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WHITEY ON THE MOON*:
PEDAGOGY OF THE PRIVILEGED: NEGOTIATING CONFLICTING TEACHER IDENTITY POSITIONS IN A CONTEXT OF PRIVILEGE.

Talia Barbeli

*'Whitey on the Moon' by Gil Scott-Heron
Whitey on the Moon lyrics © Carlin America Inc 1970

A dissertation submitted to the Wits School of Education, Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education by Dissertation.

Johannesburg, 2020

Abstract

This school-based, qualitative study examines the ways in which critically conscious, white English teachers in South Africa, teaching mostly affluent, white learners in an elite-schooling context, navigate the conflicts and possibilities for political action in this positioning. This research therefore focuses on teacher identity through the lenses of Poststructuralism, Feminist Research, and Whiteness Studies, and education through the lens of Critical Pedagogy. In a series of focus group sessions with the researcher's own English-teaching colleagues, the participants' talk captures their grappling with their identity positions, when their very identities and teaching context benefits from the maintenance of a system which centres and privileges whiteness. The researcher uses the focus group sessions and a Researcher Journal to formalise and capture an already existing community of enquiry, reflection, critique, and collaboration. Through a discourse analysis of the transcribed conversations, the researcher examines the discursive binaries which result in slippages of self, and the antagonistic positionalities in which the teachers find themselves, as they try to make sense of what Pedagogy For The Privileged means to privileged teachers. The analysis also explores the significance of discourses of emotional labour. This research problematizes these discourses as it unpacks this positioning within the urgent and fraught context of post-Apartheid South African schools, in which the legacies of colonialism and apartheid are deeply embedded. It is therefore in this rupture of identity in which this research is located; the researcher uses Scott-Heron's metaphor for the invisibility of privilege to the privileged, to problematize and contextualise the white, critically conscious educator as a 'Whitey On The Moon'. The software programme NVivo is used to aid the discourse analysis.

Key Words

Pedagogy of the privileged; Whiteness studies; Pedagogy for the privileged

I declare that this dissertation proposal is my own unaided work. It is being submitted for the degree of Master of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any other University.

Talia Barbeli
20th day of September in the year 2020

This dissertation is dedicated to my best girl and best boy; Lyla-Jean and Benjamin, and my husband, Geanini. Your love, support, and belief in me were unwavering. Thank you for the paper crowns and endless hugs. I hope that I have made you proud.

here is the deepest secret nobody knows
(here is the root of the root and the bud of the bud
and the sky of the sky of a tree called life; which grows
higher than soul can hope or mind can hide)
and this is the wonder that's keeping the stars apart

i carry your heart(i carry it in my heart)

"[i carry your heart with me(i carry it in]" Copyright 1952, © 1980, 1991 by the Trustees for the E. E. Cummings Trust, from *Complete Poems: 1904-1962* by E. E. Cummings, edited by George J. Firmage. Used by permission of Liveright Publishing Corporation.
Source: *Complete Poems: 1904-1962* (Liveright Publishing Corporation, 1991)

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I must end my acknowledgements where this all started, with the many heated debates I had as a teenager with my mom, dad, and sister around the kitchen table. My dad has always challenged me to question everything, and to never accept the status quo. My mom fills my world with a love for language, literature, and the power of a life lived examