflected on participants' awareness of the potential of assessment outcomes being used as a metric to evaluate personal performance as part of university appraisal systems and the broader implications of the national *Teaching Excellence Framework* policy as being a policy of relevance at the time of the research interviews.

In summarising the dominant use of movement and location source and target domains as a conceptual metaphor, the focus group was asked to discuss a selection of terms as an initial starting point to identify the conceptual metaphor of teaching in relation to the movement and location domains. These terms consisted of:

Teaching is an adventure, an excursion, exploration, expedition, quest,  
journey, wandering, trek.

The above terms were gleaned from the findings and aimed at isolating the conceptual metaphors symbolic of participants' teaching practice, generated some discussion and

detailed analysis of the semantics of the terms presented within the focus group. While the focus group put forward no new terms, participants leaned on preferences towards teaching as an adventure and a journey as conceptual metaphors. On being asked to agree on a conceptual metaphor, participants in the group unanimously identified **‘teaching is a journey’** as best, symbolising their teaching practice’s conceptual metaphor.

In further considering the findings identifying participants’ metaphors leaning towards reflecting and critically appraising their teaching, focus group participants suggested reflective practice and encouraging academics to reflect on decisions, actions and behaviours taken while teaching impacted their teaching practice. To identify and isolate a conceptual metaphor symbolic of the participants’ focus of reflecting and critically analysing their teaching practice, focus group participants were asked to consider a range of phrases derived from the analysis and mapping of the source and target domains they deemed symbolic of their focus on self-analysis and reflection. These phrases consisted of:

Teaching is an act, presentation, display, performance, production,  
theatre, arena.

Discussion within the focus group on the relevance of these terms identified teaching as dance, play and concert, as additional phrases representative of participants’ conceptual metaphors of their teaching practice. However, all focus group participants agreed how these terms exemplified the importance they placed on reflecting on their actions and decisions while teaching in preference to other aspects of teaching, such as planning teaching or assessments. After some discussion, the focus group agreed how the conceptual metaphor **‘teaching is a performance’** was most symbolic of their focus on their teaching practice. The identification of the ‘teaching is a journey’ and ‘teaching is a performance’ metaphors being representative and symbolic of academic conceptual systems is significant in representing an attempt to map and identify conceptual metaphors within a teaching context. Mainly, given how previous attempts at identifying and listing conceptual metaphors, for example, Lakoff et al.’s (1991) Master Metaphor List, specifically focused on identifying generic conceptual metaphors in an everyday context. Chapter 5 discusses the relevance and significance of the ‘teaching is a journey’ and ‘teaching is a performance’ conceptual metaphors in more depth as part of research question two, which explores the relationships between academics’ use of metaphors and their narratives of teaching.

The findings and reflections of participants further support how personal recollections and stories of experiences, in essence, give metaphorical insights into the inner cognitive perceptions and interpretation of the reality and phenomenon experienced. This is a view previously echoed by Saban's (2006) assertions of how:

*"metaphors structure our perception, thought, and action. For better or worse, they fundamentally affect our way of conceptualizing the world and reality whether we are aware of this phenomenon or not"* (p. 299).

The capacity and ability of conceptual metaphors to convey thought processes and identify conceptual systems are seen as a key cognitive function of metaphors (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003; Saban, 2006) due to the premise that metaphors give preference to specific thoughts and beliefs over others (Cook-Sather, 2003; Mahlios et al., 2010). This was a view identified by participants as being significant via focus group comments, stating:

*"It would be useful to know what your analysis of the interviews shows. Which metaphors were referred to and what they convey?"*  
[Participant 4]

*"Interesting themes emerging but need to really think about wider implications [of the relevance of metaphors] of this"* [Participant 2]

Focus group comments from participants were representative of broader curiosity in interpreting the significance of conceptual metaphors expressed by participants and interest in using metaphors supported by the following statements:

*"Didn't appreciate how often we talk in metaphors. They appear to be deeply ingrained in our thoughts"* (Participant 2)

*"Never really thought before of metaphors as being significant [until now]. Just a way of expressing yourself"* (Participant 3)

*"The use of metaphors was a really interesting way to think about my relationship with my professional practice. I'm curious to know about the metaphors your other interviewees used. How I relate to them and whether I might perceive my own practice differently through other people's metaphors"* [anonymous questionnaire comment]

These findings stressed increased alertness of the relevance and significance of metaphors as representing something more than mere linguistic utterances, with interest in the premise of the power of metaphors to confer deeper meaning and be instrumental in conveying the

unconscious conceptual structures, which could also be referred to as a narrative, of the way individuals may think and act, evident in the focus group discussions.

On reviewing their interview transcripts, focus group participants recounted how they believed the metaphors they referred to while reflecting on their experiences were entrenched and representative of their thoughts. They also somehow inferred broader meanings as evidenced by comments stressing:

*“Didn’t appreciate how often we talk in metaphors. They appear to be deeply ingrained in our thoughts” (Participant 2)*

*“Never really thought before of metaphors as being significant. Just a way of expressing yourself” (Participant 3)*

*“I would be curious to know about what the metaphors I referred to says about me” (Participant 4)*

The above comments suggest how participants interviewed as part of the research were not familiar with or aware of the notion and theory of conceptual metaphors, predominately believing metaphors to be linguistic terms referred to as a way of expressing what they wish to say with focus group discussion showing some evidence of a shift in perception of the importance of metaphors in everyday discussion amongst participants. These findings further corroborated Lawley and Tompkins’ (2000) discussion of the isomorphic qualities of metaphors, with participants expressing how they believed the metaphors referred to within the research interviews matched and conveyed their more profound thoughts and aided in allowing them to make sense of their thought patterns via metaphorical analogies that corresponded to their thoughts. The study results also concurred with Lakoff and Johnson’s (2003) observation of how the mapping of concrete source domains to broad target domains aided in identifying the conceptual metaphors referred to by participants, as demonstrated by the coding decisions further discussed in sections 3.3 and 4.2.

The focus group discussions also noted how the relationship between metaphors represents a wider personal story or narratives of experiences; a fundamental premise underpinning the notion of Lakoff and Johnson’s (1980; 2003) conceptual metaphors and further supported by Ho (2005) and Saban (2006) in stressing how personal stories of experiences are fundamentally metaphorical and how the choice of metaphors referred to by an individual reflected their reality and conceptualisation of a phenomenon. This premise links to the hypothesis of the value of utilising and focusing on metaphors as part of the reflective process

and the broader narrative and stories a metaphor may represent (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Bold, 2012).

However, caution needs to be expressed in forming generalisations on the analysis and interpretation of specific conceptual metaphors due to influences of context and inferences intended by the wider population. Lakoff and Johnson's (1980; 2003) original work on conceptual metaphors identified how embracing one metaphorical concept, by default, would hide other aspects of a concept and could give preference to perceptions that are congruent with the idea at the expense of those that are not (Cook-Sather, 2003). This is an aspect of working with metaphors which Armstrong et al. (2011) cautioned against, acknowledging how *"a degree of uncertainty is always present in any post-structural readings of metaphors"* (p. 357). These caveats related to interpreting metaphors were further expressed within the focus group, whereby participants queried:

*"Not sure if we would always use the same metaphors. If we were to complete the same interview on another day, would I have used the same metaphor again? I don't know, suppose metaphors are significant if there is a pattern to your use of them"* (Participant 1)

*"Wouldn't any other aspect of language and the words we say also be important? Maybe anything we pay attention to could be deemed as being important"* (Participant 3)

These caveats are further discussed and addressed within chapter 7, where the conclusions drawn from the study in answering the research questions are considered.

## Chapter Summary

In summary, an analysis of the dominant metaphors used in the way academics recall, reflect and describe their teaching experiences identified trends regarding how academics reflected on aspects of their teaching practice. Specifically, the findings determined the key mapping process between source and target domains was aided by adopting a broad, open-ended approach to the matching of source domains to a narrow band of target domains in keeping with the pattern of concrete source domains matching more abstract target domains (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003; Kövecses, 2010). The findings also tied into the theories and concepts related to the seminal work of Lakoff and Johnson (2003) and Kövecses (2010) into conceptual metaphors with regards to the mapping of concrete source domains to broader abstract target domains. Findings further identified the dominant use of three abstract source domains (movement and directions, place and locations, and senses) in the way academics reflected

on aspects of their teaching practice. Source domains, which participants cited as representative of their focus on teaching and curriculum aims, also implied the relevance of metaphors in representing deeper levels of cognition. Similarly, the popularity of target domains denoting behaviour, emotions and environment identified from the analysis of the interview transcripts was confirmed by participants as representative of aspects of their teaching in the classroom.

A sense of conventionality and universality in the use of metaphors was evident within the findings, however, these were dependent on the context of the issues being discussed and predominately tied to structural metaphors regarding aspects of behaviours and orientational metaphors expressing thoughts and emotions in preference to ontological metaphors. Similarly, the use of objects, containers and conduit metaphors (Reddy, 1979; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; 2003) was identifiable from the analysis of the metaphors and aided by an appreciation of the professional and vocational context of the discussions within the research interview.

The significant conceptual metaphors emerging from the analysis of the data and corroborated by focus group discussions fundamentally agree with Lakoff and Johnson's (1980; 2003) theory of conceptual metaphors. Furthermore, participants concurred with how the metaphors reflected and were representative of a deep level of thinking and broader narratives of how they perceive and interpret their teaching practice.

The identification of 'teaching is a journey' and 'teaching is a performance' conceptual metaphors, emerging out of the analysis of the interview transcripts and mapping of popular source and target domains, was agreed on by the participants as being symbolic in representing their conceptual metaphors and perceptions of their teaching practice. However, caution was expressed and acknowledged in how a focus and analysis of a specific metaphor by default gives significance to a particular pattern or mode of thinking over another.

The use of metaphors to convey experiences was evident in the data analysis via a preference for the use of metaphors over similes or analogies. The often-cited claim of using six metaphors a minute by Geary (2011) was not determined, primarily given the uncertainty of the context in which the claim is made, differences in definitions of a metaphor and the Clean Language questions through which the interviews were conducted.



## **Chapter 5 – Analysis of Participants’ Use of Metaphors and their Narratives of Teaching**

Further to the identification of the dominant metaphors, via analysis of interview transcripts and focus group discussions (see sections 4.2 and 4.3), suggesting academics primarily view their teaching practice via ‘teaching is a journey’ and, to a lesser extent, ‘teaching is a performance’ conceptual metaphors, this chapter debates a deeper analysis of these conceptual metaphors and the emerging narratives guiding thoughts and behaviours, and affecting participants’ teaching practice is needed to address the second research question: “What are the relationships between academics’ use of metaphors and their narratives of teaching?”

To determine the relationships between academics’ use of ‘teaching is a journey’ and ‘teaching is a performance’ conceptual metaphors and their narratives of teaching, in keeping with the conceptual framework, the following findings will review and discuss the relevance and significance of the conceptual metaphors through three levels of analysis to investigate the narratives symbolic of academics’ teaching practice. These three levels of analysis are further discussed within section 3.3 of the methodology and consist of:

- Tompkins and Lawley’s (2006) PRO model to identify the broader frames of the narrative.
- McAdams and McLean’s (2013) Narrative Identity Constructs to identify the common themes underpinning academics’ reflections of their teaching practice.
- Schwartz’s (2012) Universal Values list to identify the deeper values and beliefs underpinning the narrative.

The coding analysis of the conceptual metaphors against these levels of analysis was measured in terms of matching the conceptual metaphors within the interview transcripts, with these findings subsequently further explored and corroborated by analysis of questionnaire comments and focus group discussions, and then by subsequent scrutiny and reflection of the analysis of findings from a theoretical perspective (see section 2.3 for further details of the use of the three levels of narrative analysis referred to within this study and section 3.2 for further details of the use of research methods).

This chapter commences by discussing the findings of the narrative analysis of the conceptual metaphors in section 5.1, before the broader significance of the narratives emerging from the findings are discussed within section 5.2.

## **5.1 Findings of Narrative Coding Analysis of Conceptual Metaphors**

### **5.1.1 Reporting on focus group reflections of conceptual metaphors identified**

The significance of the ‘teaching is a journey’ conceptual metaphor was reflected on individually by participants and collectively within the focus group discussions. Participants within the focus group concurred that they identified with and saw the ‘teaching is a journey’ conceptual metaphor as representing how they perceived their teaching and gave insights into the strategies they employed within their teaching practice to plan, prepare and teach lectures and seminars. For example, participants recounted how the ‘journey’ metaphor was apt in mirroring the start and end-points of the teaching process as illustrated by the following focus group comments:

*“By the end of it, this is what we’re going to have done or where we’re going to be” (focus group comment)*

*“I agree. I am always thinking about where I am going with my sessions and with my students” (focus group comment)*

*“Something to do with covering learning outcomes” (focus group comment)*

The above comments, and subsequent focus group discussions, reflected how participants continually had in mind the learning outcomes they were required to achieve while teaching and concurred that the ‘teaching is a journey’ conceptual metaphor was apt in symbolically identifying how the starting point of their teaching journey linked to their focus on meeting module learning outcomes.

Participants, both individually and within the focus group, in identifying with the ‘teaching is a journey’ conceptual metaphor, further probed the conceptual metaphor by considering who were the passengers on the metaphorical journey and how the metaphor may give insights into their approach to their teaching with regards to how they planned lectures and seminars and taught within the classroom. Regarding passengers, participants unanimously identified ‘students’ as the passengers on the journey as characterised by the following comments:

*“...about thinking at the end of this session where do I want the students to be” (focus group comment)*

*“Just as I watch my students flourish” (focus group comment)*

*“In my lesson planning, I do often think about how I take students on a learning journey” (focus group comment)*

A sense of enthusiasm and expectation in taking the journey was also evident, with participants within the focus group reporting:

*“Because there’s a learning experience for you in there as well, I don’t see teaching for me as filling empty vessels” (focus group comment)*

*“...that is a real joy for a teacher, and that’s what keeps us going” (focus group comment)*

The completion and end-point of the journey were emphasised via links to course assessments through focus group comments, stating:

*“Understand how a metaphor of a journey is apt. We are always going somewhere to meet targets, doing something to students to complete assessments and assignments” (focus group comment)*

*“At the end of the day, it all boils down to assessments and helping students graduate” (focus group comment)*

These, and other similar focus group participants’ comments, suggest a sense of agreement and acknowledgement into the nuances of ‘teaching is a journey’ conceptual metaphors as being symbolic of how they contextualise and conceptualise their teaching practice in keeping with findings discussed within chapter 4 and chapter 6 into the use of the Clean Language questioning model to examine metaphors. Differences in what specifically denoted the journey were apparent, with some participants extolling a preference towards enhancing the student experience, while others focused on the importance of working towards assessment and learning outcomes. This is a distinction discussed later in this chapter regarding values leaning towards either a process versus the product of teaching (see section 5.2).

Participants within the focus group further wished to explore and compare how alternative conceptual metaphors could have led to a different narrative and conceptual understanding of their teaching practice, as suggested by the following comments:

*“Wonder if we adopted the metaphor of teaching as being a sport or an orchestra. Would we have a different view of how we teach?” (focus group comment)*

*“I’m a sports fan, and if I thought of teaching as a game, I think there would be some mileage in exploring how the game is played out in the classroom?” (focus group comment)*

*“I teach counselling and always considered my teaching as a conversation between the students and me. There is always much discussion within the sessions I teach” (focus group comment)*

Together with further focus group discussions, these comments helped to concur with how some relevance existed in how the choice of conceptual metaphors could potentially impact teaching practice, specifically with regards to how the choice of conceptual metaphors aligned with Lakoff and Johnson’s (1980; 2003) theory of conceptual metaphors being representative of a person’s conceptual systems, and how McAdams’ (2001) notions of how individuals make choices to tell stories that are meaningful to them and integrate with their actions and behaviours. The focus group participants comment on how alternative metaphors could yield different insights and approaches to teaching, help to demonstrate how reference to an alternative metaphor and telling of a different story could potentially offer alternative interpretations of their teaching practice, and direct their perceptions of how they approach their teaching practice in keeping with the conceptual metaphor.

Participants were also able to digest and dissect the secondary conceptual metaphor of teaching practice akin to a ‘performance’. Namely, in terms of performance linked to good teaching as denoted by participants within the interview transcripts stating:

*“You can see the learning happening” [Participant 2]*

*“See people growing” [Participant 2]*

*“I’m waving my baton, and the orchestra is in tune”  
[Participant 8]*

These sample participants’ comments suggest differences existed in how participants perceived aspects of performance while teaching, with measures alluding to sensory confirmation, control and congruence being referred to within the above examples and potentially construed as positive or negative aspects of teaching. For example, the metaphoric phrase *“I’m waving my baton, and the orchestra is in tune”* [Participant 8] could be interpreted as guiding students or as controlling or correcting students to get in tune. However, further probing of participants’ interpretations of the ‘teaching as a performance’ conceptual metaphors showed how participants perceived the metaphor to be akin to and symbolic of good teaching by employing a range of measures consisting of their thoughts and feelings, judging participation levels, and mood of the group and external sources of feedback

(students' evaluations, peer review comments, etc.), with congruence between these three elements being taken as signs of good teaching.

Other interpretations of 'teaching as a performance' conceptual metaphors related to 'not performing well' as alluded to by participants within the interview transcripts, stressing:

*"Musical instruments or the musicians are out of tune" [Participant 8]*

*"I'm trying to perform rather than being myself" [Participant 10]*

*"it's when you see those cartoon characters with clouds over their head" [Participant 9]*

These sample comments of participants 'not performing well' suggest incongruence and low mood attached to occasions when student disposition, participation and energy levels are depleted. However, these examples of believing that they were not teaching well were countered by utterances denoting the need to teach and perform better, as signified by the following participant comments:

*"How do I grab students' attention?" [Participant 5]*

*"Because you tend to be concentrating on your own performance when you first start teaching [referring to a career in teaching]" [Participant 6]*

The act of considering storytelling and exploration of conceptual metaphors as an approach to reflective practice was commented on within the questionnaire via the following responses:

*"I found it all (storytelling and exploring metaphors) useful and it aided my powers of reflection" [Participant 6]*

*"I really found the interviewing interesting, and it made me think about my own practice in several different ways" [Participant 7]*

Participants further commented on the value of reflecting on and exploring their conceptual metaphors for teaching in their questionnaire responses, for example:

*"Teaching and learning is complex, and that thinking through the metaphors enabled me to re-consider the pedagogical processes we (I) use with students" [Participant 10]*

*"It helped me think quite deeply about my teaching practice and approach. Good technique – consistently brought me back to re-examine metaphors and descriptions I had used to try to drill down what I may have meant/understood in describing my practice" [Participant 5]*

*“The use of metaphors was a really interesting way to think about my relationship with my professional practice. I’m curious to know about the metaphors your other interviewees used. How I relate to them and whether I might perceive my own practice differently through other people’s metaphors” [Participant 3]*

The above questionnaire comments were further elaborated during the focus group discussions, with participants stating:

*“It seems obvious now but not previously considered how telling stories of our experiences are actually part of the reflective process”*

*“I always thought of reflective practice as something more abstract and broader. Homing in on and exploring metaphors we use to explore our experiences was novel and very interesting”*

These participant observations suggest how probing the relevance of a conceptual metaphor could yield a greater level of reflection into the complexities of teaching, potentially not possible by examining teaching experiences via traditional models of reflection espoused by Kolb (1984) and Gibbs (1988). Primarily, this may be explained by how these cyclical models of reflection emphasise and promote a procedural approach to analysing experiences, instead of a more open approach to analysing all aspects of experiences via metaphors. Furthermore, the focus on referring to and exploring metaphors while reflecting could avoid employing mechanical cyclical approaches of reflection requiring practitioners to reflect on demand and often out of context of their teaching practice (Boud & Walker, 1998; Surgenor, 2011). Additionally, a move towards a focus on exploring metaphors and the use of Clean Language questions as a method of reflection, whereby academics can freely reflect on their practice as part of a conversation as promoted by Hoffman-Kipp et al. (2003) and Guo (2021), acknowledges the value of reflection via discussions and counters criticism of Schön’s (1987; 1988) writing on reflection predominantly promoting reflective practice as a solitary activity. Hence, the findings suggest an opening exists, where a focus on exploring conceptual metaphors to encourage reflective practice is evident, and helped to inform the development of the proposed model of reflection originating from the findings of this study (see section 7.3 for further details).

### 5.1.2 Findings of analysis of PRO categories

The process of determining links between metaphors and participants’ narratives of their teaching practices was undertaken by analysis of the two identified conceptual metaphors (i.e., teaching is a journey and teaching is a performance) against Tompkins and Lawley’s

(2006) PRO model. This initial level of analysis aimed to establish an understanding of participants' narratives of their teaching practice, prior to the deeper level of analysis of the link between participants' conceptual metaphors and narratives of teaching through McAdams and McLean's (2013) Narrative Constructs and Schwartz's (2012) Universal Values list.

Discussions of the relevance and significance of the analysis of interviews against Tompkins and Lawley's (2006) PRO frames were positive and welcomed via participant focus group comments stating:

*"Wasn't aware of the concept of framing and that my reflections had a particular slant to them" (focus group comment)*

*"In terms of insight, you could look way too deep into these things and end up navel-gazing, but I like the idea of how a simple frame (PRO model) can help to structure your reflections" (focus group comment)*

*"Not heard of the Problem, Outcomes, Remedy model before but think this could be something both use to reflect and use in my teaching" (focus group comment)*

Of the 251 coding references attached to the PRO categories, an overwhelming 81.67% of coding matched the 'problem' or 'remedy' frame category, with both the frame categories being represented equally (problem – 41.04% and remedy – 40.64%). Reflections of these findings with the focus group identified a consensus whereby participants recognised how they consciously and unconsciously monitored their teaching when working with a group for potential problems (as denoted by the Tompkins and Lawley 'problem' frame) that may hinder learning and making adaptations (characterised by the 'remedy' frame) to their teaching practice when there appears to be a lack of engagement by students. Participants within the focus group further reported a sense of satisfaction of how their proactive approach to teaching was recognised within the conceptual metaphors referred to during the interviews and findings, and PRO framing categories, via comments stating:

*"I think this PRO model, which I have not come across before, sums up neatly how I watch out for problems while teaching and making changes to the planned sessions where necessary"*

*"I think the PRO model highlights my level of self-awareness when teaching and working with a group, in that I look out for when teaching is not going well and always strive to mix things up to get the students motivated to engage with the session again"*

On reviewing the relevance of the PRO model to participants' teaching practice within the focus group, participants expressed mixed views of the model's value in informing their reflections of their teaching. On a personal level, participants discussed how they believed the PRO model offered a practical but somewhat simplistic way of understanding how reflections can be framed within categories which they could identify and relate to, and also noted how the emphasis on navigating challenges is mirrored within Tompkins and Lawley's (2006) 'problem' and 'remedy' framing categories. From a teaching perspective, participants also discussed how the PRO model had wider potential to be used within a teaching context and working with students in helping them identify how their students framed and conceptualised aspects of their learning. However, as part of the focus group discussion, some participants identified the PRO model as lacking in not giving a more detailed account of their narratives for teaching, through comments suggesting:

*"I like this concept of working with frames and can see how the PRO model helps towards that, but surely within academic circles, we can think and identify frames that suggest a higher, deeper level of thinking and reflections" (focus group comment)*

*"There must be other framing categories and models we can work with to inform our reflections and help students understand theirs? But I do like the PRO model as a way of summing up our reflections of experiences in a way that is easy to understand and follow" (focus group comment)*

These comments and observations were echoed by participants within the focus group in suggesting they wanted to know more about the wider implications of how the conceptual metaphors might link to their narratives of teaching and therefore welcomed the more profound analysis of the metaphor, which was forthcoming via the analysis of the conceptual metaphors against McAdams and McLean's (2013) Narrative Constructs.

### 5.1.3 Findings of analysis of McAdams and McLean's Narrative Constructs

A total of 758 coding references were matched against McAdams and McLean's (2013) Narrative Identity Constructs from analysis of the metaphors identified within the interview transcripts to procure a deeper level of understanding of how participants' metaphors of their teaching experiences were representative of and informed their teaching practice. Of the seven Narrative Construct categories listed by and detailed in Appendix eight, a key pattern emerged whereby three key Narrative Constructs dominated 75.98% of all metaphors matched to McAdams and McLean's (2013) Narrative Constructs. Namely, these were:



- **Exploratory narrative processing** construct (31.12% of all coding references)  
Described as the extent that the narrator engages in self-exploration while telling a story
- **Agency** (27.18% of all coding references)  
Refers to the extent to which the narrator is autonomous and has the power to affect their own life/decisions
- **Redemption stories** (17.68% dominance of coding references)  
The narrator transitions from a generally bad/negative state to a generally good/positive state

Discussing the relevance of these findings with the focus group, after explaining the definitions underpinning the dominant Narrative Constructs to participants, some consensus into McAdams and McLean's (2013) Narrative Constructs existed with participants identifying with the significance of the findings through example comments indicating:

*"This is really interesting; it makes me think we could make use of this as a way of making sense of our reflections"*

*"This reminds me of Booker's book on seven story plots, but more relevant than the seven plots, I think, not sure how, but I'd like to find out more about McAdams' theory of narratives"*

McAdams and McLean (2013) define the exploratory narrative processing construct as the "extent of self-exploration as expressed in a story" (p. 234), concurred with focus group reflections regarding the depth participants believed they are required to reflect on their teaching practice. This emphasis on reflective practice was reported earlier (within chapter 4), correlating with participants' observations of their quest to continually enhance their teaching practice stemming from the encouragement to reflect on their teaching and be a reflective practitioner (Schön, 1983). Furthermore, McAdams and McLean's (2013) 'agency' construct, defined as the extent individuals perceive they have autonomy and the power to affect their actions, focus group participants linked to corresponding to their ability to facilitate and manage their teaching.

Similarly, findings identifying the use of 'redemptive' Narrative Constructs – the transition within a story indicating a move between a negative to a positive state – was seen by focus group participants to be in keeping with the optimistic and constructive tone of reflecting on experiences to enhance practice. This was particularly evident within the focus group, with participants' comments stating:

*“The definition you give of redemptive narrative stories fits my thinking very well. Striving to move from negative to positive teaching, I always try to do, and think is something we should all strive for” (focus group comment)*

*“Thinking about this [redemptive narrative stories] and our earlier discussions on reflection. Isn’t the reason we reflect on our teaching all about identifying what isn’t working and making changes to our teaching practice towards what does work?” (focus group comment)*

These participant reflections and seeming popularity of the reference to the use of ‘redemptive’ narrative stories within the focus group discussions, suggest a positive slant towards participants’ optimistic solutions-focused approach to their teaching practice aligning with Tompkins and Lawley’s (2006) remedy frames of the conceptual metaphors referred to by participants; the wider significance of these findings is further discussed in section 5.2. Furthermore, the positivity of participants’ approaches to redemptive stories aligns with McAdams and McLean’s (2013) observations of individuals who tell redemptive stories tending to be more generative and have higher levels of well-being than individuals who prefer ‘contamination’ stories of their experiences; a phenomena McAdams and McLean (2013) specifically discuss in relation to individuals’ personal stories of their experiences, but could also be translated within a teaching context of how a problem-solving optimistic approach to teaching could yield a greater sense of well-being of academics.

Habermas and Bluck (2000) and Daiute (2013) identify the need to determine the coherence of the analysis into narratives. Hence, the dominant Narrative Constructs (‘exploratory narrative processing’, ‘agency’ and ‘redemption’) emerging out of the analysis of the conceptual metaphors were put to the focus group participants to determine their significance. After sharing McAdams and McLean’s (2013) definitions of the three dominant constructs with participants, focus group participants were able to identify a thread linking the three dominant narratives’ identity constructs as suggested by focus group comments as follows:

*“Isn’t exploratory narrative processing a form of reflection? You [researcher] mention the word self-exploration. I would then link this to the reflection that we are encouraged to practise while teaching” (focus group comment)*

*“I would say the same, exploratory narrative processing is about reflection and self-awareness, and the other construct [redemptive stories] is about changing practice from reflection. Actually, maybe the stuff about ‘agency’ is about the responsibility we take in changing our practice as a result of reflection” (focus group comment)*

*“It seems to me we are going around in circles here, not in a bad way, but that what you have found in your research links to reflection very closely, not sure if that was what you intended or what you have found from your analysis, but there does seem to be a clear link between your narrative constructs and reflective practice”(focus group comment)*

These and other similar participant observations suggest and identify a link between the three dominant Narrative Constructs and reflective practice. More specifically, this link could be denoted as a narrative strand whereby participants’ focus on reflective practice and self-awareness is akin to and exemplified by McAdams and McLean’s (2013) ‘exploratory narrative processing’ and ‘redemptive’ narrative agency constructs related to the actions taken to improve aspects of their teaching practice. Thus, Habermas and Bluck (2000) and Daiute’s (2013) call for determining coherence in the analysis of narrative could relate to how aspects of reflective practice are mirrored and align with the three dominant Narrative Constructs arising out of the analysis of the conceptual metaphors determined from the interview transcripts.

In summary, analysis of the metaphors emerging out of the interview transcripts against McAdams and McLean’s (2013) Narrative Constructs identified a significant narrative strand implying a focus on reflective practice (exploratory narrative processing), autonomy and self-sufficiency in actions (agency).

#### 5.1.4 Findings of analysis of Schwartz’s Universal Values list

A further deeper layer of analysis of the interview transcripts was completed by coding the interview transcripts against Schwartz’s (2012) Universal Values list (as detailed in section 2.3 and section 3.3) to explore the narratives underpinning participants’ use of conceptual metaphors. This analysis layer resulted in 335 coding references of the metaphors identified in the interview transcripts matched to Schwartz’s (2012) Universal Values list. Analysis of the coding of the interview transcripts identified a pattern whereby a strong preference towards the following values linked to Schwartz’s (2012) emerged from the findings:

- **Self-direction** (71.4% of all coded references)  
Emphasis on placing importance towards independent thought, choosing actions, creating and exploring
- **Stimulation** (15.82% of all coded references)  
Placing importance on seeking excitement, novelty and challenge in life

- **Achievement** (13.13% of all coded references)

Personal success through demonstrating competence according to social standards

The above values emerging from the findings indicate the importance of reflecting on teaching practice by the participants, and, more specifically, the beliefs that function as internalised guides that define behaviours to desired goals (Schwartz, 2012). As such, participants within the focus group discussion both identified and subscribed to the three fundamental values emerging from the findings via the following comments:

*“Erm, interesting how I can relate to the findings of values. Not given this much thought before but can relate to the three values identified” (focus group comment)*

*“I’m surprised how we have gone from talking about metaphors to now values. Initially, I thought this was a big leap, but I can see the link between metaphors, narratives and values” (focus group comment)*

*“I’m particularly interested in how this notion of values acts as guides directing our motivations and actions. I kind of knew about this in the back of my mind but never given this much thought before” (focus group comment)*

Further exploring the relevance of these values within a personal and wider teaching context, participants expressed some surprise to discover how these findings link to earlier discussions around the use of Tompkins and Lawley’s (2006) PRO model, and McAdams and McLean’s (2013) Narrative Constructs via the following comments:

*“Not sure how this links to the PRO model, but I think there are some similarities between the values we are talking about here and the narratives ideas stuff [McAdams and McLean’s Narrative Constructs] we discussed earlier. I mean, isn’t self-direction all about agency?” (focus group comment)*

*“I can identify and relate to ‘self-direction’ being the top value, as I like the autonomy of being in control and deciding what I want to do, both in my teaching and personal life” (focus group comment)*

*“I am not sure how representative the percentages are, but I can identify with the value of stimulation as I constantly challenge myself to do and try new things” (focus group comment)*

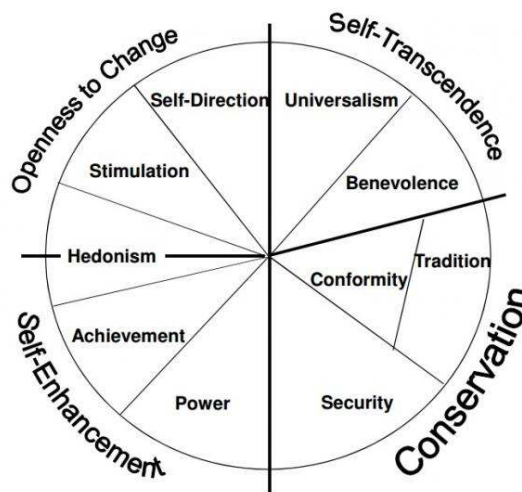
*“Not really surprised achievement featured lower than self-direction and stimulation values. For myself, and maybe this relates to others too, I’m more bothered about being stimulated and motivated about*

*teaching than achievement on a personal level. But that is not to say I don't value achievement in terms of students' success in assessments" (focus group comment)*

The above comments and similar discussions within the focus group help to show how participants interpreted and identified the findings of values embedded within the metaphors aligning with the earlier Narrative Constructs on 'agency' and the need to be able to exercise and have autonomy in how they teach. The finding of 'stimulation' as the second most popular value acknowledged the importance participants placed on excitement and being challenged in how they teach, and, to a lesser extent, the value of 'achievement' demonstrative of the personal competence, success and recognition associated with good teaching practices.

Schwartz (2012) identified how the expression and pursuit of some values could conflict with other values and therefore create dissonance and incongruence between individuals' motivations, decisions and actions. More specifically, figure 2 below illustrates how all the values of Schwartz's (2012) Universal Values list can be grouped within four categories of openness to change, self-transcendence, self-enhancement and conservation.

Figure 3 – Schwartz's (2012) Universal Values Framework



Schwartz (2012) stresses how a need for and importance of congruence and alignment between the values can have psychological and practical consequences. For example, a person's conceptual system based on values seeking security and stimulation would conflict due to these values directing thoughts and behaviours at polar opposite categories of 'openness to change' vs 'conservation'.

Within Schwartz's (2012) values categories, an important observation emerging from the findings into the values embedded into the dominant conceptual metaphors relates to the

alignment and congruence between the three key values determined by the findings. More specifically, by expressing and following values of self-direction, stimulation and achievement within their teaching practice, a pattern emerges where Schwartz's (2012) values categories of 'self-enhancement' and 'openness to change' align, and would not conflict in impacting participants' decisions and actions towards their goals. Furthermore, these values align with McAdams and McLean's (2013) dominant Narrative Constructs whereby 'exploratory narrative processing', 'agency' and redemptive stories reflect and mirror the values of 'self-enhancement' and 'openness to change', reinforcing the coherence between Narrative Construct strand and values.

Dauite (2013) identifies how individuals consciously and unconsciously negotiate values, and implicitly and explicitly enact them in discussing values within narrative contexts. Furthermore, Dauite (2013) suggests values echo diverse personal, situational and cultural factors giving preference and importance to specific beliefs, thoughts and behaviours. Hence, participants' broader relevance of values within the conceptual metaphors and the narrative they convey need to be considered and further discussed in section 5.2 below.

## **5.2 Discussion into the Significance of Narratives Emerging from the Findings**

Bleakley (2005) identifies narratives as a process of endowing reflections of experiences with meaning; a process going beyond merely recollecting experiences towards determining the preferred frames, mindset and schema surrounding reflections to answer what Dauite (2013) refers to as the 'now what?' question in drawing narrative inferences from the findings. Within the context of this study, this refers to exploring the relevance of conceptual metaphors identified as being symbolic in endowing narrative meaning on experiences to answer further the second research question relating to determining the relationships between academics' use of metaphors and their narratives of teaching.

The following account discusses the inferences and implications of the narratives underpinning the conceptual metaphors identified via the findings. Subsequently, the broader understanding of the narratives emerging from the findings is further discussed to explore the relationship between participants' teaching practices' conceptual metaphors and academics' narratives.

An interesting finding emerging from the analysis of the narratives embedded within the conceptual metaphors and discussions within the focus group was the appreciation of the relevance and significance of the concept of storytelling by participants and stories told. Squire et al. (2014), in citing how “your stories about your life are not the same as the life you live” (p. 110), stress the tensions between ‘thinking about a story’ (reflections of experiences) and ‘thinking with a story’, with regards to stories having a particular impact on practice (Bleakley, 2005). These distinctions between thinking about and with a story were borne out via focus group comments as follows:

*“Aren’t the stories we tell, our interpretation of an event, they not reality, are they?” (focus group comment)*

*“I heard you [the researcher] use the phrase, there is what happened, then there is the story of what happened, during our previous discussions. This is so true; we attach our interpretation to our stories which is probably so different from the reality of what happened” (focus group comment)*

*“I really like this concept of exploring the meaning of stories we tell compared to what happened, both in terms of our self-awareness and reflective practice. I think there is a lot of mileage in this” (focus group comment)*

The comments above tap into the notion and help to signify participants’ awareness of how stories and narratives by their nature are multi-dimensional and impacted by perception, interpretation and context of experiences, as are conceptual metaphors. Hence, they present difficulties in gaining a precise insight into the lives of individuals. Moen (2006), in citing Jerome Bruner, recognised this but sought to distinguish between narratives of ‘life lived’, ‘life experienced’ and ‘life told’, or the ‘facts’, ‘fallacies’ and the ‘fiction’ of a story (Moen, 2006). These aspects linked to the analysis of narratives require closer scrutiny of the multi-layered meaning and interpretation of narratives, specifically within the context of this study the relevance of metaphors referred to within the stories (Riessman, 1993, 2008; Squire et al., 2014).

Participants acknowledged the multi-layered meaning their reflections and stories had on their narratives of their teaching practice, and acknowledged the potential impact of conceptual metaphors used to reflect on and frame their experiences of teaching via focus group comments, stating:

*“Didn’t appreciate how often we talk in metaphors. They appear to be deeply ingrained in our thoughts” (focus group comment)*

*“I never really thought before of metaphors as being significant. Just a way of expressing yourself” (focus group comment)*

The above comments and further discussions within the focus group, suggest some consensus amongst participants of the significance in the pervasive qualities of conceptual metaphors mirroring and framing their reflections, narratives and approaches to teaching, and thus suggest how the two key conceptual metaphors identified framed narratives and impact actions. This is in keeping with Lakoff and Johnson’s (1980; 2003) theory of conceptual metaphors being symbolic and representative of encoding a person’s conceptualisation of experiences. However, metaphors and the meaning they convey have not traditionally been linked to narratives, with Dauite (2013) explicitly not listing or considering metaphors as an evaluative device or phrase imbuing meaning, or referring to a way of knowing or being. However, the findings of this study and exploration into the relevance and significance of conceptual metaphors, suggest metaphors could be considered evaluative language in determining both the symbolic meaning of the metaphor and offering insights into how experiences are perceived and conceptualised by individuals. Thus, concerning the findings of this study, the conceptual metaphors of ‘teaching is a journey’ and ‘teaching is a performance’ can be explored to identify the schemas and narratives participants may consciously or unconsciously associate with their teaching practice.

In interpreting the meaning, wider implications and significance of the two primary conceptual metaphors emerging from the findings, the concept of exploring ‘frames’ surrounding and linked to the conceptual metaphor helped establish a starting point for interpreting the conceptual metaphors and narratives they represent. As previously discussed within the Literature Review chapter, Goffman (1974), an early pioneer of the theory of framing, described how the act of placing frames around concepts and arguments consciously and unconsciously layers a schema over the way experiences are understood, interpreted and communicated (Borah, 2011). The participants within the focus group further acknowledged how reference to specific conceptual metaphors and narratives could positively frame an experience and further articulated this through the following focus group comments:

*“I get it; thinking about my teaching as a factory will cause me to interpret and frame my teaching experiences differently instead of thinking of my teaching as a playground?” (focus group comment)*

*“Until now, I never really appreciate the power of metaphors. This whole thing about metaphors mirroring our thoughts and framing*



*how we perceive things, I'm going to have to go away and think about more" (focus group comment)*

Therefore, an exploration of metaphors whereby the notion of conceptual metaphors describing 'one thing in terms of another' (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003, p. 5) and giving preferences to one schema over another, with an emphasis on how the chosen frame and schema having an impact on academics' teaching practice, resonated with focus group participants. This notion of conceptual metaphors giving preference of one schema over other ties with Dauite's (2013) theory of dynamic narrating with regards to how a story's expression can give significant clues to the narrative underpinning the story, specifically by focusing on evaluative devices (phrases, expression, etc.) used to convey a story. Therefore, the research findings, in identifying the conceptual metaphors of 'teaching is a journey' and 'teaching is a performance' as being representative of how participants made sense of their teaching, give clues regarding inherent narratives expressing the values and beliefs participants hold about aspects of their teaching practice (Connelly & Clandinin, 1988). Furthermore, Robins and Mayer (2000) note how the framing process is ingrained into participants' thoughts and regulate behaviour (Moser, 2000), yet often out of conscious awareness of the individual (Borah, 2011), as shown by focus group comments identifying a lack of appreciation of the value and impact of exploring metaphors within the comments above. Thus, by adopting a specific conceptual metaphor, certain aspects of teaching are given preference over others. For example, by adopting and embracing working to the 'teaching is a journey' conceptual metaphor, academics may emphasise lesson preparation and student experience in preference over other parts of teaching, such as curriculum planning and meeting quality assurance procedures. This concept of conceptual metaphors and the narratives that underpin them, framing thoughts and actions, has been alluded to by Thibodeau and Boroditsky (2011, 2013, 2015) and Steen et al. (2014). Their studies suggest metaphors can frame perception and subsequent thoughts of a phenomenon, which concurs with how adopting 'teaching is a journey' and 'teaching is a performance' conceptual metaphors can frame academics' narratives of their teaching practice and influence their approaches to their teaching. Therefore, the use of a specific metaphor and the source target domains used to convey a metaphor, identify both how individual thoughts and behaviours could be influenced by the way the metaphor is framed and, by default, highlights specific elements of a concept or argument over others (Robins & Mayer, 2000; Borah, 2011).

Furthermore, in considering stories as reflections of how an academic conceptualises their experiences of teaching, Yero (2010), citing the words of Carl Jung, explains: "if teachers don't

know who they are – if they are unaware of their beliefs about learning, teaching ... then they are also unaware of whom they are teaching” (p. 14). Within the context of this study, identifying the frames surrounding the conceptual metaphors helps to raise awareness of the subtle ways the conceptual metaphors aid in contextualising and conceptualising experiences (Allbritton et al., 1995) and, thus, suggesting that there is a tendency for individuals to make decisions and take actions consistent with the metaphors used to frame their experiences (Robins & Mayer, 2000; Thibodeau & Boroditsky, 2011, 2013, 2015).

Digging deeper, these observations are in keeping with Chong and Druckman’s (2007) suggestion of how individuals are likely to favour frames consistent with their values and beliefs. Thus, recognising how ‘teaching is a journey’ and ‘teaching is a performance’ conceptual metaphors are symbolic and representative of one’s teaching practice reinforces Gillis and Johnson’s (2002) argument that:

*“Because they [metaphors] reveal our educational values, beliefs, and principles, they contain information essential to our growth as professionals” (p. 37).*

Values, as expressions of personal beliefs, can be defined as “judgements and evaluations that we make about ourselves, about others and the world around us” (Yero, 2010, p. 28) and help give a person a sense of stability. As such, Mahlios et al. (2010) and Yero (2010) specifically identify how a person’s beliefs impact the metaphors they choose and use to describe their experiences, which aligns with Lakoff and Johnson’s (1980; 2003) theory of conceptual metaphors. However, as beliefs are chosen from a range of differing judgements and evaluations, the findings relating to values espousing ‘self-direction’, ‘stimulation’ and ‘achievement’, identify values underpinning practice, which Dilts (2006) defines as “have intrinsic worth [to a person]” (Yero, 2010 p. 34) and reflect a person’s beliefs. Hence, within this study’s context, the detailed narrative choice was made whereby participants veered towards using metaphors congruent with their values and beliefs, and further reinforced the significance of the narrative strand emerging and identified from the earlier finding.

Despite the yields to be gained from analysing conceptual metaphors to raise awareness of the narratives that underpin them, and inform thoughts and behaviours, caution needs to be taken in interpreting the stories told by individuals. This is especially regarding how the phenomenon of telling a story is more akin to the way in which individual reflections are a ‘representative construction’ of an actual event with regards to how they have consciously and/or unconsciously emphasised, generalised and distorted aspects of their story (Bold,

2012). Squire et al. (2014) further emphasise the uncertainty presented by the subjectivity inherent in the telling and interpretation of a story, and within the context of this study, metaphors, by stating how “there are blurred lines between what is said and unsaid, what is heard and not heard, what is analysed and not analysed” (p. 99); blurred lines requiring the need to corroborate findings of the interpretation of metaphors where possible. Hence, as part of this study, a reflexive approach to analysing the interview transcripts was taken by forwarding copies of the interview transcripts to each of the participants interviewed and inviting them to discuss the initial findings of the conceptual metaphors emerging out of the interview transcripts to comment on, initially individually, and then further by inviting participants to a focus group to corroborate the findings into conceptual metaphors and the extent to which they give insight into the storied lives of their teaching experiences. This combined analysis of the findings revealed a degree of consensus amongst participants about the two primary conceptual metaphors identified and their subsequent narratives as being symbolic in giving a perceptive and accurate insight into the storied lives of their teaching experiences. This is evident via the concluding focus group comments, emphasising:

*“I must admit to being surprised how we move from discussing stories, reflection, metaphors and narratives, but I can see the link between them now” (focus group comment)*

*“I like the two main metaphors we have talked about (i.e., teaching is a journey, teaching is performing). They sum up my approach to teaching, I think. But I especially like the concept of how they link to personal narratives and values. I’d like to read your completed thesis after it’s finished” (focus group comment)*

*“The fact that I could follow the logic between all the different elements of what you researched (i.e., stories, reflections, metaphors, narratives, etc.) suggests to me there is something of real value here, and I’d like to continue this conversation with you further on another day” (focus group comment)*

*“A lot to take in here. I need to go away and think about this further. Like the others, I would agree with what your research shows and could identify with a lot of what we discussed today” (focus group comment)*

Within a broader context, the patterns emerging from the analysis of the conceptual metaphors of ‘teaching is a journey’ and ‘teaching is a performance’ identified findings suggesting participants shared a common mindset regarding the narrative they adopted when reflecting on their teaching experiences.

Dauite (2013), in suggesting how individuals “become good at narrating within cultural norms” (p. 6) to tell their stories and situate and conceptualise their experiences, within the context of this study, alludes to a commonly shared narrative amongst participants whereby the conscious and unconscious focus on reflective practice was both a product of, and process arising out of, a culture valuing and embracing the concept of continuing professional development in a bid to enhance teaching practice. Hence, it can be surmised how the coding analysis of the interview transcripts, of participant observations within the focus group and analysis of conceptual metaphors, against three levels of narrative frames, combined to identify a narrative steeped and embedded in a culture of reflective practice, adopting a solutions-focused approach to teaching, and underpinned by a keen sense of values espousing an attitude of ‘self-enhancement’ and ‘openness to change’ (Schwartz, 2012).

## Chapter Summary

In summary, this chapter identifies how a degree of consensus was evident in acknowledging how the choice of conceptual metaphor referred to in reflecting on teaching experiences could impact teaching practice, with participants identifying how the two primary conceptual metaphors (i.e., teaching is a journey and teaching is a performance) identified within the study were symbolic of how participants contextualised and conceptualised their teaching practice and were representative of their conceptual teaching systems. These findings suggest how a greater level of reflection was possible by probing the significance of conceptual metaphors as an alternative to traditional cyclical models of reflection (e.g., Kolb, 1984; Gibbs, 1988).

From a theoretical perspective, the findings support notions of how conceptual metaphors can frame reflections and give insights into patterns of how a tendency exists for individuals to make decisions and take actions aligning with and consistent with their conceptual metaphors. Furthermore, the findings also aligned with Lakoff and Johnson’s (1980; 2003) theory of conceptual metaphors, and McAdams and McLean’s (2013) Narrative Identity theory regarding how the stories individuals tell of their experiences have relevance and inform their actions and behaviours. Regarding McAdams and McLean’s (2013) Narrative Identity theory, constructs categories referring to exploratory narrative processing, agency and redemptive stories, emerged from the findings as being prevalent in being representative of participants’ reflective stories told of their teaching experiences. These findings signify the emergence of a narrative strand whereby participants adopted an optimistic problem-solving approach to their teaching practice, in keeping with the further analysis of the interview transcripts against Tompkins and Lawley’s (2006) PRO model.

The deeper level of analysis of the conceptual metaphors referred to by participants against Schwartz's (2012) Universal Values list identified values espousing self-direction, stimulation and achievements as being dominant and representative of participants' underpinning values and beliefs of their teaching practice acting as internalised guides that define and inform behaviours.

The combined analysis of the dominant conceptual metaphors against McAdams and McLean's (2013) Narrative Constructs and Schwartz's (2012) Universal Values list suggest how the exploration of metaphors, whereby the notion of conceptual metaphors with an emphasis on how the chosen frame can give insights to inform and impact on academics' teaching practice, emerged as key findings of this study.

Finally, this chapter identified how an appreciation existed in valuing the relevance and significance as an approach to reflective practice in a move away from the traditional approach to reflection encouraged by cyclical models of reflection.

## Chapter 6 – Analysis of Use of the Clean Language Questions Within the Research Interviews

This chapter reports on the findings into the use of the Clean Language questions to allow participants to reflect on their teaching practice in keeping with the third research question: “To what extent do the Clean Language questions allow participants to reflect on the metaphors representative of their teaching experiences?”

As previously discussed within the Methodology chapter (sections 3.1.2 and 3.3), three approaches of analysis were employed by this study to determine the level at which the Clean Language questions within the research interviews were facilitated and allowed participants to reflect on their teaching practice. These three approaches consisted of:

- A coded content analysis of the Clean Language questions asked by the interviewers within the research interviews
- Quantitative analysis of questionnaires distributed to participants after the interviews to seek participants’ views of the use of Clean Language questions as a method of exploring participants’ reflections and metaphors of their teaching practice
- Qualitative reflections of the use of the Clean Language questions within the questionnaire and focus group discussion to corroborate the participants’ observations and reflections of the value of exploring metaphors and use of the Clean Language questions

This section reports on the analysis of the use of the Clean Language questions via coding decisions reported in section 3.3; namely, the categories of the type of questions asked, the level of Clean Language questions asked by the research interviewers, against Sullivan and Rees’ (2008) list of Clean Language questions, and the identification of the ‘cleanness’ of Clean Language questions in keeping with Lawley’s (2014) *Protocol for Validating ‘Cleanness’ of an Interview* classifications. The coding of the interviews was completed via NVivo data analysis software, whereby a total of 336 Clean Language questions were identified across 11 research interviews, against the Sullivan and Rees (2008) list of Clean Language questions included in Appendix one.

The findings reported within the chapter are based on the return of 10 out of 11 questionnaires and seven participants contributing to the focus group discussions.

The chapter initially details the findings of the content analysis of the use of the Clean Language questions within section 6.1 and proceeds to report on participants' reflections of the use of the Clean Language questions within the research interviews (section 6.2). Finally, section 6.3 summarises the key findings into using the Clean Language questions as part of this study.

## 6.1 Analysis into the Use of Clean Language Questions

Initially, the value and relevance of the questions asked during the research interview were probed within the focus group, where participants commented:

*"The questions seem neutral in their response, and the manner in which they were asked gave me scope to respond to them as I wish"*  
(focus group comment)

*"Questions asked by [the interviewer] appear vague, sometimes just repeating what I had said, but now understand how this is part of the model and in a way gave me the freedom to direct my answers to the question"* (focus group comment)

*"A strange interview in that I did not know what was expected of me or the answers I was required to give as in traditional research interviews. In a way, this was good ... I could reflect and say what I wanted to at will"* (focus group comment)

These comments were further substantiated by questionnaire findings whereby eight out of ten participants reported they found the questions asked during the research interviews 'considerably' or 'to most extents' useful. Furthermore, figure 3 reports on the findings of participants being invited to describe the experiences of being interviewed and details how the combined findings from the questionnaire and focus group discussions suggest that the interview and interviewers' use of the questions were positively welcomed by participants in enabling them to reflect on and discuss aspects of their teaching practice.

A detailed analysis of the specific questions asked during the research interviews identified that a over two thirds of questions asked by the interviewers being either a Clean Language question, or reflective prompts question, and to a lesser degree probing questions inviting participants to volunteer further information (see appendix 14 for further details). These findings suggest the presence of a mix of 'clean' and other 'response' questions identified a divergence away from the pure form of Clean Language interviewing advocated by David

Grove, whose concept of the clean interview comprised only of solitary use of Clean Language questions and the use of Clean Language 'syntax'. This move towards using a more varied range of questions could be explained by recognising that David Grove's background in using the Clean Language model within a psychotherapy setting differs from the aims of the reflective or research-based context of the interviews completed as part of this study. This importance in acknowledging the context and aims of the interview is further recognised by Meese (2014), who identified how the aim of an interview could have a bearing on the use of the Clean Language questions to promote a more pragmatic approach to employing the use of Clean Language questions within research contexts and within this study.

An exploration of the interviewers' specific use of the Clean Language questions was made against the 12 Clean Language questions (see Appendix one) identified by Sullivan and Rees (2008), and coded to determine the frequency of their use within the research interviews and identify the extent to which interviewers asked specific Clean Language questions. Of the three categories of Clean Language questions listed by Sullivan and Rees (2008), 'developing', 'intention' and 'source and sequence' questions from the total of 134 Clean Language questions were asked across all research interviews. These findings signify a clear pattern in the use of the 'developing' category of Clean Language questions, with 86.57% of questions coded identified as being from within this category of Clean Language questions. Therefore, a clear trend in the prevalent use of the 'developing' category of Clean Language questions is evident from the findings. The relevance of the findings in identifying the frequency and popularity of the use of four key 'developing' Clean Language questions is significant regarding the level of competence needed to employ and ask these questions effectively to reflect on practice, due to the ease with which the interviewers can recall and ask the developing questions, within a research interview context or facilitate reflection.

A more detailed analysis of the use of the 'developing' Clean Language questions shows a pattern whereby four key 'developing' Clean Language questions were predominantly referred to within the research interviews, namely:

- What kind of [x]?
- Anything else about [x]?
- Where is/whereabouts is [x]?
- That is like what?



The above listed developing questions represented 92.24% of all 'developing' Clean Language questions asked within the research interviews. These findings concur with Rees (2016) and Hartley's (2020) observations as sufficient in employing the use of the Clean Language question, with 92.24% of all questions asked originating from the 'developing' category of Clean Language questions. Thus, the notion of 'less is more' could be applied to stress how using a minimum range of clean questions outside of a therapeutic context could be employed effectively to encourage individuals to reflect on their practice.

38.69% of the questions asked across all the research interviews were 'reflective prompts' of participants' utterances, whereby the interviewer responded by mirroring participants' words/phrases back to them to either promote further discussions or clarify/explore the issues being discussed. This was a manner of responding which participants found helpful via focus group comments, stating:

*"Enjoyed the way in which my thoughts were repeated back to me.  
Made me realise what I was thinking"*

*"Interesting how some of the questions asked were not questions,  
just a reflection of my own words. Don't get me wrong, this did not  
seem out of place. Actually helpful"*

The act of the interviewer responding to participants' comments by mirroring back participants' own words and phrases can also be found within the humanistic and Rogerian approaches to helping, and thus suggests how the use of the Clean Language questions can be complemented and enhanced by reference to other models of helping. Regarding the use of the humanistic and Rogerian approaches to helping specifically, Nelson-Jones (2014) identifies how the act of reflecting keywords and phrases back to the client can help pull together the key contents and feelings expressed by a participant, and can help to show understanding on the part of the interviewer, as well as clarifying the most important points and acting as a bridge in allowing the participants to expand on the issues being discussed, or move on to another. Mearns et al. (2013) further stress how reflecting on participants' sentiments, particularly feelings, aids in building empathy with the client and allows for a deeper and more meaningful exploration of the issues by a participant. However, the act and importance of reflecting and summarising as a mode of responding to participants is underplayed within the Clean Language model, in preference to using the Clean Language 'syntax' to explore metaphors, yet is considered by participants to be of value.

The second level of coding undertaken in the analysis of the interview questions consisted of examining the levels of 'cleanness' of each of the Clean Language questions asked by interviewers against Lawley's (2014) protocol to further evaluate the use of the Clean Language questions (see Appendix 11 for further details. Table 5 details the coding percentage analysis of the Clean Language questions asked by the research interviewers. In scrutinising the use of the Clean Language questions, Lawley's (2014) contention of 90% of a range of questions asked within an interview needing to be 'classically clean' or 'contextually clean' as a measure of the validity of the cleanness of the interview was adhered to, with 92.75% of the questions asked being within the measure stipulated by Lawley (2014). However, the 90% measure of cleanness of interview questions identified by Lawley (2014) illustrates a personal preference for measuring cleanness of Clean Language questions asked, as opposed to one corroborated by research. Though, the high degree of clean questions asked within the 'classically clean' and 'contextually clean' categories aids in stressing the degree of skill and competence in the use of the Clean Language questions that was evident when exercised by the two research interviewers.

The *Protocol for Validating a 'Cleanness' of an Interview* represents an attempt by Lawley (2014) to establish a range of criteria to measure the cleanness of the interviews and validate the Clean Language model's use via academic research studies. The use of the categories proposed by Lawley (2014) allows for clear identification and distinction between the 'cleanness' of Clean Language questions and corroboration in supporting the validity of the protocol, while further consolidating the legitimacy of using the Clean Language model. However, limits exist in the use of Lawley's (2014) protocol criteria since it does not acknowledge the value of questions asked outside of the Clean Language model. In this study, value was placed on how Clean Language questions were complemented by the use of reflective prompts and probing questions during the research interviews, as discussed earlier.

## **6.2 Analysis of Interviewers' Conduct in the Use of the Clean Language Questions**

Analysis of the questionnaire findings suggests participants positively welcomed the interviewers' conduct and enjoyed the experience of being interviewed, as shown by the words chosen to describe the experience of the interview in figure 3 within section 6.1.

These questionnaire findings into the conduct of the research interview were further supported by questionnaire and focus group comments stressing how:

*“[interviewer] stuck to the pointing and picked up the metaphors to explore... appeared detached, but still able to precisely pick up on what I was saying especially in relation to metaphors” (focus group comment)*

*“More conversational and cathartic in his use of questions. Almost a self-help approach to reflections” (focus group comment)*

*“It was a really well-conducted interview. The interviewer is clearly skilled in the Clean Language method and was also very good at quickly building rapport” [Participant 2]*

*“It took a little bit of time for the interviewer to coax out specific metaphors. However, she spent time re-questioning and coaxing ... then after this I found the experience useful for reflecting on my practice” [Participant 6]*

The interviewers' skills and experience in using the Clean Language questions can influence the number and the 'cleanness' of Clean Language questions asked and engagement from participants. Efficient use of the Clean Language model requires a degree of skills and competence as demonstrated by the range of online and offline courses existing to teach the Clean Language model, and local practice groups to assist Clean Language practitioners and those with interest in Clean Language to fine-tune and hone their Clean Language questioning skills. Both the interviewers involved in interviewing participants had previously completed a minimum of Modules 1 and 2 of the Clean Language certification courses, thus assuring a level of competence in using the Clean Language model.

Nevertheless, these positive findings into the use of the Clean Language questions need to be tempered by acknowledging how some participants expressed mild to moderate unease in the interviewers' mode of questions and questioning approach; an issue reported by a couple of the participants who, on reflecting on their experiences of being interviewed, stated:

*“Unsure of direction, but questions required real thought, which was hard work at the time” (focus group comment)*

*“It was a deep interview, sometimes not easy, but ultimately productive in getting me to think about my practice” (focus group comment)*

*“Found myself working hard to think my responses through, not in a negative way but the questions asked focused my attention in a way that I am not used to” (focus group comment)*

Possible explanations of the contrasting views expressed by participants on being interviewed could be linked to a lack of preparation and clarification of the Clean Language model on behalf of the participants. Each participant completed a Participant Consent Form (see Appendix two) before the interview, detailing how the focus of the interview required them to reflect on their practice, and some participants were only given a brief explanation of the Clean Language model or approach to questioning as advocated by the model. This issue was evident whereby a couple of participants reported how they were “*unsure of expectations [of the approach to interview]*”, and of how the interview dynamic functioned especially since, where the onus was on them to lead the conversation, was at times “*uncomfortable*”, thus denoting how a lack of understanding of the Clean Language questions could hinder the effective use of the model and might have been addressed by a more thorough debrief during the Participant Consent Form of the Clean Language model and an approach to questioning employed within the interviews. However, it is important to acknowledge how the role of the interviewer and the level of rapport they had with participants were found to be key variables aiding the success of a Clean Language interview, as does the perception of the level of the difficulty some participants reported in responding to the Clean Language questions; issues that will need to be considered and debated in the broader use of the range of Clean Language questions in the discussion that follows.

The controversy over the ‘mechanical’ use of the Clean Language syntax, previously discussed within section 2.4, was analysed to determine the use of the syntax within the research interviews. While a lack of consensus exists into the use of the ‘syntax’ in the Clean Language community, the debates within online professional media forums lean towards a more flexible and pragmatic approach to the use of the syntax being encouraged to match the aims of the interview (Lawley, 2014; Meese, 2014). This decision to move away from employing the use of the Clean Language syntax within the research interview, while remaining mindful of the need to be ‘clean’ in the way questions are asked to maintain rapport with the participant, was reinforced via focus group discussions which suggested:

*“I found the interviewer’s approach to asking questions relaxed and casual. I don’t know the Clean Language questions, but my chat with the interviewer appeared very informal” (focus group comment)*

*“Following my interview, I was interested in finding out more about Clean Language, and I have read some online articles about it also watched some YouTube videos. From what I know, the interviewers didn’t precisely follow how Clean Language is advocated, but this is a*

*positive. I think I would have found the format I have read about somewhat intimidating” (focus group comment)*

*“[Interviewer 1] was more conversational and cathartic in his use of questions. Almost a self-help approach to reflections” (focus group comment)*

*“[Interviewer 2] came across as a warm person and professional in her approach” (focus group comment)*

The above focus group comments, echoed by other participants, about the interviewers' approach, identify how the combination of the move away from Clean Language syntax and use of additional reflective summaries and probing questions, aided a more flexible approach to employing the Clean Language questions, and encouraged participants to engage productively with the research interview and the Clean Language questions asked of the participants. Furthermore, the more conversational style of questioning and the Clean Language model adopted by interviewers and welcomed by participants reinforced the need to promote conversational reflection methods advocated by Hoffman-Kipp et al. (2003) and Guo (2021).

### **6.3 Analysis into Clean Language Questions' Ability to Promote Reflective Practice**

In further probing how participants found the range of questions asked allowed them to reflect on their teaching practice, questions two, eight, nine and ten within the questionnaire (see Appendix 11) aimed to determine participants' views of the range of questions asked by the interviewers. The majority of the participants within the questionnaire reported positively on the range of questions asked during the interview as either 'considerably' or 'to some extent' helpful in encouraging and enabling them to reflect on their teaching practice. Findings correlating with qualitative comments within the questionnaire and focus group discussions suggest:

*“The questions were sufficiently open to give me plenty of scope to explore my practice; follow-up questions pointed me in the right direction to explore further” (focus group comment)*

*“[the questions] Helped me think quite deeply about my teaching practice and approach” (focus group comment)*

*“The style of interviewing was open and non-judgemental. I was therefore enabled by the open nature of the questions to reflect on my practice” (focus group comment)*

As discussed within section 6.1 earlier, the questionnaire identified a strong leaning towards identifying positive elements of the interview as acknowledged via question eight, whereby from a list of 18 supportive and undesirable words aimed at gauging participants' broad reflections of the interview, the words 'informative', 'revealing', 'useful' and 'helpful' proved popular in describing the participants' experience of being interviewed as part of this study; a point further reinforced by question ten, where participants appear to be generally 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the range of Clean Language questions asked, and further supported by the findings of question nine, where participants reported they found the range of questions during the research interview helpful via comments such as:

*"The questions provided an opportunity to reflect on aspects of my practice, I do not often think about in-depth though being too involved in the everyday minutiae of my role" (focus group comment)*

*"Gave me time to think about my practice and spent some time reflecting after the interview" (focus group comment)*

These positive reflections of the interview identify a common theme whereby a degree of agreement exists regarding the value of Clean Language questions in enabling participants to reflect on their teaching practice was further reinforced by the findings of questions one, three and five of the post-interview questionnaires completed by participants. The findings from question one of the questionnaire showed participants identified how the interview questions allowed them to 'considerably' or 'to most extents' explore aspects of their teaching practice, and 70% reported how the interviews allowed participants to explore their thoughts about their teaching practice (question three). This is a significant finding supported and congruent with focus group comments whereby participants recounted:

*"Yes, a very deep level of reflections, which I was unprepared for or expected as part of the interview" (focus group comment)*

*"A very different form of reflection" (focus group comment)*

*"Required me to reflect at a level I had not done before" (focus group comment)*

In further analysis of the use of the Clean Language questions, participants, responding to question five, determined how a sense of development was evident in their reflections of the interview, with 80% of participants reporting how the research interviews helped raise their self-awareness of their teaching practice. These findings suggest a pattern of acceptance and relevance of the approach to the interview, and the use of the Clean Language questions as a reflection method. The combined findings from both questionnaire and focus group

discussion identified how, as a mode of reflection, the Clean Language questions allowed participants to explore, analyse and challenge their appreciative systems (Schön, 1987; Zeichner & Liston, 2014), and via an exploration of the frames surrounding the metaphors referred to when reflecting on their teaching practice, identify a potential alternative approach to reflecting on practice.

These findings further suggest how conversing and interaction (with the interviewee) helped address some of the criticisms levelled at contemporary approaches to reflective practice, for example, the value of dialogue as a mode of reflection advocated by Hoffman-Kipp et al. (2003) allowed participants to move away from the use of checklist approaches to reflection as identified by Boud and Walker (1998), and criticism of the dominant use of process and cyclical models of reflection used within different aspects of education today. Additionally, Surgenor's (2011) criticisms of how a premise to 'reflect-on-demand' prompted by cyclical approaches to reflection is at odds with and could prove counterproductive in allowing individuals to reflect on their practice effectively are countered by the informal conversational approach to asking questions utilised as a part of this study.

The conversational approach to reflective practice advocated by the Clean Language questions also ties into Black and Halliwell's (2000) and Bullman and Schutz's (2008) notions of how reflective practice approaches need to take into account the different ways individuals learn by giving participants autonomy in steering discussions to give them greater scope to think through and explore the metaphors symbolic of their teaching practice. Hence, it is important to consider how the Clean Language questions' productive use is aided by the rapport between the interviewer and interviewee, and the practical and pragmatic approach of asking Clean Language questions in an informal and conversational way.

Participants' observations of experiencing the Clean Language questioning model as a method of reflection suggest a degree of acceptance in using the model as a reflective approach which allowed them to explore how their thoughts were impacted by the act of placing frames around concepts and arguments consciously and unconsciously, layers a schema over the way experiences are perceived. The frames and schemas analysed and identified as part of this study are discussed further in sections 5.1 and 5.2.

The extent to which Clean Language questions allowed participants to explore metaphors associated with their teaching practice and emotions was queried as part of questions four, six and seven on the questionnaire, and further probed as part of the focus group discussions.

More specifically, the value of reflecting on metaphors allied to participants' teaching practice was evident as part of the analysis of question six, with analysis of the questionnaire responses showing 80% of the participants asserting they found the focus of reflecting on metaphors to be 'considerably' or 'to some extent' useful as a way of reflecting on their practice. These findings are corroborated via focus group comments stressing:

*"Never before explored metaphors and viewed them as important. But do so now. Not sure how but feel that they are significant and useful" (focus group comment)*

*"Made me think about metaphors which were not really metaphors" (focus group comment)*

The significance of exploring metaphors was also revealed by the findings of question seven, with 80% of the participants reporting they found the specific focus on analysing metaphors to be either 'considerably' or 'to some extent', helpful despite the element of surprise reported by the focus group:

*"Didn't appreciate how often we talk in metaphors" (focus group comment)*

*"Never really thought before of metaphors as being significant. Just a way of expressing yourself" (focus group comment)*

*"I would need to listen and read through the interview transcript again carefully, but my general impression was the issues discussed and metaphors explored were significant, but just don't know or able to summarise how specifically" (focus group comment)*

Interestingly, the consensus of the value of exploring metaphors to reflect on practice did not extend to allowing participants to explore their emotions. Responses to question four aimed at establishing to what extent the interview allowed participants to explore their feelings resulted in 70% of the participants identifying how the Clean Language questions either 'considerably' or to 'some extent' allowed participants to explore their emotions. Findings, however, suggesting a lesser degree of certainty as to the value of the Clean Language questions in tapping into participants' emotions, were demonstrated by focus group comments which reflected:

*"I would be curious to know about what the metaphors I referred to say about me" (focus group comment)*

*"Felt the interview was deep, and so were the metaphors which [interviewer] picked up to explore, but not sure what all this means,*



*what is the significance. Maybe a follow-up interview would be helpful?" (focus group comment)*

The combined analysis of the questions aimed at determining the significance of the Clean Language questions in allowing participants to explore metaphors representative of their teaching practice identified a degree of consensus exists in the positive value of exploring metaphors as a way of reflecting on experiences and via the use of the Clean Language questions.

In summary, common themes and threads emerging from the analysis of the post-interview questionnaires and focus groups, with regards to determining "how the Clean Language model and range of questions allowed participants to reflect on their teaching practice", suggest a strong correlation whereby participants acknowledged and appreciated the value of the use of Clean Language questions as helpful prompts that aid reflection and the specific focus on exploration of metaphors to be significant. The role of the interviewer and mode of questioning also appeared significant and were issues of note in the analysis of participants' experiences of completing the research interviews.

## Chapter Summary

As part of the findings into the level to which the Clean Language questions facilitated and allowed participants to reflect on their teaching practice, three approaches of analysis were employed by this study: a coded analysis of the Clean Language questions asked by the interviewers; quantitative analysis of questionnaires distributed to participants after the interviews; and qualitative reflections of the use of the Clean Language questions within the focus group discussion. The combined findings identified a favourable response towards the use of the Clean Language questions in order to allow participants to reflect on and raise their self-awareness of their teaching practice. A mode of reflection, when combined with interviewers' use of reflective prompts and probing questions, was specifically aided by the use of the conversational mode of questioning to encourage reflections over traditional self-reflect activities more routinely utilised and used within various aspects of education today (Guo, 2021), and this was further impacted by the level of rapport between the participant and interviewer. Participants also welcomed the interview's focus on exploring metaphors as a potentially valuable approach to reflecting on practice.

A measure of the use of the Clean Language questions was shown via an analysis of the questions asked against Lawley's (2014) *Protocol for Validating a 'Cleanness' of an Interview*,

which, in addition to proving to be influential in determining the level of 'cleanness' of interviews, aided in identifying the high degree of Clean Language questions asked and exceeded the 90% measure stipulated by Lawley (2014) of cleanness of interviews. Variations in the specific use of the Clean Language model, with the addition of reflective prompts and probing questions, was evident in the analysis of the finding showing how the proper form use of the Clean Language model, as advocated by its founder, David Grove, was at odds with the depth the model used by a research interview, which consisted of a mix of reflective and clean questions and, therefore, moved away from the use of the 'clean syntax'. The mode and method of use of the Clean Language questions were welcomed by participants in identifying how a more relaxed and flexible use of the Clean Language questions and enhanced depth of rapport with the interviewer allowed for a more thorough and insightful level of reflections.

An analysis of the interviewers' use of Clean Language questions identified a leaning towards using a limited range of four 'key developing questions' which utilised a range of reflective prompts. This suggests how the effective use of the Clean Language model could be achieved by focusing on a narrow set of Clean Language questions that individuals could be trained to employ effectively.

However, these findings are hinged with some uncertainty expressed about the style of questioning employed by interviewers and how the contrasting style of questioning could influence the level of engagement of the participant and their ability to reflect on their practice. This was a finding, however, which could possibly be accommodated by a more thorough briefing and the introduction to the Clean Language model and questions before the interview.

## Chapter 7 – Conclusion

In acknowledging the importance of reflection within education, this study set out to determine the significance of conceptual metaphors in aiding reflective practice, the relationships between conceptual metaphors and academics' narratives for teaching, and to evaluate the Clean Language questioning model as a research interviewing method. The following chapter summarises the findings in light of the research questions (section 7.1) before proceeding to detail the study's contribution to knowledge (section 7.2) and then progressing to discuss the emergence of a working model of reflection based on the empirical research findings, and a discussion of how the model may work in practice (section 7.3). The chapter ends by acknowledging limitations and caveats associated with the study (section 7.4) before ending with a concluding summary.

### 7.1 Review of the Research Questions

The section below reviews and discusses the research questions posed within the introduction chapter. The specific research questions were:

1. What are the dominant metaphors used in the way academics recall, reflect and describe their teaching experiences?
2. What are the relationships between academics' use of metaphors and their narratives of teaching?
3. To what extent do the Clean Language questions allow participants to reflect on the metaphors representative of their teaching experiences?

Regarding the first research question, which focused on the dominant metaphors referred to by academics to recall, reflect on and inform their teaching practice, this study identified three key findings from the analysis of the research interviews and focus group discussions. Firstly, the analysis of the metaphors identified the dominant use of three source domains from the range of source domains coded and analysed within the interview transcripts (see chapter 4). Namely, source domains referring to 'movement and directions', 'place and locations', and 'senses' were confirmed by participants as being representative of their teaching practice and indicative of the outcomes (primarily curriculum and local/national standards) that participants are required to maintain and achieve. Secondly, the mapping of source to target domain codes in relation to NLP logical learning levels identified target domains conveying characteristics of 'behaviour', 'environment' and 'emotions' was central to the participants' metaphors and were mentioned in preference to deeper learning levels linked to values,

beliefs and identity. Thirdly, a sense of conventionality and universality in the use of the metaphors expressed, especially regarding the use of 'structural metaphors' to communicate aspects of behaviours and 'orientational metaphors' to express thoughts and emotions, was evident within the findings. The analysis and the mapping of the source to target domains were aided by and confirmed the relevance of Lakoff and Johnson's (1980; 2003) work on conceptual metaphors and Kövecses' (2010) list of source and target domains in analysing the findings, and offered potential to draw inferences with regards to the relevance of the conceptual metaphors referred to by participants and identified via the study. In summary, the findings into the dominant metaphors referred to by academics to reflect on aspects of their teaching practice identified an emerging trend towards 'movement and directions', 'place and locations', and 'senses' source domains to convey thoughts associated with 'behavioural', 'environmental' and 'emotional' aspects of their teaching practice.

The research findings determined the applicability of focusing on metaphors as meaningful variables to explore as part of the reflective process. They can raise awareness and give insights into how academics contextualise and conceptualise their teaching experiences by identifying and recognising how the dominant conceptual metaphors referred to by academics to reflect on teaching practice are symbolic and representative of the narratives underpinning their teaching practice. This suggests how, within a reflective discussion, there is potential to focus on and explore metaphors in ways that could be of value in enhancing the reflective process.

These findings also yielded some interesting observations regarding an emphasis on the role of metaphors and, more widely, storytelling within the context of reflective practice. Academics within HE are not obliged to reflect on their teaching practice for CPD purposes but are encouraged to ponder on their experiences to enhance their teaching practice. Mälkki and Lindblom-Ylänne (2012) cite how negative perceptions of what constitutes reflective practice and a lack of knowledge about teaching pedagogy (McAlpine & Weston, 2000) can hinder reflective practice within HE. However, adopting a conversational approach to reflecting on experiences, as utilised within this study, can help to facilitate a more detailed analysis of thoughts and feelings regarding aspects of teaching practice, and adopt a more amenable and flexible approach to reflective practice. This move from a descriptive to interactive approach to reflection fosters the opportunity to explore and critique practice in a way traditional cyclical models of reflections via ruminations may not (Ashwin & Boud, 2020; Guo, 2021).

Furthermore, regarding the focus on exploring metaphors within the context of reflective practice, Thibodeau and Boroditsky (2011; 2013; 2015) – as previously discussed within the literature review – suggest how framing and explaining experiences via specific metaphors impacts how phenomena are perceived. This was evident within the findings of this study and through the identification of academics' conceptual metaphors of their teaching. Therefore, adopting a storytelling approach to encourage reflective practice in order to explore how the stories and metaphors referred to within a story are framed, can help to raise awareness and give insights into the effectiveness of approaches to teaching, and may also help to address barriers to reflective practice identified by Mälkki and Lindblom-Ylänne (2012) and McAlpine and Weston (2000).

The findings, which indicate a preference towards appreciating the value of exploring metaphors by participants, could be widened and extended to a teaching context. The value of referring to metaphors as a strategy for teaching students has previously been acknowledged and espoused by Wormeli (2009), Saban (2006) and Karolia (2015). However, within a teaching context, considering and exploring the metaphors referred to by students to demonstrate their understanding of knowledge and of concepts covered during lectures and seminars appears to have not been given due regard. Attending to and questioning the metaphors referred to by students when explaining their understanding of content and concepts covered during sessions via the Clean Language questions (further discussed below) could help provide an additional avenue to clarify and verify students' understanding of concepts discussed during teaching sessions and facilitate reflection.

The second research question – “What are the relationships between academics' use of metaphors and their narratives of teaching?” – saw the emergence of two key conceptual metaphors, primarily, perceiving ‘teaching is a journey’ and, to a lesser extent, ‘teaching is a performance’. Participants were able to recognise and concur with these conceptual metaphors as representative of their teaching experiences and yield broader insight into the problem-solving and decision-making strategies they adopt as part of their teaching practice. Further analysis of ‘teaching is a journey’ equated the conceptual metaphor as an excursion between two points to meet the students' needs, and address curriculum and assessment needs. Similarly, the ‘teaching is a performance’ conceptual metaphor related to ‘not teaching well’ and ‘attempts to teach better’ as themes within participants' perspectives of their teaching narratives. Participants acknowledged how these conceptual metaphors were symbolic and representative of how they contextualised and conceptualised their teaching practice. They

also identified how the choice of conceptual metaphors could potentially impact teaching practice, specifically regarding how individuals make choices to tell meaningful stories and potentially inform decisions and actions.

Exploring the relationship between conceptual metaphors and wider narratives was established by exploring the implications and significance of how the theory of frames can allow participants to understand the ways in which their conceptual metaphors for teaching can inform practice. The implications of the conceptual metaphors were understood by exploring those referred to by participants within the interview transcripts in relation to the use of the PRO framing categories (Tompkins & Lawley, 2006), and the wider frames and narrative of McAdams and McLean's (2013) Narrative Constructs and Schwartz's (2012) Universal Values Theory. Against McAdams and McLean's (2013) Narrative Constructs, the study identified a pattern where constructs linked to 'exploratory narrative processing', 'agency' and 'redemptive' stories were dominant within the conceptual metaphors mentioned by participants while reflecting on aspects of their teaching practice. This, thus, suggests that participants' narratives of their teaching consist of a quest to enhance their teaching practice and to seek the autonomy to adopt a solution-focused approach to teaching positively. These findings were further supported via analysis of the conceptual metaphors against Schwartz's (2012) Universal Values Theory, where a strong focus on values espousing self-direction, stimulation and achievement was evident. These values appear to be aligned with and be congruent with the findings of McAdams and McLean's (2013) Narrative Constructs in being consistent with expressing a narrative whereby participants' schemas of their teaching consist of a positive wish to reflect on their pedagogy and be open to change in adjusting their teaching practice where necessary. These findings also shed light on how theory could underpin and give insights into the reflective process and model of reflection proposed. Within the context of this study, the relevance of Lakoff and Johnson's (1980; 2003) theory of conceptual metaphors in the telling of stories (of teaching experiences) within the realm of narrative studies aided in reinforcing the exploration of metaphors within the reflective stories people tell.

The findings into interpreting and determining the narratives underpinning conceptual metaphors referred to by participants emphasised the value of linking conceptual metaphors and narratives to raising awareness of participants' agency and teaching identities. Ashwin and Boud (2020) specifically identify how telling stories and reflecting via discussions helps us understand how emotions, thoughts, and perceptions of the past and present, can enhance

teaching practice and awareness of who we are as teachers. This study helped raise awareness and give a deeper insight into the values and beliefs underpinning participants' teaching practice through the variables discussed earlier to code and analyse the interview transcripts. The importance of exploring academics' values and beliefs has been alluded to by MacFarlane (2004), who suggests how many aspects of education are imbued with values and the need for academics to strive to teach through and demonstrate the values they espouse. In referring to Schwartz's (2012) Universal Values list to analyse participants' conceptual metaphors, this study helps to stress an avenue of how values of beliefs underpinning academics' teaching practice could be explored.

However, caveats in analysing the links between conceptual metaphors and wider narratives need to be acknowledged. For example, the generic, simplified phrasing of a conceptual metaphor (e.g., teaching is a journey) may not highlight the comprehensive understanding and complexities of experiences or may change over time and not accurately convey the participants' intentions. Furthermore, individuals may consciously and unconsciously censor aspects of their stories, while the metaphors used to convey their experiences may not fully define the broader narrative they purport to represent. Therefore, any analysis and interpretation of a metaphor need to consider participants' specific understanding of the multi-layered meaning of the metaphors. Within the context of the study, using the Clean Language questioning model approach encouraged a more open participant-centred and driven dialogue in exploring the relevance and significance of a metaphor, and helped to focus the research interview discussions against the simplified analysis and interpretation of a metaphor.

The retrospective analysis of metaphors and qualitative data needs to be recognised regarding the relevance of past reflections of experiences and the findings to current practice; an aspect of reflection whereby participants are likely to make causal connections between events and variables in keeping with their need to make sense of phenomena; a need further extending to researchers who themselves are prone to creating narrative fallacies when analysing retrospective data and identifying causal connections in the analysis of raw data; a matter countered to an extent by allowing participants to review their interview transcripts and an invitation to discuss the significance and implications of the findings, individually and via the focus group, where participants expressed a link between their retrospective reflections and the metaphors referred to while discussing aspects of their teaching practice.

In recognising the possibilities of exploring conceptual metaphors and frames surrounding the relevance and significance of the metaphors, adopting an alternative approach to interpreting narrative may be helpful in further determining a more robust link between conceptual metaphors and the broader underplaying premise conveyed. Dauite's (2014) concept of narrative inquiry and model of 'significance analysis' process particularly appeal given the model's emphasis on determining the evaluative devices and exploring narrative from holistic perspectives, which may allow for an original and novel approach to interpreting the relevance of the conceptual metaphors.

The findings into the third research question into the use of the Clean Language model showed a favourable response towards the use of the Clean Language questions to explore metaphors into aspects of participants' teaching practice (research question three). Findings, confirmed by both the questionnaire and focus group comments, indicated that participants specifically noted that the Clean Language model allowed them to explore, analyse and challenge elements of their practice, and also raised their self-awareness by framing and reframing reflections of their teaching practice. A key finding emerging out of the coding analysis of the Clean Language questions was the prominent use of four specific 'developing' clean questions over 'intention' and 'sort and sequence' category questions. Namely, questions stating:

- What kind of (x)?
- Anything else about (x)?
- That is like what?
- Whereabouts/where is (x)?

In keeping with the findings above, the use of a limited number of Clean Language questions links to Rees' (2016) and Hartley's (2020) notions of the possibility of utilising a limited range of Clean Language questions to employ the Clean Language model effectively. The research implications of this have potential in the broader methodological use of the Clean Language model given the limited time needed to learn its fundamental principles and the four questions of the Clean Language model as a tool for encouraging reflection.

The study's evaluation into using the Clean Language questioning model to complete qualitative research interviews identified the potential value of using the model as a research method. Specifically, it identified how using a limited range of four Clean Language questions, together with reflective and probing questions, was especially productive in promoting a conversational approach to reflection. This further supports the extended use of the Clean



Language model in alternative contexts. Of particular note is the role of the interviewer and the mode of questioning adopted by the interviewers, whereby participants noted a level of rapport with the interviewer and observed how effectively the Clean Language questions avoided the interviewers appearing distant. The questioning approach employed by the interviewers, alongside the absence of the 'Clean Language syntax', adopted a more pragmatic approach to asking a mix of 'clean', and reflective and probing questions. The act of conversing and the use of dialogue also stimulated the reflective process. This was in contrast with reflecting on paper in isolation and the more dominant process and cyclical models of reflection typically used within different aspects of education today (Hoffman-Kipp et al., 2003; Zeichner & Liston, 2013).

The 'cleanness' of these research interviews, with regards to the range of questions asked by the interviewers, was confirmed by analysis of the interview transcripts against Lawley's (2014) *Protocol for Validating 'Cleanness' of an Interview* classifications and the list of Clean Language questions identified by Sullivan and Rees (2008). The research interviews completed as part of this study exceeded Lawley's (2014) premise of 90% of the range of questions asked in an interview needing to be 'classically clean' or 'contextually clean', thus, demonstrating the two researchers' confidence and competence in using the Clean Language model when completing the research interviews and acknowledging the value of Lawley's (2014) protocol as a measure of determining the depth of the Clean Language interview, as discussed in section 6.1.

A key secondary finding in using the questions asked during the research interviews centred on reflective summaries and probing questions. The use of reflective summary and probing questions within the research interviews was in keeping with the ethos of the Clean Language model, whereby the zero inference embedded within a reflective summary/paraphrase could be considered as a 'classically clean' question within Lawley's (2014) protocol criteria. This encouraged a balance between using four key clean questions (identified earlier) with a series of reflective paraphrases and probing questions to aid reflections and promote a conversational approach to the interviews in preference to the Clean Language syntax.

Despite acknowledging the value of the Clean Language questions in aiding reflections, a small number of participants expressed a degree of uncertainty about the questioning approach employed by interviewers, specifically, regarding the lack of direction from the interviewers and how the model requires a 'reflect-on-demand' approach to isolating and

exploring specific metaphors. On consideration, this issue may be linked to inadequate preparation and clarification of the use of the Clean Language model before the interview and was possibly impacted by some participants' learning and reflective preferences (Black Halliwell, 2000; Bulman & Schutz, 2006; Surgenor, 2011). These anxieties could have been potentially addressed and overcome by debriefing participants before the interview about the scope and manner of the questioning approach adopted using the Clean Language questions and model.

Given the above conclusions, in keeping with the finding welcoming the use of the Clean Language questioning model to aid reflections, a study trialling the emerging model of reflection would be beneficial to determine the value of the effectiveness of the model in practice and in order to expand the appeal and application of the Clean Language model. The findings into the effectiveness and popularity of using four key Clean Language questions, in conjunction with reflective paraphrase prompts, would benefit from being promoted and debated within the wider Clean Language community and research to determine the approaches' value within the context of completing 'clean' research/questioning interviews.

The development of a new model of reflection based on the research findings gives rise to a practical outcome of the study. This model of reflection, developed in line with the study's key findings, acknowledges the complexity and individual nature of the reflective process, adopting a model of reflection that encourages a conversational storytelling approach to reflection and allows for an exploration of metaphors and the use of the Clean Language questioning model.

## **7.2 Contribution to Knowledge**

In concluding this thesis, the key elements of this study – storytelling within reflective practice, metaphors, narratives and application of the Clean Language questions – discussed initially within the introduction chapter, are revisited to summarise the value of the study within various contexts.

The study investigated an approach to reflective practice previously not studied within the context of how HE academics could reflect on aspects of their teaching practice or how reflective stories and the metaphors referred to by academics link to how they might conceptualise their teaching experiences. The findings of this study illustrated how

conversational storytelling was valued and could be used as a method of reflection and a welcome alternative to the traditional cyclical process method of reflection.

The study's findings further noted the relevance of exploring metaphors as part of the reflective process, specifically, focusing on identifying the dominant conceptual metaphors referred to by academics to reflect on their teaching practice which had significance in terms of the narratives the metaphors represent within broader teaching and reflective practice contexts.

From a methodological viewpoint, the study's use of the Clean Language questioning model to complete qualitative research interviews was effective and productive when used as a research method in facilitating the reflective process and exploration of the conceptual metaphors, thus, recognising the positive potential use of the Clean Language questioning model as a research method.

Theoretically, the study provided insights into the telling of stories (of personal experiences) and the role of conceptual metaphors in conveying a greater understanding of the narrative embedded within them. This was specifically regarding how the theory of frames could be used to determine an individual's narrative against the work of Tompkins and Lawley's (2006) PRO model, McAdams and McLean (2013) on Narrative Identity Constructs, and represents values and beliefs in relation to Schwartz's (2012) theory of Universal Values.

Practically, the study sees the development of a new model of reflection based on the research findings. This is based on empirical evidence from the research and acknowledges the complexity and individual nature of the reflective process. It amalgamates the three strands of the thesis (exploration of conceptual metaphors, interpretation of narratives and use of the Clean Language model) to promote a pragmatic model of reflection as an alternative to traditional cyclical process-driven approaches to reflection, which are described in more detail below within section 7.3.

### **7.3 An Emerging Model of Reflection**

The study resulted in the development of a model of reflection amalgamating the findings of the three research questions, combining elements of the Clean Language questions to elicit metaphors, identify conceptual metaphors and refer to frames to promote reflective practice amongst academics and educators.

The model, shown as a diagram below, is subsequently explained via links to findings from the study further within this section.

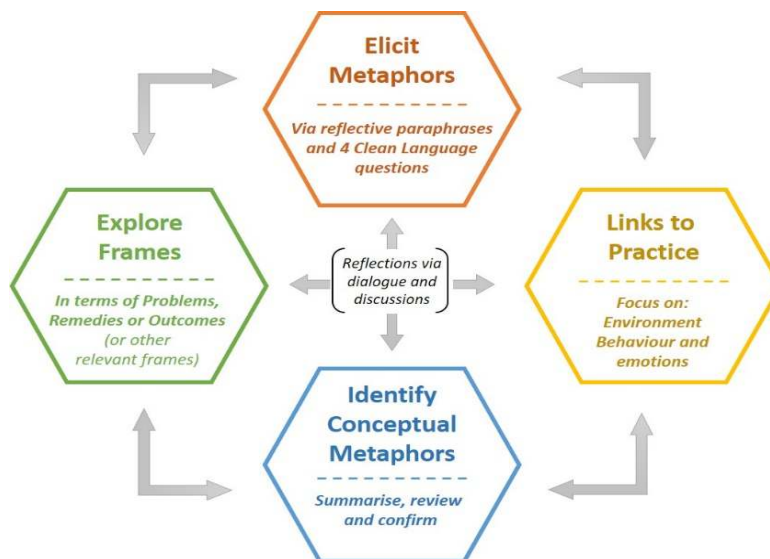


Figure 4 - Proposed Model of Reflection

To demonstrate how the proposed model of reflection links to theory and an analysis of the findings, it is recommended that reflective practice should be encouraged via discussions with others, as shown in the centre of the diagram stating, 'Reflections via dialogue and discussions'. This aspect of the model, stemming from a conversational approach to reflecting on experiences, was welcomed by participants.

Adopting a conversational approach to reflection would allow participants to air their teaching stories and enable facilitators to determine the dominant metaphors and frames permeating across the reflections (Bold, 2012).

### 7.3.1 Eliciting metaphors

The model proposes a flexible approach to eliciting metaphors via conversation in keeping with Black and Halliwell's (2000), Bullman and Schutz's (2006) and Guo's (2021) notions of how reflective practice approaches need to consider the different ways individuals learn. The approach encouraged within this model would also take into account the findings allied to the effectiveness of reflecting aspects and words of the participant as responsive paraphrases and probing questions, and the use of a limited range of four Clean Language questions (as

previously discussed) which would require only nominal training to build competence and confidence in the use of clean interviewing techniques.

The use of reflective summaries and probing questions is consistent with the findings, showing how participants reflect on their practice while maintaining a flow of discussions. Reflective summaries and probing questions promote empathy and deeper and meaningful exploration of the key issues (Nelson-Jones, 2014; Mearns et al., 2013). In keeping with the key principle of the Clean Language model of the need for the interviewer to have a detached facilitator role in influencing and interpreting the participants' responses (Lawley & Tompkins, 2000; Sullivan & Rees, 2008), it is important, therefore, to acknowledge how the use of reflective paraphrase prompts, within the context of the Clean Language model, represents a 'clean' reactionary stimulus to participants' utterances. This is a way of responding which recognises how the move away from the use of the Clean Language 'syntax' is more appropriate to the research interview context and a more pragmatic approach to the Clean Language model and questions (Meese, 2014).

In eliciting metaphors, some awareness of the concept and differences between the source and target domains, and structural, orientational and ontological metaphor types could aid in exploring and identifying conceptual metaphors (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Kövecses, 2010). Therefore, some understanding, recognition and training with respect to these concepts of working with metaphors would be helpful alongside the training necessary to employ a limited range of Clean Language questions appropriately.

### 7.3.2 Identify conceptual metaphors

The aim of identifying conceptual metaphors within the model is to help the participants gain an understanding of the subtle impact metaphors have in making sense of complex thought patterns via metaphorical analogies, particularly with regard to their cognitive and decision-making processes, their wider practice and the isomorphic qualities metaphors have on conveying more profound thoughts (Robins & Mayer, 2010). This process is aided by exploring the entailments of a metaphor (transfer of information from source to a target domain) and the inferences resulting from these entailments. Identifying an agreed-upon conceptual metaphor further can act as a 'tethering post' and as a focal point to explore the frames, both limiting and enhancing, which surround the conceptual metaphors and may potentially impact practice (Hartley, 2020).

The process of identifying conceptual metaphors could take account of and consider Lawley and Tompkins' (2000) suggestions of the need to observe repeated or corresponding patterns of metaphors within conversations. Specifically, Lawley and Tompkins (2000) encourage the determination of three characteristics of a pattern that could act as a catalyst; namely the parts (i.e., source and target domain of metaphors) of a pattern, the arrangement (mapping of source and target domains) of a pattern and how individuals repeat these patterns. As part of the reflective process within the proposed model, the facilitator could take account of using Clean Language questions, a reflective summary and probing questions to note the patterns and analyse them with regard to the similarities and differences, and in relation to the compare and contrast analysis of the metaphor referred to in order to establish the primary conceptual metaphors emerging out of the reflective process.

The process of determining conceptual metaphors emerging out of the discussions could further be aided by reference to examples of conceptual metaphors from existing publications. For example, Lakoff et al.'s (1991) Master Metaphor List could provide an avenue whereby conceptual metaphors could be categories consisting of events, structures, mental events and emotions, which might be a starting point for exploring patterns of metaphors arising from reflective discussions with individuals.

### 7.3.3 Explore frames

The exploring frames stage of the model of reflection would focus on summarising and confirming the presence of the conceptual metaphor with participants before progressing to discuss and identify the impact the frames surrounding a conceptual metaphor would have on a person's thoughts and behaviours. This stage of the proposed model of reflection would allow for a deeper level of awareness, reflection and exploration of the broader impact of the conceptual metaphors in expressing a preferred schema of teaching over others.

Within this study, the PRO model (Tompkins & Lawley, 2006), McAdams and McLean's (2013) Narrative Constructs and Schwartz's (2012) Universal Values Theory were used as a framework to explore and examine the frames and narratives evident and expressed via metaphors. However, another alternative range of frames could be used to explore conceptual metaphors within different contexts and give flexibility to the participant to examine metaphors in line with the context, remit and aim of the reflective practice being pursued.

A vulnerability in analysing and working with metaphors is emphasised by Cook-Sather (2003) and Carpenter (2008), who stress that adopting a specific metaphor in the analysis of experiences, in preference to other metaphors, could limit rather than enhance self-awareness and practice. Hence, careful consideration needs to be given to the use of metaphors. By default, consciously or unconsciously, using a specific metaphor and frame to convey and interpret an experience could exclude the substance and importance of alternative interpretations of experiences. Therefore, as part of the 'identifying frames' stage of the proposed reflective model, it would be important to adopt a questioning approach to determining patterns of relevance within the conceptual metaphors identified as the significance, and a probing approach to explore frames surrounding the conceptual metaphors.

#### 7.3.4 Links and transferability to practice

The value of the proposed model emerging from the findings can be further determined by exploring the potential links to practice and the transferability of the model within different contexts. As well as higher education, the generic approach and process in which this model of reflection could be applied and utilised would enable and appeal to a range of educational contexts (schools, FE) where reflective practice is encouraged and required to enhance pedagogy and practice and continuing professional development. The model might also be promoted and used within social care and healthcare settings, where reflective practice is also valued and could further be utilised within professional activity where supervision, monitoring, and evaluation activities (e.g., management, performance appraisals, etc) are encouraged and practised.

Appreciating the significance of the value of conversational storytelling could be further considered within the teaching context. Green (2004) identifies how the role of storytelling in teaching has been superseded by a focus on imparting knowledge by the sharing of facts (e.g., bullet points on PowerPoint slides). However, utilising stories and narratives within a teaching context may aid learning by personalising content, generating interest, making learning more relevant, and overcoming anxiety by allowing learners to reflect on how their own stories and experiences relate to their learning and apply to practice. Similarly, the value of exploring metaphors and reflections via specific and chosen frames of references linked to a relevant theoretical lens (e.g., professional identity, personality/behavioural traits, pedagogy, etc.), specific context, or profession may engender a bespoke approach to reflective practice not always possible by following traditional cyclical methods of reflection.

There might also be further scope for the Clean Language questioning model's transferability within different contexts in addition to its use as a qualitative research method as utilised within this study. The findings demonstrating the value of a limited number of four key Clean Language questions, which could be assimilated without the need for specialist training could have wider applications to encourage reflection. For example, employing Clean Language questions as a method of facilitating teaching, tutorials, action learning sets, peer observations, personal development reviews, group work, brainstorming, etc. indicates the wider relevance and significance of the findings of the study and the possible application of the proposed model of reflection amongst different contexts. This aspect of the model is potentially further enhanced by adopting a conversational approach to reflection, as mentioned previously, to exploring metaphors via the proposed model with the aid of a facilitator who appreciates the vocational context of the participants.

#### **7.4 Limitations and Caveats of the study**

In addition to the challenges of working with retrospective data and addressing phenomenological perspectives, as discussed within sections 2.3, 3.2 and 3.3.2. The necessity of grounding the findings in the data collected and of reconciling any findings that might initially appear contradictory were accommodated as part of the analysis of the data within this study (Neusar, 2014). This was achieved by allowing and involving the participants in reviewing the findings from the initial analysis both individually and via focus group discussion, which confirmed the relevance of the preliminary findings from the analysis of the data. Furthermore, the critical nature of the relationship and regular meetings between the two researchers encouraged an evaluative approach to the relevance of the findings and informed the initial conclusions of the data analysis.

The findings from this study are based on a small sample of participants which undermines the potential for generalisation. This research story, it must be acknowledged, depends upon subjective dispositions of metaphors, liable to changes in both moods and circumstances, as conveyed by participants from the same institution, and interpreted by a researcher, at a particular point in time. Clearly, this limited sample of 11 participants, although diverse in age, experience, and vocational discipline (see Appendix three), cannot be deemed representative of the wider academic population. However, they do constitute a rich and recognisable research story. Furthermore, the study's research questions aimed to identify the narratives



represented within participants' conceptual metaphors and to evaluate the use of the Clean Language questioning model within the specific context of a sample of HE academics instead of inferences signifying broader generalisations of aspects of practice across other contexts (Neusar, 2014).

## **Concluding Summary**

Overall, this study helped to determine how the limitations of traditional methods of reflection encouraged and promoted within education and, within the context of this study, HE, could be addressed by fostering a storytelling approach to reflection, exploration of conceptual metaphors and the use of the Clean Language questioning model as part of the storytelling process. The findings and conclusions of the study link to reflective practice within HE, help to attend to notions of how reflective practice has yet to be fully integrated into HE to enhance teaching practice and to promote professional development (Chan & Lee, 2021), specifically, regarding the use of a conversational approach to reflection and use of alternative methods of reflection practice (Guo, 2021). Further exploration of the deeper narratives embedded within the conceptual metaphors could also help to inform and give insights into how academics contextualise, conceptualise and adapt their teaching practice. The study contributes to our understanding of the value of exploring conceptual metaphors with reflective and teaching contexts, the potential of referring to the Clean Language questioning model as qualitative interviewing methods and to an awareness gained from analysing the narratives as part of the reflective process. Although set within the backdrop of academics working within a HE setting, the insights emerging from this study would be of interest and relevance to educators within a range of contexts who are required or appreciate the value of reflection to enhance teaching practice.

Finally, the metaphorical journey of completing this thesis has ultimately been one where peaks and many valleys have had to be negotiated and managed, and where the passengers on the journey (i.e., support from others) have ultimately aided and led to the completion of the journey and this thesis. The insights gained from completing the journey have helped to form a narrative, best summarised by the quote: “you can't write the next chapter, without turning the page on the last”.



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## Appendix 1 – Clean Language Questions

### Developing Questions

- (and) what kind of 'x' (is that 'x')?
- (and) is there anything else about 'x'?
- (and) where is 'x'? (and) whereabouts is 'x'?
- (and) is there a relationship between 'x' and 'y'?
- (and) when 'x', what happens to 'y'?
- (and) 'x' is like what?

### Sequence and Source Questions

- (and) then what happens ? or (and) what happens next?
- (and) what happens just before 'x'?
- (and) where could 'x' come from?

### Intentions Questions

- (and) what would 'x' like to have happen?
- (and) what needs to happen to 'x'?
- (and) can 'x' happen?

Sullivan, W., & Rees, J. (2008). *Clean Language: Revealing Metaphors and Opening Minds*. United Kingdom: Crown House Publishing.

## **Appendix 2 - Participant Consent Form**

**Thank you for agreeing to participate in my EdD Doctoral thesis research which aims to explore the effectiveness of using metaphors as method of reflection within Higher Education setting.**

**This form gives a brief overview of the aims of the research, your commitment to the research, the ethical considerations that you need to be aware of, your rights as a participant in the study and your consent agreeing to participate in the research.**

### **Purpose of the Study**

The proposed study, on recognising the value and importance of reflecting on practice within education, aims to counter some of the criticisms levelled at current methods and models of reflective practice by trailing and evaluating a new method of reflection (Clean Language model) that is more akin to the way in individuals think and conceptualise their experiences via metaphors. A study whereby a range of academics working in various HE institutions will be interviewed at various stages through the academic year to determine the effectiveness of the new model of reflection.



## Your Commitment to the Research

The research will require the following from you:

- To complete a minimum of four 60-minutes interview over an academic year.
- A complete a short online questionnaire shortly after each interview aimed at evaluating and gauging your reactions to interview.

## Ethical Considerations

You will need to be aware of the following:

1. The interview will be recorded.
2. The interview will be transcribed and aliases will be used to ensure your identity is protected both within the thesis itself and any notes taken as part of the interviews.
3. All transcripts of the interviews are available for you to view should you wish to see them.
4. Your employing organisation or the department in which you work will identified within the thesis itself and any notes taken as part of the interviews.
5. There is a possibility that the findings from the research may be submitted for publication purposes to the relevant journal(s).
6. All data will be stored electronically within a computer folder that is only accessible by the researcher and protected by a password

## Consent

Please read the tick the relevant boxes below:

- I have been fully informed of the nature and aims of this research
- I understand that I have the right to withdraw from the research at any time without giving any reason
- I give permission for my words to be quoted (by use of aliases)
- I understand that the information collected will be kept in the secure place by the researcher
- I understand that no other person other than the researcher and the research supervisor will have access to the information and that all information will be held in secure location by the researcher.
- I understand that my identity will be protected by use of a aliases in the report and that no written information that could lead to my being identified will be used in the report
- My contribution to this research is entirely voluntary and I am able to withdraw my involvement in the research at any time

Please do not hesitate to contact the researcher should have any questions about the consent for the research study.

If you are satisfied that you understand the your commitment and involvement with the research study, please sign below.

Signature of the Participant:    Print Name:                  Date:  
.....                                  .....                                  ..... / ..... / .....

Signature of the Researcher:    Print Name:                  Date:  
.....                                  .....                                  ..... / ..... / .....

One signed copy to be retained by the Participant and one by the Researcher

## Appendix 3 – Participants Profile

Participant Number	Subject Specialism	Level of HE experience	Interview by	Participant in Focus Group
1	Healthcare	21+ years	Researcher 1	
2	Education	11-15 years	Researcher 1	Yes
3	Science	11-15 years	Researcher 1	Yes
4	Psychology	6-10 years	Researcher 1	Yes
5	Psychology	6-10 years	Researcher 1	
6	Languages	6-10 years	Researcher 2	Yes
7	Business	11-15 years	Researcher 2	Yes
8	Education	11-15 years	Researcher 2	
9	Education	6-10 years	Researcher 2	Yes
10	History	21+ years	Researcher 2	
11	Business	0-5 years	Researcher 2	Yes

## Appendix 4 – Pilot interview sample transcript

### Pilot Interview 1

S1: Interviewer

S2: Responder (referred to as Jane to maintain anonymity)

Timecode	Speaker	Transcript
00:00:001	S1	This is a test just to see if the recording is working. You want to say something, Jane?
00:00:05	S2	Okay. Hi, I am Jane. I am very interested in your study.
00:00:08	S1	Thank you. Now, we will begin. So basically, I would explain a little bit what we're doing. One point that we basically find out is a bit more about your teaching experiences over the last academic year. So feel free to kind of describe your teaching experiences over the last academic year? What would you say it was like?
00:00:30	S2	Okay. I suppose I choose just the way it's like __0:35__ and what would I say it's like? I often regard my teaching has been in the <b>youth group</b> and it has been particularly like that with <b>one or two groups</b> . Busy. What's it like? That's where I am with it.
00:01:04	S1	It's okay. No problem. So when you say youth group, what kind of youth group would that be?

00:01:12	S2	What youth group it would be? Well, I suppose when I think of when I am saying with a lot of the student's I teach are these community students. So it's <b>lively</b> , it's quite an open conversational kind of process really. So a <b>lively open youth club</b> with lots of conversation going on.
00:01:40	S1	Okay. So I feel when the conversations going on, what kind of conversations are going on?
00:01:50	S2	Well, there is <b>lots of debate</b> . There is <b>lots of opinion</b> . There is lots of <b>points for development</b> really, no routes to go down sort of chewing things over and <b>drinking coffee</b> and putting the way it's right those kinds of debates and conversations. But more focus on that obviously.
00:02:21	S1	More focus on that. Okay. So it does a kind of point of development and routes. Is there anything else about the new study, you think?
00:02:33	S2	Well, obviously, they are focused on a particular curriculum and I think that the subjects that I teach provides opportunity for those kinds of development and I think about also things that I'm teaching and other modules. I wouldn't say that's quite the same really and that ends up feeling different. What do I describe the other ones as – sometimes it just <b>feels like you are in the school</b> .
00:03:17	S1	Okay. As I did appoint a development on the routes, is there a relationship between the points of development and the routes that you take?
00:03:28	S2	Yeah. I mean what happens is that you see the opportunity to you know all the students would say, he had a particular route and it seems that with the discussion of the topic. And then what you have got to do is to try a spot the points of development for the students and put in the points that you want

		at that particular point in time. So to draw them back to the theory and to draw them back to the key concepts that we're trying to discuss to get them to look at a different view things or whatever.
00:04:04	S1	Okay.
00:04:08	S2	That's what I mean by the points of development and if it then to be think more critically.
00:04:14	S1	Okay. So if there is a point of development speaking more and thinking more critically putting the points of development thing, what exactly are the points of development?
00:04:35	S2	I was to say about that...usually what you find is that the students will grasp the concepts or won't grasp the concept. So for those who grasp the concept in some way, then they will start their conversation, they will start to tell you what they think. They will give you their opinions. At some point in that discussion will be an opportunity to actually challenge of feeding some different information really.
00:05:10	S1	Okay. So does it gasping the concept or not gasping the concept? What has to happen before the gasp the concept?
00:05:22	S2	Well, they have to have the input of some kind and that's happening in the lectures at the moment.
00:05:29	S1	Okay. What kind of an input would that be?

00:05:36	S2	They got a basic overview and the key concepts that set out to them as far as I am thinking really – it's a bit of a <b>big picture kind of frame way</b> and then when they come to the seminars then what we are trying to do is get them to look at the picture in a bit more detail. So they got to think a bit in terms of pictures and do some of <b>your own</b> .
00:06:08	S1	Okay. What kind of a picture would that be?
00:06:17	S2	Again, limiting we have rather than actually be able to describe it. It's sort of – maybe it's a bit disconnected but it's full of bits, a bit like a country side really here. Yeah. <b>Like a horizon in a particular view</b> .
00:06:46	S1	So it is a picture bits country side, horizons on a particular view. What kind of a view would this be?
00:06:55	S2	So it's a... You know it might be an outlook coming from a particular perspective really and I think the reason that's in bits are probably contrary more than one perspective. You're trying to get and sew the layouts of the land in the lecture and then the bits are trying to hone in on particular places as those. That would be the way that I would say and to understand the shape of those places and maybe the influences on those places.
00:07:40	S1	So there are places lay out on the <b>__07:41__</b> to its places and things in particular places. What about <b>site</b> in these places?
00:08:04	S2	Well, something <b>__08:05__</b> valleys and hills really. I suppose it depends on the concept of what you are acting <b>__08:18__</b> you know for certain equate that the group with module again will come back to may be saying a particular setting where a group would be weaving together so it lines up images of the



		particular group. If they are talking about gender and society. You might have a place that's a home or whatsoever you know and then a woman would be or something in that kind of own way. We're talking about something that affects society then you might see that as a city or as a part of the city or part of the town or – yeah. And then we used to do a role theory, I used to not get them to look at __09:15__ so you need to get a system and you get things like transport in that way and stuff like that. Maybe sometimes its networks that blocking out certain things they ask them to join and link together.
00:09:31	S1	So your __09:32__ cities and towns and all kind of theory. Is there anything else about the valleys and the hills?
00:09:53	S2	I cannot think of right now really it's just sort of – I suppose it's sort of that relates to what they grasp and grasp for things or not and then whether there a bit stuck in the valley or whether the — up the hill a bit or whatever I suppose. Yeah, that's really where I am going.
00:10:13	S1	Stuck in the valleys up in the hills. Is there a relationship between stuck in the valleys up in the hills?
00:10:19	S2	Oh that's where they are with they're grasping of the concept I suppose, yeah, and it's also why trying to get them to follow the route I suppose.
00:10:29	S1	Okay. And where about is the route?
00:10:34	S2	I just think I suppose you get more perspective if you're high up the hill and where about is the route? I don't know. It probably goes over the hills far away if probably weaves around the landscape really I suppose.

00:10:52	S1	Okay. And what would need to happen for you to kind of follow the route?
00:11:03	S2	It's probably when I am at the <b>11:04</b> . Well they've got to go with the <b>11:07</b> you know or so suppose and so much better and trying to leave them in some way or in a quite portion. The source of – I will keep up with them that's where I'm looking for. So marked of them yeah I suppose that this sort of come and follow and that's what usually really like if it's also – or you would like you know, I cannot wait to make because you've heard ahead of you and you try to put those as same sense, to slow down and make them think of it more and be a bit more critical. Some of them you know, almost can drag in into the frame way and some of them you know it's a bit of pushing them up the hill and I cannot think a sort of — that's made mess for us I suppose and I suppose the challenge for me is how will I focus. I will keep them the...
00:12:13	S1	So the <b>12:14</b> meant for pushing them up to hill telling you know and giving them a focus and keeping them there. What would need to happen to keep them there?
00:12:36	S2	Well it's going to be stimulating, it's going to be interesting, it's you know what comes to my mind as if — as one of the students saying things about you know what more scenarios. She wants to see the picture that set so, to how I have got to you know help them see the picture. She wants the scenario to apply but some of this is about saying for some depth laying in because you know maybe the students don't necessarily want to go up and down the hill so then maybe they are want back kind of outlook, maybe they want more like ice skating rink you know I mean, and they want to get to a place where they can just skate across of it really and which the other side, which is the passing to the silence and that kind of thing. And sometimes it's

		getting them to focus on the <b>__13:38__</b> or something because maybe you know maybe for another country.
00:13:44	S1	So you've got ice skating rink, you've got hills and the valleys, ice skating in their journey, was anything else about the journey?
00:14:00	S2	<b>__14:00__</b> different sort of family not really happy, trying to think about teaching other journey because I was thinking about my teaching rather than the <b>__14:14__</b> that's what you wanted too.
00:14:17	S1	It could be <b>__14:18__</b> .
00:14:18	S2	Well okay. I suppose it's two things from which showed the two aspects of the route, the teacher under laying it really because if I think about the journey then I suppose I'm sort of thinking of a lot of things on the way and that's, that's what I mean really. I don't quite now almost go a lot out of that I suppose in some way a little bit, up to the land up to their journey, it's you know, it's whether it's a <b>__15:00__</b> it's smooth or it's <b>__15:04__</b> or a direct or what makes a good journey? Comfortable with stretching and able to stretch or you know, I have got to change now because I like changing or driving in cars, I like to see the land as I go passed so I have got stuck with me again but I think – it sort of think about the stimulation and feeling comfortable in some <b>__15:48__</b> .
00:15:55	S1	Stop picking up the pieces <b>__15:57__</b> and also cannot see the landscapes and the <b>__16:02__</b> the landscape. Is there anything else about – Is there a relationship between the like being bumpy and smooth?
00:16:33	S2	I don't think the way really for a journey you know, a smooth rises you can put <b>__16:25__</b> it's not necessarily, it's not necessarily very stimulating and a

		bumpy ride can just feel uncomfortable and put you off kind of – yeah. So I suppose there's something __16:41_ between and that's something that is comfortable and stimulating pleasurable.
00:16:53	S1	So there's something comfortable and stimulating, you think __16:56_ about comforting and stimulating in their journey?
00:17:06	S2	I think it is probably something about a freedom in the – getting off the shoes sort of __17:16__. Yeah and what I like about road journeys as oppose to rail journeys is being able to choose your own way so it's sort of you know there's something between – whether you're on what type of journey, you're on one way you've got more choice or whether you know one way you're a bit more constructive I suppose.
00:17:52	S1	So you got more journey, freedom and sort about choice. Is there a relationship between the freedom and choice?
00:18:04	S2	Yeah, it's a very strong really I think. But why you think about the teaching, sometimes the students don't have any choice or the choice is they would make it not about what you would be after <b>V&amp;E</b> .
00:18:26	S1	Okay. So we started off on looking that kind of taking in the youth goal and kind of got all we are teaching being something about freedom or choice and __18:41_ going to choice, would that be your kind of the place to kind of live it for now?
00:18:46	S2	Yeah, yeah I think so. However, I might say that the youth club – that is exactly where the youth club should be so yeah. It would be the same thing

		really and so much better to date __18:58__ to residential hearts. It's a kind of education that I'm used to provide.
00:19:03	S1	Alright. Okay. Thank you.
00:19:06	S2	Thank you.
00:19:07	S1	Thank you.
00:19:08	S2	Very interesting.

## Appendix 5 – Pilot Survey sample responses

Hi Ma,

Sorry this is so delayed, but it escaped me a bit. Anyway, I hope this is not too late for your conference paper and that this is of some use.

When I am teaching at my best, it is like ... The students each respond 'as if they were proper' professionals and in honour of their teacher-student relationship. When it is not so good 'teaching' then occurs based on terms of professionalisation, there is no really beneficial relationship of ideas that is respectful on both parts. The teaching is dynamic and the quality of understanding was excellent and appreciated by the students and was on the occasion. When teachers are motivated and their contribution encourages more to try to be creative, often, students and their teaching are very best (according to my own criteria).

On an off day, my teaching is like ... a very performance that is not really reaching the 'students' or students. The engagement and reciprocity of learning is missing and it is, in effect, a 'one-way' 'teaching' task. The key and the presence of teaching and learning are missing.

During the last academic year, my teaching was like ... many things in life, including of course higher and some lower, including challenges which have required adjusting thinking and teaching practices, whilst simultaneously trying to create strategies to engage with the students.

When I write this I think I think a lot in my head and am probably still your only respondent to do so.

Hope this is useful for you.

Cheers,

Hey!

We problem- love this sort of thing- really gets me thinking...

When I am teaching at my best, it is like ... I am on top of the world. I feel anything is possible and that my knowledge is limitless. It is like being a rock star - giving the audience the best performance of your life. They pay a lot for a ticket and expect a great performance and to see you at your best- doing what you do best- that being teaching your subject.

On an off day, my teaching is like ... flat and slow. I feel that I cannot engage properly with the audience and that the audience has been bored or has left. I think in fact of the time my teaching is affected by these well-worn but not that I am having an off day, but rather that the audience is having an off day.

During the last academic year, my teaching was like ... the best it has ever been. I know my subjects well and know me better as a teacher. Like a rock star knowing their songs and set list for a concert, once you know it, you can improve it... it is special effects, chemistry, new techniques... but that the best has to be right.  
Hope this helps. x

This was actually quite hard to not miss if it's the sort of thing you were after but I've tried to do it instinctively rather than over-thinking it

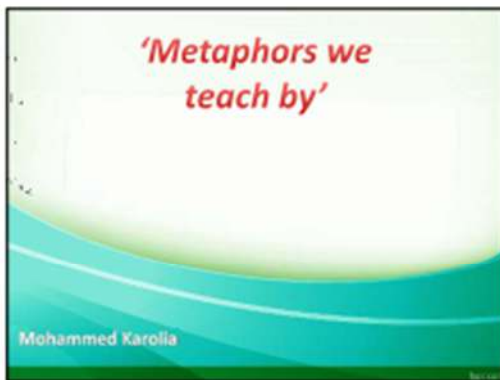
When I am teaching at my best, it is like ... flying - it feels really free and exhilarating. There is a connection when learning is visible and students are engaged, a buzz in the room. It reinforces the advantages of my preferred approach (positive) to teaching and learning experiences

On an off day, my teaching is like ... walking through a maze. It feels hard and daunting and I'm waiting for it to be over because I don't feel the students are getting the best of what I can offer. It takes a lot of energy and I'm starting to get personal here

During the last academic year, my teaching was like ... challenging, fun, hard, stretching, meaningful, though-provoking

See you soon

# Appendix 6 – ANLP Conference Presentation PowerPoint



1



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### ANALYSING METAPHORS

**Isomorph:** is a story or analogy that represents or is similar to another situation  
(Merriam-Webster Online)

**Source Domain:** words/phrases used to describe one experience in terms of another  
**Target Domain:** the conceptual domain that is being understood  
(Merriam-Webster Online)

**Vehicle:** metaphor words or phrases  
**Topic:** what the words/phrases refer to  
**Grounds:** connection or similarity between the two  
(Merriam-Webster Online)

**NLP Metaprograms**  
Teaching at your best: 'moving towards' + 'internal reference'  
Teaching on a off-day: 'moving away' + 'external focus'



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### ANALYSING METAPHORS OF TEACHING



**Symbolic Modelling**

"a method for facilitating individuals to become familiar with the symbolic domain of their experience so that they can discover new ways of perceiving themselves and their world"



**Clean Language**

"helps to acknowledge a client's experience exactly as they describe it... Orientate client's attention to an aspect of their perception"



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### METAPHOR LANDSCAPES

"The sum total of a client's embodied symbolic perceptions" (Lawley & Tomkins, 2000)

<p><b>When I am teaching at my best, it is like...</b></p>	<p><b>Symbols</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Rock star</li> <li>+ Actor</li> <li>+ Performer</li> <li>+ Host of a party</li> </ul>	<p><b>Relationships</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ performance</li> <li>+ great performance</li> <li>+ engaged</li> <li>+ Connection</li> <li>+ enthuse and inspire</li> </ul>
<p><b>On an off-day my teaching is like....</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ walking through treacle</li> <li>+ hit and miss</li> <li>+ audience</li> <li>+ wishing for it to be over</li> <li>+ uphill hike</li> <li>+ Heavy backpack</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ disappointed and frustrating</li> <li>+ pulling</li> <li>+ reluctant</li> <li>+ effort all the way</li> </ul>



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### THE WAY AHEAD

Symbol → Relationships → Patterns → Patterns of organisation

Early stages of completing the doctorate

To identify how Clean Language and Symbolic Modelling will help

**Actual Research Strategy**

22-25 respondents → Interview → 8 points in the year → Patterns of organisation

Clean Language

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Questions & Ideas

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## Appendix 7 – Metaphor Coding Categories

METAPHOR ANALYSIS		
SOURCE DOMAIN		TARGET DOMAIN
Animals (k)	Nature/Environment (k)	Problem
Building/Constructions (k)	Person/People	Remedy
Colours	Place / Location	Outcome
Communications	Plants (k)	
Cooking / food (k)	Senses	
Faith / Religion	Shapes	Identity
Food	Sizes / Measures	Emotions
Forces (k)	Text / Stories	Beliefs
Games and Sports (k)	Tools / Machines	Values
Good/bad	Transport	Capabilities
Health / Fitness (k)		Behaviour
Human Body (k)		Environment
Light and Darkness (k)		
Materials / Equipment		
Money and Economy (k)		
Movement / Directions (k)		

*Identifies 'Source Domains' added as part of coding analysis of interview transcripts.*

## Appendix 8 – Narrative Analysis Coding Categories

<b>NARRATIVE ANALYSIS</b>	
<b>McADAMS AND McLEAN (2013)</b>	<b>SCHWARTZ (2012) VALUES LIST</b>
<i>Agency : The degree to which individual are able to affect change in their own lives or influence others in their environment,</i>	<i>Achievement: personal success through demonstrating competence according to social standards</i>
<i>Positive: The degree to which individual are able to positively affect change in their own lives or influence others in their environment,</i>	<i>Benevolence: preserving and enhancing the welfare of those with whom one is in frequent personal contact (the 'in-group').</i>
<i>Negative The degree to which individual are able to positively affect change in their own lives or influence others in their environment,</i>	<i>Conformity: restraint of actions, inclinations, and impulses likely to upset or harm others and violate social expectations or norms.</i>
<i>Coherent Positive Resolution: The extent to which the tensions are positively resolved to produce closure/ending.</i>	<i>Hedonism: pleasure or sensuous gratification for oneself.</i>
<i>Communion : The degree to which individuals demonstrate or experience interpersonal connection.</i>	<i>Power: social status and prestige, control or dominance over people and resources.</i>
<i>Contamination: Scenarios where good/positive event turns bad/ negative.</i>	<i>Security: safety, harmony, and stability of society, of relationships, and of self.</i>
<i>Exploratory Narrative Processing: The extent of self-exploration and reflection expressed by individuals.</i>	<i>Self-direction: independent thought and action--choosing, creating, exploring.</i>
<i>Meaning Making: The degree to which the individuals learn or gleans a message from an event.</i>	- <i>Positive independent thought and action--choosing, creating, exploring leading to positive outcomes</i>
<i>Redemption: The extent to which bad/emotionally negative event or circumstance leads "good" or emotionally positive outcome.</i>	- <i>Negative independent thought and action--choosing, creating, exploring leading to negative outcome.</i>
	<i>Universalism: understanding, appreciation, tolerance, and protection for the welfare of people and for nature.</i>
	<i>Stimulation: excitement, novelty, and challenge in life.</i>
	<i>Tradition: respect, commitment, and acceptance of the customs and ideas that one's culture or religion provides.</i>

## Appendix 9 – Clean Language Coding Categories

CLEAN LANGUAGE			
RESPONSE TYPE	LEVEL OF CLEANNESS	TYPE OF QUESTION	
Reflective prompt	Classically Clean	Developing Questions	
Probing question	Contextually Clean	What kind of . . . ?	
	Mild/potentially Leading	Anything else about . . . ?	
	Strongly Leading	Where is / whereabouts . . . ?	
		That is like what?	
	Neutral Question	Is there a relationship between . . . ?	
		When . . . what happens?	
		When . . . what happens . . . ?	
	Intention Questions		What would . . . like to happen . . . ?
			What needs to happen . . . ?
			Can . . . happen?
			Sort and Sequence Questions
			Then what happens. . . happens next . . . ?
	What happens just before-after. . . ?		
	Where would . . . come from?		



There's stuff around work building, but I think parallel to that is that I don't feel that I'm growing, and we all need to grow just as I watch my students flourish. I think as professionals we need the opportunity for that as well and yeah, I feel I've kind of plateaued a little here. It's a great place to work and that's the frustration of it to be honest, it's a great place to work because we're all about learning and developing and that's really core to my psyche and the university has given me a lot of opportunities to do that. But I feel that I need to find a way to create a bit more space in my life to really generate the opportunities to learn more and this is all pointing towards getting a research profile, that's where it's all heading really but that's not just for the sake of being a researcher, it's not about that I don't think, it's more about it's an important part of my personality that's being neglected but because I work here I'm consistently reminded that that part of my personality is being neglected because I'm supporting a lot of other people in their own research and not doing any myself which makes me feel a bit of a fraud as well.

So in terms of what you've just said I've picked up on three things you've said, so something about being stuck in a plateau and being stuck in a role.

That's really interesting that language isn't it?

I think in relation to that, two things you've mentioned's making changes and wanting to grow so I want to take those three themes just go to plateau first and see what that means for you and how that feels for you and then what changes you would like and how you see that carrying into putting your professional goals wanting to grow.

I think they are excellent words you've picked out. It's almost a tension between a plateau and a role because a plateau is high and it's not down there but and so the plateau first I guess if I think of using the word plateau it's almost like you've climbed up the top of the mountain and at the top of the mountain it's flat so there's no more climbing up to do and it's quite nice being stuck at the top of that mountain for a while because you can observe the view and I feel I've been here long enough now to get an idea of how the place works. In that sense I'm on that plateau, I've got an idea of what my job role involves and how I ought to do it and where I do it well and where I do it less well and at those levels of things, I know the system, I know how it works I feel comfortable. I get my anxieties like everyone else but I feel fairly comfortable with that, but that's a positive of being on the plateau but it also means you can survey the whole landscape and nothing's changing you're stuck there, you're not moving anywhere. So I think the plateau has some positive connotations, the risk is when you're stuck down in a ditch and you can't really see out so the analogy does kind of work across because the stuck in a ditch thing means I'm stuck in this channel and I do feel that I want to spread my wings a little bit more that I have done so far but all I can see







**Being comfortable but dissatisfied.**

*And I think that the phrases you used were funny and having that occasion that's where the tension is coming from, that you feel comfortable at the same time you've got this threat and need to come apart to develop and grow.*

*You very much what you've just said, you want me to say more on that then? (Isn't it clear what she is saying, without going round and round in circles. I don't know what this has got to do with reflection but I think the frustration is it was employed here at the University as an academic, that's what our job is, that's what we are, now I understand that it is a teaching university or at least it was when we were employed so there is a significant teaching role and that's fine, I think the administrative role is very burdensome but my frustration is that [that] there really is no space for academic work or scholarship and that's what's frustrating me and it's frustrating me because that's what I want to do, it's frustrating me because I see people around me managing to do that and I wish I understood their secret of how they manage to do that, it frustrates me though I wouldn't say it frustrates me but I'm continually reminded of that frustration because I am supporting other people in their research, I'm supporting you by doing this interview, I've got 3 PhD students that I'm supporting, I'm just doing the undergrads with their dissertations and the MA students so it's like reminding you at the time that you're not doing it, that you're helping others do it and I'm happy to be helping others.*

*Let's move on to the jobless. Do you talk about the jobless and being on the high and on the landscape? what do you see around the landscape?*

*This is going back to reflecting on the year. I see assessment, I know assessment is part of the job and when I say assessment I mean marking really but I find it incredibly draining, even if you only do 4 or 7 hours of marking a day it doesn't leave you with a lot of mental capacity to do anything else at the end of the day. I see managing students as individuals and this is where quite a lot of time is absorbed but not really catalogued. I see it as part of my job I don't want to be coming across as negative so it's managing students and particularly where you may know that you've got a student who for whatever reason is time consuming and they're in year 2, they're going to be with you for the next however long so I see managing students, I see my teaching role but that's actually more of an emerging role for me in because that's a way into scholarship, seeing my teaching resources gives me the opportunity to refresh my subject knowledge and extend my subject knowledge so I see that, I'm also quite turned on by organising, I do like things to be tidy and organised so setting up my reading list on Unilearn, setting up my resources on*





Universities, I see all their ongoing stuff and I see just the upside of it, I'm going to have to now, what's coming up now. Clearly that's the nearest thing, I've got seminars around recruitment which is less so that's a worry. I've got CAs first, so I've got assessment, CAs, Clearing, planning, induction, all those kinds of things, there can't really a proper break in the summer, I have got postgrad students who I'm going to have to give some dedicated time through the summer so that's what the landscape is. Although in my mind's eye now I'm taking it to you I can describe this landscape as a landscape rather than a lot of jobs. Every summer, so not every summer but maybe last summer and definitely this summer I said right I'm going to get some research done this summer but the summer goes so quickly and it's cluttered up with other jobs but I'm trying to plan in my landscape for this summer to definitely do some defined research, you know hopefully I'll feel better about the world after that. I feel like I'm over stepping it, I'm saying that this is a pause, that isn't how I see it at all, I see it as a fundamental part of my job that is neglected and it means I can't move on anywhere else because I'm quite expensive now for another university to employ and they're only going to want to employ someone who can offer the full package as it were.

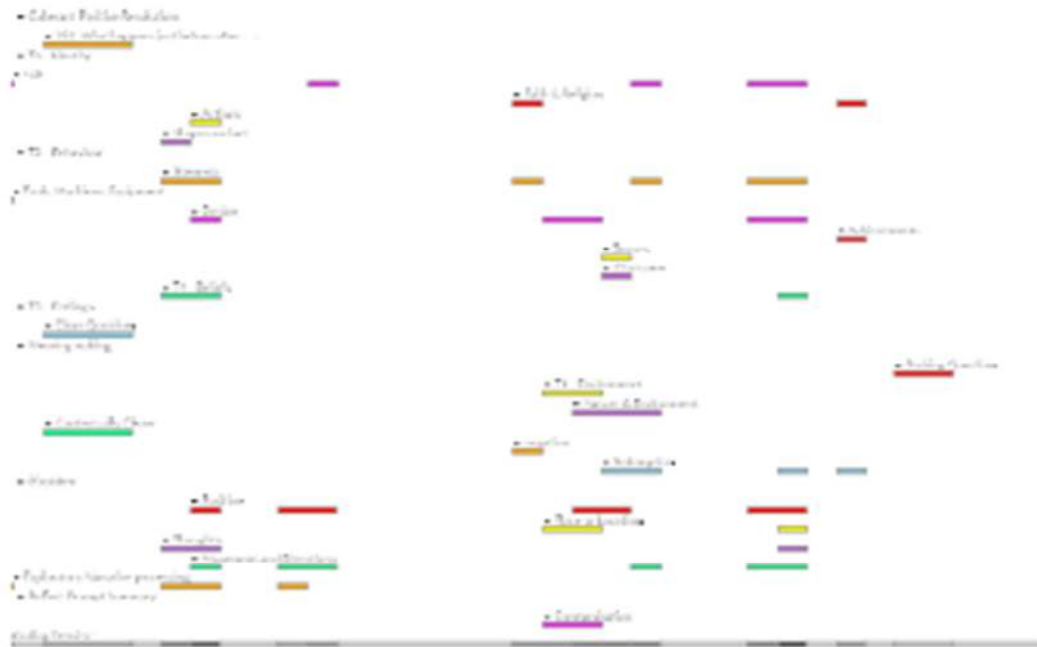
So in terms of the landscape that you described and the bit of things, the CAs, the assessments, the student support, the teaching, so research wasn't on there.

No it's certainly not prominent and that's my problem! should be making that prominent and I know that other colleagues do, I just don't know how they do it that's the mystery to me because I feel foremost my job is to make sure students are okay and to fields into the students' future, do the best they can and get the best experience they can and I see that as my professional responsibility but I also see that as my moral obligation as a human being and I think probably what my tension or my problem is, is that I'm not prioritising academic work, I'm saying right I've got to mark these scripts and get all this feedback back for them I can maybe do a bit of reading, not the other way around so I'm not saying right my scholarship is what's most important so I'm going to do that and then after I've done that I'll meet these scripts so it's a prioritisation thing.

So in terms of this prioritisation and you talk about problems, do you think there's a relationship between the full and the planned?

Yes they're the same thing, but it's really really interesting the way you're picking up on this because the differences, the risk is a confined space and is disorganised whereas the planned is an open space where I can view the landscape and I can see what's going on but both of them are about capability. It is about being, but without wanting to get too philosophical we are opinions of our lifestyle, I've just used my biggest ball and chain is my mortgage but I want somewhere to live, I'm not a hermit am I?





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So you've talked a bit about the rat and the plateau then the two other themes we picked up on were growing and change, so if we were to put them in a sequence what would come first, grow and change or change and grow?

I think that they are in parallel, because you change through growth and growth is a change, they're kind of like the same thing. What I'd like to do is I would like to find a strategy where I can just sort of maybe for a year. It would have to be a year I think because of the way the academic year works, this is my wish, I don't know how it's going to happen is another thing but this is my wish, I'm quite happy here I don't necessarily want to leave here but I think I need to make some kind of radical change just to shake things up. So my wish would be to find some job in the field and plan ahead I don't want to jump ship and I certainly don't want to cause aggravation for any of my colleagues who are all very lovely, but if I'm just being really self-centred about it I would like to just take a year out like a gap year, I'd like to take a year out and I'd like to revisit some of the locations where I did my original PhD research, and some other places as well that are linked to things that I've been reading about because I think the book learning only takes you so far, you learn through being somewhere, experiencing something so I guess a bit of travel but not travel for its own sake, travel for a specific purpose and then spend the rest of the year writing up. So basically just taking a substantial year and I think I want to do that, I don't know if can this is just a fantasy at the moment, but I think for two reasons, think to get me out of the rat, get me off the plateau, now it might be that I get off the plateau and I go out into the wilderness and think do you know what that plateau was really really good I'm going right back there but at least I will have seen what's beyond, so that's one reason. But I think just to regenerate and to get myself kick started again on academic scholarship, that's what I'd like to do because I can't do it while I'm here, and because I'm so ignorant it's taken me this long to realize every year I've gone next year it'll be different, next year I'll have more time and it never happens so I think the only way it can happen is for me to actually, well I've got two choices as far as I see it, one is to completely and radically change my professional experience by just hopping off the treadmill ahead for a year then hop back in, or to think do you know what this rat is like, this plateau is ok and be comfortable, just be satisfied that I've got a nice job, some of it I'm good at, some of it I could be better at but that's the same for all of us, and just count my blessings a bit more so I've got those two options going on there.

So think about these two choices, if you were to look ahead to the start of the next academic year and just find to reflect back on these two choices what would you be thinking?

If you're asking me to reflect forward on to next academic year?

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the reason why it's indulgent but it's contextualised in going back to the point that we are employed as academics, we are employed as people who paid to create and there's a limited amount of knowledge one can get by being stuck here making thousands of assessments and responding to thousands of positive e-mails and I think what I'm trying to say is I've come to the point to realize that as long as I'm not at the desk the situation is not going to change so I need to take myself away from the desk to change that and then come back to the desk at intervals and bouncing again like I was 3 years ago.

**So it's come out of this and go into the forest beyond the landscape**

Yes but it's quite normal for academics to have substitutes, I don't think actually what I'm saying is not an unusual thing at all, I think it's a really normal thing for the reasons you and I know they're not happening for us so if my employer won't do it for me I've got to do it for myself. I just don't know how I'm going to find it or how I'm going to connect Christmas or any of those practical things. **At I'm at the ecology stage, the tertiary stage.** I think reflecting on this year as well as the things that I'm interested in teaching about, the school is not interested in learning about all I am being a bit dislocated and I think that is going to only add more to recruitment for R2 & dipping, dipping, dipping which is double edge sword, of course it's very concerning because that's my reason for being here but at the same time it's also quite a relief because if the undergraduate course goes it means my situation here will have to change and as the discourse is showing you're bored and I want to change so I'm almost quite looking forward to that change whenever it is, change is always highlighting particularly when we don't know what we're going to change into but we cope with change really well as human beings so it's something that will be survivable and actually it might be much better wherever that is. So I don't think it's at religious studies, between you and me I'm not convinced that the school gets it and gets what it's about, it's been this quality thing that's been isolated on but it's never been properly engaged and people think we're a bit mad, we might be a bit mad but in terms of the subject. I don't feel that as an academic discipline it's either understood or particularly valued but that's been ok because we've had the numbers and so we've pushed on and it's been fine but that's clearly declining now. Also I'm seeing in the students that we're not using with very few exceptions **there's no passion, there's no fire in their belly so I don't feel like I'm teaching students who are really deep about interested and want to learn for its own sake they want to know they can get a 70 in their essay without doing any work and that is quite exhausting.** The other thing that I'm really interested in learning about and teaching is sustainability and the school's got no interest in that at all, it pretends it has but it hasn't and I've tried to get that into curriculum and it's not happening so I'm left in the position where the few things that interest me academically aren't interesting to the community that I'm working on and that's a little bit of an exhausting position to be in as well. That's a combination of stuff.

- Cultural Position/Realization
- Self-Reflection/Response (and feedback others)
- Self
- Self & Beliefs
- Actions
- TD - Beliefs about
- Identity
- Public, Institutional, Community
- Personal
- Professional
- Academic
- Research
- Teaching
- Leadership
- Professional and Personal
- Self-Reflection/Response

Reading Texts



This is my summary of what I think has been said and how I've learned. So in terms of how you feel now towards the end of the academic year so you've been stuck in a rut and there's a whole host of reasons why that might be, some a bit personal, some of it professional, some of it in terms of your work situation, there's something about jobs as well and some in the landscape which you are very familiar with and pretty much allowed to as well and something about you taking that step out into the forest to see what's there and see how that could feed into maybe enhancing the landscape as well. You've got some ideas about how that could potentially happen, what you would like to do in that forest as well, explore the terrain, do more reading and doing all these things, two things that you talk about in relation to change and growth and both work in parallel with each other but it amounts of of that there's still concerns about how might all of this actually happen.

**That's the gap analysis.**

So I suppose what we've done and I want to get your thoughts on this is in a sense a summary with how things are and explore that in a bit more detail and briefly looked at how you would like things to be and the implications around that as well, but if I was to ask you for your impressions how would that come out?

I think that's a very accurate summary, I guess my final comment is about, my final reflective comment on the things that we've talked about is the association of my professional life, so let me say it differently, it's about my identity so I think about my identity, is my identity predominantly my professional life or my personal life or my domestic life, where do all those priorities fit together and in the decision that you and I have been having now, my professional and personal identities are really clearly intertwined and if I stopped being an academic at this or any other university what am I, where does that leave me. But I do reflect on this quite often in my private moments and I think maybe I've got an over attachment to my identity being my professional identity and even that to be stripped away from me for whatever reason, it would be just according to me what was left and how I coped with what was left so we really are talking about identity. It's very difficult for me to separate those things out because I don't have a family and kids and stuff like that which is not a regret for me but it's not a bit of identity that I need to consider so I'm actually quite lucky in that I can be self-centred about myself but what about if I just stopped working at the university and got a job in a petrol pump attendant would that make me any less of a person.

*I suppose the question for you would be who are I then?*

Who am I then? Should I give me all that free time to read, do I need to be in an academic position to verify and endorse my intellectual interests.





# Interview Transcript & Coding (Researcher 2)



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**Interviewer:** if I just ask you that question if we know it on to the table, when you're lecturing or lecturing at your best when it's working well, just to explore that a little bit. Would you call it teaching or lecturing?

**Participant:** I don't mind, or presenting, I tend to do more presentations now or whole group presentations rather than small group work these days because of the nature of my job. You're likely to give indications when I know things are going well.

**Interviewer:** You and what's that for you when that's working well?

**Participant:** I think that's quite interesting, it depends what the subject is of course. Some of my lecturing is around academic integrity for new students inducting them into the university when they first come here and so its very policy and procedure led. So it tends to be rather didactic and therefore quite solemn and dry. That's to prepare them for the fact that they're going to be writing assignments, if they're on courses where they've got placement then they go under fitness to practice, it's all that professional-ness and so really I don't think that that's the sort of lecturing that would be helpful for MEd's research, that's more didactic with questions and answers at the end and that's it, it's very didactic. The other type of lecturing I do therefore is very much based on teacher training in further education (bring learning. I give lectures on the curriculum design, it links up with historical developments and again I lecture on the professional and the teaching and learning modules as well and I think that the way that I see they work out well is in the way that I operate, I don't give a lecture and then at the end of it ask the questions and have a question and answer session. What I do is I'm going this please feel free to ask questions as I go through it and I think I do that for two reasons one because it's very easy to forget what the question was 10/15 minutes ago that one wants to elaborate on or get more information from me and the other is I think if one person is going to ask a question during the lecture then the chances are there are other people willing to ask the same question. I think that's my baremetal. I think when the students are attentive, when they are asking questions, when they are obviously thinking things through as I go through my session I think that that's a strong indicator to me that students are bouncing ideas off with me so it's not a formal lecture with an opportunity for questions and answers at the end that I like it's actually a process interacting with the students. I think there is a danger with a formal lecturer to be clinical and re-transaction as all so that's what I think is a strength of the way that I work with a group of students. Obviously if it's a smaller group, if it's not a hundred students for example if it's a group of 25 in the room then obviously that's more

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I just think it's quite nice to do it. I tell them why I'm doing it as well so if they're waiting a while whilst I'm running round I say well the reason why I'm doing this is because it's me connecting with each one of you and hopefully putting you at ease if it's at the start of the lecture and it's part of the group in a sense, not standing at the front with a lectern or table in front of me as a barrier. It's because I've taught in open plan classrooms when I worked in FE in Essex and all the classrooms were open plan areas, there were no walls at all and that was quite interesting and the only way you could relate to your group that was situated somewhere in the room was the physical contact to give them handouts.

**Physical contact, open plan and flat and building up a relationship.**

Yes very much so

**And democratic.**

Yes to everyone is being treated the same, it's not as though I'm handing out to those in the front or those in the first table and saying can you pass that down, every single student receives a handout, a hand book or some notes or a PowerPoint, in some or whatever, everybody receives it from me not somebody else.

**And it's there anything else about interacting when it's democratic, everybody's treated the same, building that relationship and facilitating, facilitator.**

Perhaps it's body language and I'm sure I speak for everybody really or a lot of people including yourself and including Me, when you take a session you very quickly find that if there's somebody feels or giving them the message in a sense or the impression that they're not absolutely one hundred percent behind whatever it is and I think if the room is laid out in groups rather than a formal lecture then I feel comfortable going to that group and just saying is everybody here ok about this, is there anything you want to ask, is there anything you want to clarify so that that individual has got an opportunity to say well actually I think it's a total waste of space or waste of time, I'm not very well or I've had a bad day at placement and I'm spent about it, if they wish to divulge in that. I think it's again this responsiveness to all learners and their individual needs and I can't solve a lot of external problems but at least I can try and encourage them to work together and get the best out of the session that they possibly can.

**Responsiveness and perhaps something about body language and democratic and facilitator. When somebody is interacting?**





group which we tend to have here in the school it's a way to criterion or it's a way of measuring learning that at the end of the session, maybe not everybody but the majority of people I've picked up understand and feel comfortable, motivated, when they leave the class to go away and start answering the activities and perhaps preparing to write part of their assignment.

**When teaching is working well, you're like what?**

Oh possibly a conductor of an orchestra. Maybe that sort of business leadership role, I'm waving my baton and the orchestra is in tune and I recognise the piece of music. That's probably an extreme example but it's the one that's always in my head at the moment. It's when some of the musical instruments or the musicians are out of tune and rather than stop in a formal way and then repeat that piece of music or that part of a piece to actually ask for clarification or ask some questions, leaving that perhaps some of the group don't understand something and then bringing them back into the orchestra to continue to play the music.

So bringing them back into the orchestra rather than stop and repeat, ask them questions and you're like a conductor of an orchestra waving your baton, the orchestra is in tune and you recognise the piece of music.

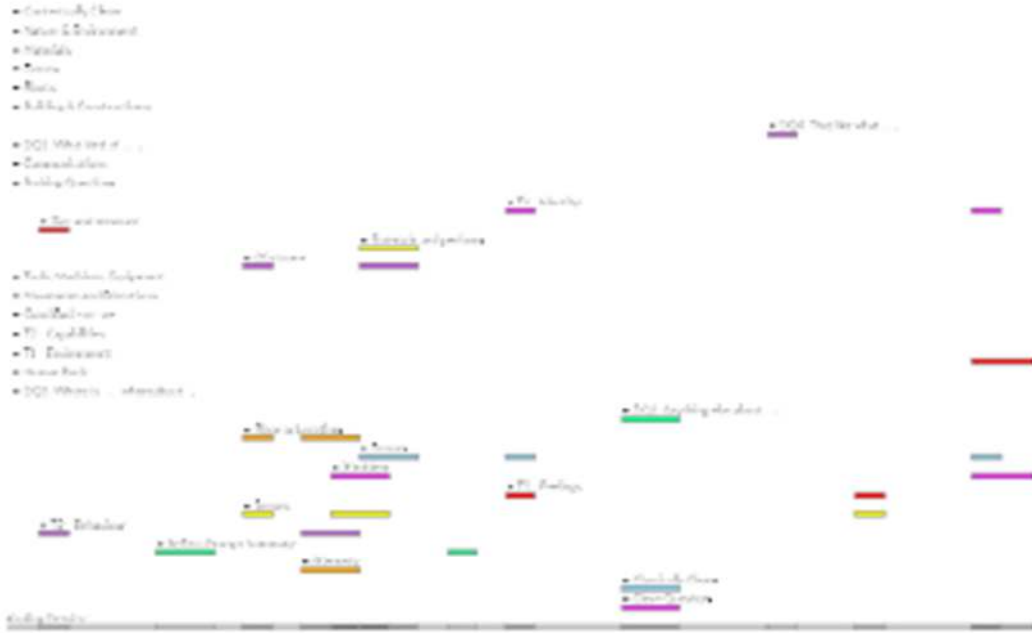
Yes but rather than stop and say can the brass section please go over that last piece again, the last 2 or 4 bars because you made a jigg out of it and I'm really annoyed for you doing that everybody else has got it right, rather than doing it that way to say well shall we just stop there and see if there's anybody that thinks they're out of tune in other words does anybody want some clarification or is there anything that someone wants to bring up at this point, saying that perhaps one or two people are not quite sure and then they don't feel isolated, they don't feel as though it's just them because I'm sure it wouldn't be just them, I'm sure everybody has got lots of questions to ask but then we go back into harmony and move on.

And if it's there anybody that thinks they're out of tune and they don't feel isolated and then go back into harmony.

Yes I think so, I think that's the way I'm thinking of it at this moment in time.

**And the orchestra's in tune and making the notes.**

Yes, I mean there's some difficult pieces within the work and it's good to know that they are not being necessarily identified as causing problems and people having to rehearse for a bit more time than they'd



planned. It's doing it in a professional manner and professional way that encourages them people maybe to take risks, maybe to feel confident that they can ask deep questions as well as superficial questions, feel confident that their voices will be respected, these questions will not be putting them in a position where they're getting told off, respecting their views.

**Deep questions as well as superficial questions and later risks, and confident. And not enhancing longer that you need to.**

**No that's right, to move on once everybody's back in tune.** I wouldn't say to somebody for example oh you obviously don't understand what I've just said or you don't understand what this is about I would always start by saying well that's a really good question, that's worth asking and going in a little bit more depth about, whatever it is they're asking a question about because I know full well that there are other people in the room who are also rightly out of tune and so it's not just helping an individual it's helping the whole class, the whole orchestra.

**And go back to harmony, into harmony and rather than stop and repeat, ask them questions.**

**Yes making them feel that they are professional musicians that's why they're there and yes, but like anybody else they just need that encouragement, they just need that confidence that they can try something and if it doesn't quite work they're not going to be in trouble.**

**Can't by something, they're not going to be in trouble and a conductor of an orchestra. Anything else about that conductor?**

**I think that's probably covered that.**

**When it's not working well, that's like what?**

**It feels uncomfortable, there's a sense, I don't know if it's experience or whether it's empathy or that something's difficult to understand or whether it's just a sixth sense perhaps, but something isn't quite right, whether it's the body language of the students, whether it's the sort of questions they're asking, whether it's a lack of anybody asking any questions or whether it's people not wanting to engage and debate or discuss or give case studies, it rarely happens but there is that fear I think with lecturers, I suppose the best way to describe it it's a bit like nervousness, nervousness has often said that the biggest nightmare that they worry about is that one night when they're on air there's no news and of course we**



know that's never going to happen but I think there's that fear amongst lecturers particularly if it's an area of work that you know is quite complex that one has to really sense the mood of the group because if it is a feel of the whole class that this isn't going very well, then there's only the lecturer, there's only the conductor if you like that can just sit right and think that's the difficulty. I think it's harder with small groups when I taught groups of 5 or 6, which is fairly rare now but where I've not run them on model seminars, where I've been going them based new content I think that is quite a challenge a lot of people might think you've got a small class that's dead easy. I don't think it is I think with a larger class it's probably easier to manage because there will be some people in there who are ambassadors for the session in a sense and will chip in and discuss and elaborate and clarify but that's the fear I have I think, I would imagine all lecturers have the same fear that the day could be upon us when it's just not working and then have to use alternative strategies in various ways perhaps rearranging the groups, if it's in a lecture theatre it's very difficult to change the atmosphere and it's difficult and impossible but in a classroom to perhaps try and break off a session and have a break and then when students come back perhaps re-arrange the groups and try and mix people up in a different way but it's that sixth sense I think that we have where we know things are going wrong and we've got to diagnose it very quickly I think.

Diagnose it quickly, very very quickly.

I must admit I have to say I'm trying to think of an example where a lesson has gone wrong, I don't think lessons go wrong I think parts of them might go wrong rather than say a session that's an hour and a half or 45 minutes the whole thing is a waste, it's the difficult bits or what we think probably perceive as the bad bits that we remember afterwards but I think there are ways around it, I think we've got to think on our feet perhaps and try and think of alternative approaches to whatever the session is about and see if there are other ways of presenting the information and working with the groups.

So alternative approaches and think on your feet and there are ways around it and parts go wrong and if feel uncomfortable and whereabouts does it feel uncomfortable?

I think the whole group, I think it's not just the lecturer I think it's probably the class because I think a group of students would pick up on that as well. I'm sure that two thirds of the class think it's fairly busy everything's going really well because clearly it isn't, there's one thing that's got in the way, it might be personality of course, it could be the lecturer's personality, it could be my personality, it could be personality of the group or personalities or it could be just the content of the lecture, it's one of those tricky lecturers that's very hard to necessarily make interesting, something that's quite formal.





Whole class and is uncomfortable, is that on the inside or the outside?

Oh I think it's on the inside definitely.

Whenabouts on the inside?

I think perhaps with the lecturer.

And whenabouts with the lecturer or the public?

You mean inside the lecturer whenabouts?

Yes

That's a good one, I think probably in the head rather than a churning stomach, the reason why I'm saying that is because I think it's the head that is responding and trying to change things to make it work rather than in the stomach where it, a bit like a comedian at the Glasgow Theatre in the 1950s would have that and those thrown at him or her, it's not so much the emotional as perhaps the cognitive fear that one needs to have another approach to this and perhaps respond in a different way.

So responding and trying to change things and cognitive fear in your head and whenabouts in your head is cognitive fear?

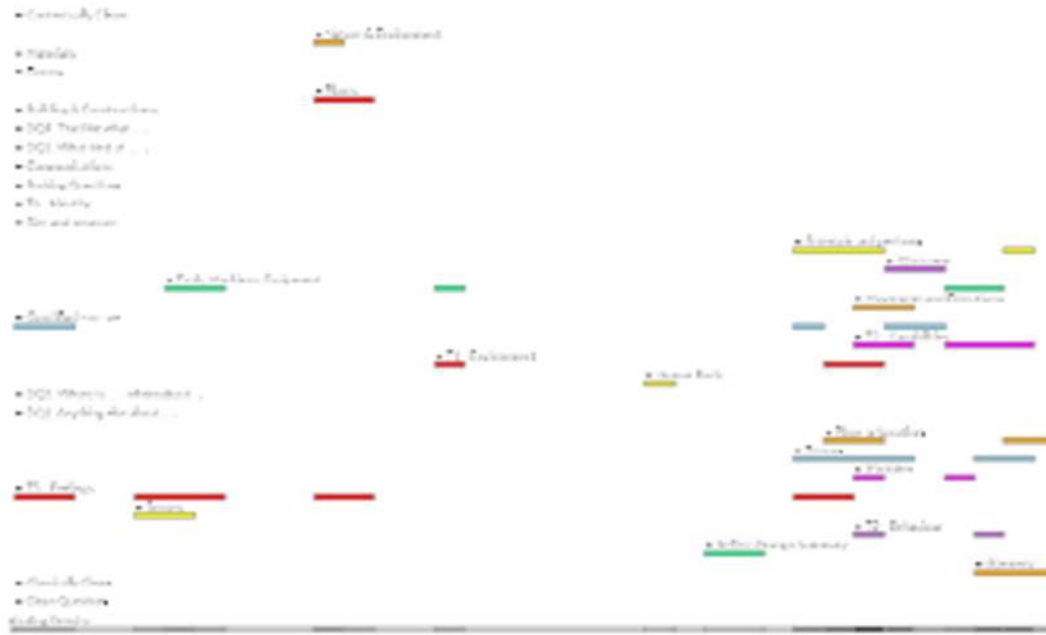
I suppose it's that sort of self in the mind. The sense that's saying look this isn't working, you've got to try something different, this is definitely not working, we've got to think of a way around this.

An embelmer and self in the mind and does uncomfortable feeling have a role or a shape?

No I don't think it does, not with me. No I don't think I could come up with a size or shape, I mean the size thing I suppose if it's a large group it's a big thing, if it's a smaller group it's manageable and hopefully there's the skills, the experts to bring that group round within a session. With a big group it's probably much harder to do that.

And embelmer and in your head and responding trying to change things, dispose it very very quickly and think on your feet, alternative approaches. Is there anything else about off of that?





have 10 minutes for any suggestions and that can be very painful of course because you're actually asking for honesty from the students as well as oneself but yes it would have been better if we'd had some lecture notes put up on (b)loom a week ago so we could read this, it's a bit of information, it's difficult to understand, okay that's fine thank you I'll do that and next time when I meet you I'll make sure that all the notes are up there a couple of weeks before the session, something like that so they can see that I know it wasn't a good session and they know it wasn't a good session but rather than just wave goodbye to them and shut the door with great relief that everybody wants it to be a success.

Would that be a good place to leave it?




I think that depends on the context, I'm going into hypothetical mode here in a sense and it's never touch wood so far got to that stage in reality, I'm just empathizing that it could go that way, I think part of it is the pressure we're under for another class often comes in 3 minutes after the end of the session so often, in possible sessions particularly where people have continued to ask questions and are really interested in something it all has to be shut down because there's going to be another class of students coming in to that room and we can't stay in that physical space any longer, I think if it's at that stage and it's at the end of a lesson then I think the answer is we'll pick up on this next week or the next lesson it on such and such a thing but we'll have 20 minutes and go over this session and make sure everybody understands and everybody feels comfortable with things, I think that's the problem, time is taken out of our hands it's not like saying why don't we just have half an hour over coffee somewhere because you can't get a class into a coffee area and carry on the discussions it's all very formal so I suppose to answer your question often it's not solved, it just clinically finishes and one has to try and perhaps re-engage the next time.




And when it's working well it's like a conductor of an orchestra and when it's not working well it feels uncomfortable and honest with yourself and with them.

Yes I think so I'm just going back to the conductor bit I suppose in a negative, I suppose as a conductor feeling that the orchestra is not yet ready to perform in front of an audience however it might not be the orchestra, it might be the conductor, it's not just one part of the whole and maybe the conductor needs to make sure that the pace and the score is correctly aligned with the piece of music that the composer wanted it to sound in a certain way. I think the negative side of the profession is if one was to say well it's not my fault, all the violins were out of tune and you can't blame me on that if they don't get it right the first time then I'm just there at the front waving my baton and that's the end of it, it's got to be a responsibility of the conductor to make sure that the orchestra feel comfortable and understand the nature of the piece of music and how it should be played, can't blame that on them.



## Appendix 11 – Questionnaire Findings




1. To what extent did the interview allow you to explore aspects of your practice?								
						Response Percent	Response Total	
1	Considerably					66.67%	4	
2	To most extent					16.67%	1	
3	Somewhat					16.67%	1	
4	Not much					0.00%	0	
5	Not at all					0.00%	0	
6	Not applicable					0.00%	0	
<b>Analysis</b>	Mean:	1.5	Std. Deviation:	0.76	Satisfaction Rate:	10	answered	6
	Variance:	0.58	Std. Error:	0.31			skipped	0

2. To what extent did the interview help to raise your self-awareness about your practice?								
						Response Percent	Response Total	
1	Considerably					50.00%	3	
2	To most extents					0.00%	0	
3	Somewhat					33.33%	2	
4	Not much					16.67%	1	
5	Not at all					0.00%	0	
6	Not applicable					0.00%	0	
<b>Analysis</b>	Mean:	2.17	Std. Deviation:	1.21	Satisfaction Rate:	23.33	answered	6
	Variance:	1.47	Std. Error:	0.5			skipped	0
Please briefly state which aspects of practice specifically? (4)								
1	15/05/14 11:35AM ID: 10491275	The extent to which my idea of my personal identity relates to my professional identity						

2. To what extent did the interview help to raise your self-awareness about your practice?			Response Percent	Response Total
2	11/07/14 11:06AM ID: 11246565	Although it was a. Erg supportive interview, I did not feel that my self awareness was raised particularly apart from the fact that I was able to use metaphors to some extent and that I do actually use metaphors in my speech without realising it!		
3	24/07/14 2:15PM ID: 11447418	1. working with dissertation students 2. Admin		
4	02/03/16 8:34AM ID: 32032658	the interface between academic teaching and aspects of teaching a professional / vocational type course; my attitude and assumptions to and about my students		


3. To what extend did the interview help you to explore your thoughts about your practice?			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Considerably		16.67%	1
2	To most extents		33.33%	2
3	Somewhat		50.00%	3

3. To what extent did the interview help you to explore your thoughts about your practice?							Response Percent	Response Total
4	Not much						0.00%	0
5	Not at all						0.00%	0
6	Not applicable						0.00%	0
<b>Analysis</b>	Mean:	2.33	Std. Deviation:	0.75	Satisfaction Rate:	26.67	answered	6
	Variance:	0.56	Std. Error:	0.3			skipped	0



4. To what extent did the interview allow you to explore your emotions and feelings?				Response Percent	Response Total
1	Considerably			16.67%	1
2	To most extents			50.00%	3
3	Somewhat			33.33%	2



4. To what extent did the interview allow you to explore your emotions and feelings?							Response Percent	Response Total
4	Not much						0.00%	0
5	Not at all						0.00%	0
6	Not applicable						0.00%	0
<b>Analysis</b>	Mean:	2.17	Std. Deviation:	0.69	Satisfaction Rate:	23.33	answered	6
	Variance:	0.47	Std. Error:	0.28			skipped	0


5. To what extent did the interview help you to contextualise your reflections on your practice?							Response Percent	Response Total
1	Considerably						0.00%	0
2	To most extents						50.00%	3
3	Somewhat						33.33%	2

5. To what extent did the interview help you to contextualise your reflections on your practice?						Response Percent	Response Total	
4	Not much					16.67%	1	
5	Not at all					0.00%	0	
6	Not applicable					0.00%	0	
<b>Analysis</b>	Mean:	2.67	Std. Deviation:	0.75	Satisfaction Rate:	33.33	answered	6
	Variance:	0.56	Std. Error:	0.3			skipped	0

6. To what extent did the interview allow you to identify changes that could be made to your practice?						Response Percent	Response Total
1	Considerably					0.00%	0
2	To most extents					50.00%	3

6. To what extent did the interview allow you to identify changes that could be made to your practice?								
						Response Percent	Response Total	
3	Somewhat					16.67%	1	
4	Not much					33.33%	2	
5	Not at all					0.00%	0	
6	Not applicable					0.00%	0	
<b>Analysis</b>	Mean:	2.83	Std. Deviation:	0.9	Satisfaction Rate:	36.67	answered	6
	Variance:	0.81	Std. Error:	0.37			skipped	0

7. How helpful did you find the range of questions asked during the interview?							
						Response Percent	Response Total
1	Considerably					16.67%	1
2	To most extents					50.00%	3

7. How helpful did you find the range of questions asked during the interview?							Response Percent	Response Total
3	Somewhat						33.33%	2
4	Not much						0.00%	0
5	Not at all						0.00%	0
6	Not applicable						0.00%	0
<b>Analysis</b>	Mean:	2.17	Std. Deviation:	0.69	Satisfaction Rate:	23.33	answered	6
	Variance:	0.47	Std. Error:	0.28			skipped	0

8. Which of the following words best describe your experience of being interviewed?							Response Percent	Response Total
1	Informative						0.00%	0
2	Confusing						0.00%	0







8. Which of the following words best describe your experience of being interviewed?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
3	Revealing		0.00%	0
4	Unhelpful		0.00%	0
5	Useful		0.00%	0
6	Ineffective		0.00%	0
7	Helpful		0.00%	0
8	Uncomfortable		0.00%	0
9	Illuminating		0.00%	0
10	Difficult		0.00%	0
11	Valuable		0.00%	0
12	Awkward		0.00%	0
13	Effective		0.00%	0

8. Which of the following words best describe your experience of being interviewed?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
14	Puzzling		0.00%	0
15	Pleasant		0.00%	0
16	Lacked focus		0.00%	0
17	Enjoyable		0.00%	0
18	Laboured		0.00%	0
19	Beneficial		0.00%	0
20	Complicated		0.00%	0
			answered	0
			skipped	6

9. Please briefly describe how the range of questions asked helped or hindered your reflections on your practice?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question		100.00%	5
1	15/05/14 11:35AM ID: 10491275	The discussion was free-flowing, so one particular avenue of my professional practice was explored in some depth, whilst other areas were not examined		
2	11/07/14 11:06AM ID: 11246565	I enjoyed the discussion and the interviewer was supportive. The style of interviewing was open and non-judgmental. I was therefore enabled by the open nature of the questions to reflect on my practice though not in a way that led to any new insights.		
3	24/07/14 2:15PM ID: 11447418	enjoyed looking at the cards, A visual representation helped me to focus my thoughts		
4	02/03/16 8:34AM ID: 32032658	the questions were sufficiently open to give me plenty of scope to explore my practice; follow up questions pointed me in the right direction to explore further.		
5	24/03/16 4:44PM ID: 34157319	The questions provided an opportunity to reflect on aspects of my practice I do not often think about in depth through being tot involved in the everyday minutiae of my role.		
			answered	5
			skipped	1

10. Please briefly describe how the range of questions asked helped or hindered your reflections on your practice?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question		0.00%	0
No answers found.				
			answered	0
			skipped	6

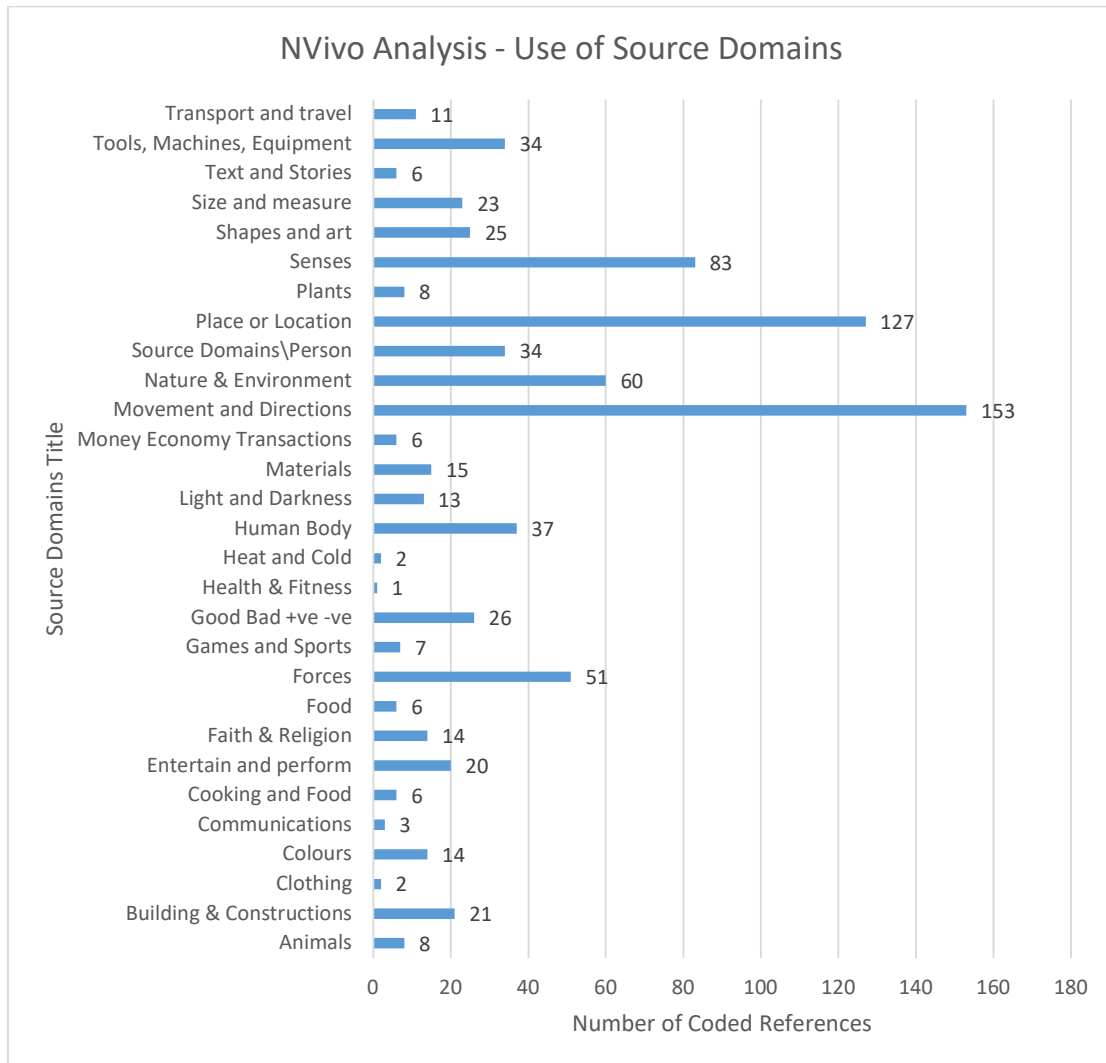
11. To what extent did you feel the interview identified metaphors that helped you to convey your reflections on your practice?				
			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Considerably		16.67%	1
2	To most extents		33.33%	2
3	Somewhat		33.33%	2

11. To what extent did you feel the interview identified metaphors that helped you to convey your reflections on your practice?						Response Percent	Response Total	
4	Not much					16.67%	1	
5	Not at all					0.00%	0	
6	Not applicable					0.00%	0	
<b>Analysis</b>	Mean:	2.5	Std. Deviation:	0.96	Satisfaction Rate:	30	answered	6
	Variance:	0.92	Std. Error:	0.39			skipped	0

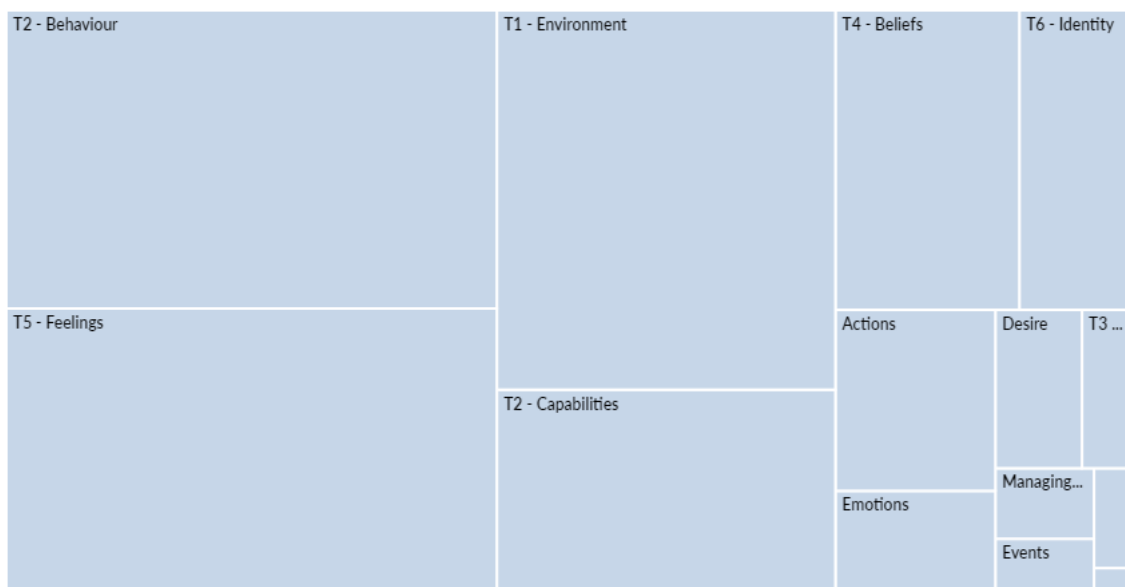
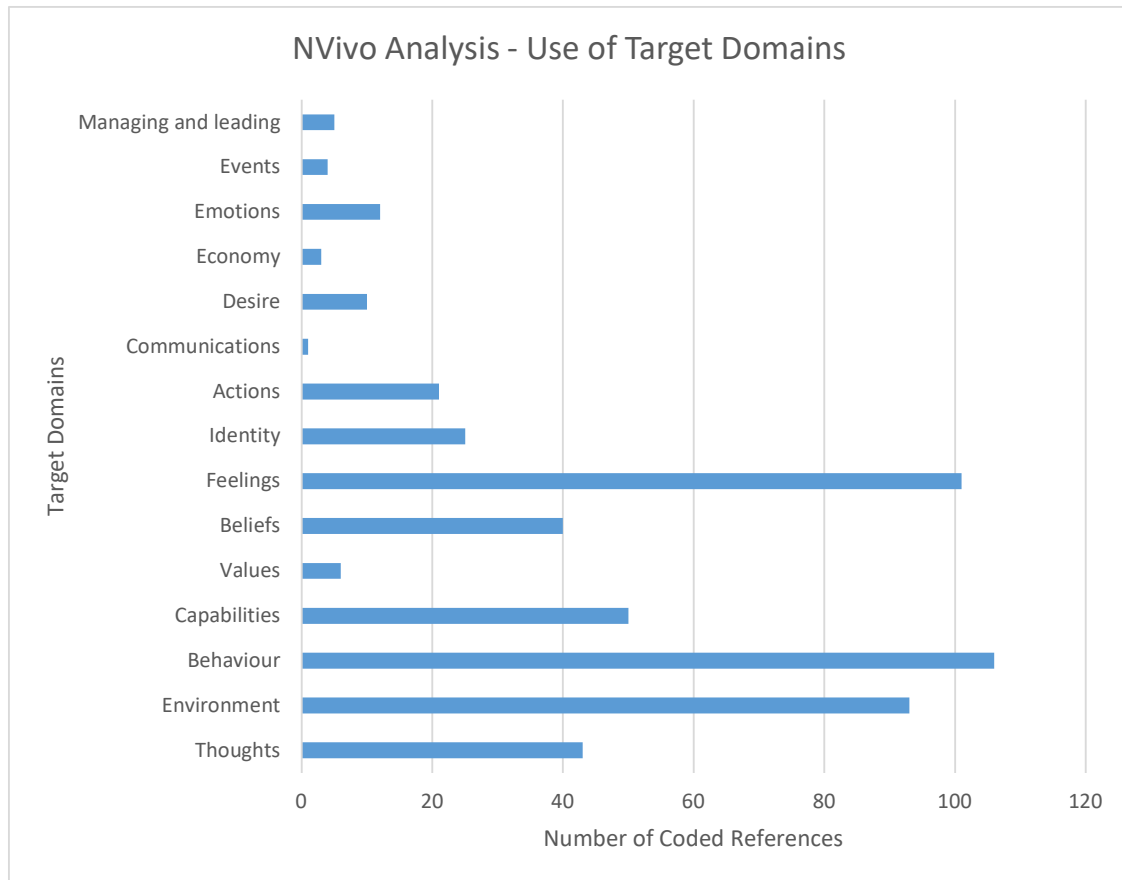
12. Please use this space to comment on any other aspect of the interview which the researcher may find helpful and inform future research interviews						Response Percent	Response Total
1	Open-Ended Question					100.00%	4
1	15/05/14 11:35AM ID: 10491275	The use of metaphor was a really interesting way to think about my relationship with my professional practice. I'm curious to know about the metaphors your other					

12. Please use this space to comment on any other aspect of the interview which the researcher may find helpful and inform future research interviews			Response Percent	Response Total
		interviewees used, how I might relate to them, and whether I might perceive my own practice differently through other people's metaphors.		
2	11/07/14 11:06AM ID: 11246565	Nothing really to add to what I said following the first interview.		
3	02/03/16 8:34AM ID: 32032658	it might have been helpful to give some examples of how metaphor might be used. I was a little confused to begin with as to whether we were looking at metaphors used in teaching or about teaching.		
4	24/03/16 4:44PM ID: 34157319	It may have been helpful to have been given the questions in advance.		
			answered	4
			skipped	2

## Appendix 12 – NVivo Analysis of Source Domains



## Appendix 13 – NVivo Analysis of Target Domains





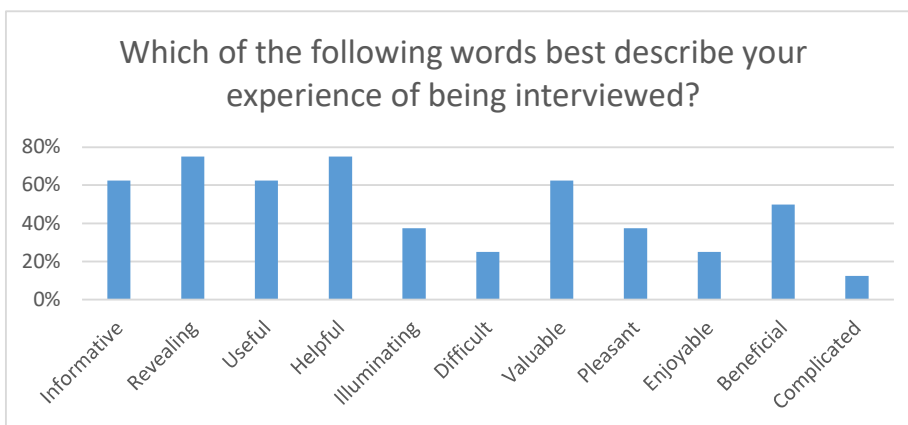
## Appendix 14 – Analysis of use of Clean Language questions

Categories of questions	Percentage Responses
<b>Total questions asked: 336</b>	
Clean Language Questions	39.88%
Reflective Prompts	38.69%
Probing Questions	21.43%

Analysis of categories of interview Questions

Categories of Clean Language questions	Percentage Coded
Classically Clean	56.52%
Contextually Clean	36.23%
Mild/leading Questions	7.25%
Strong Leading Questions	0%

Analysis into the use of the Clean Language questions



Questionnaire findings of participants experiences of being interviewed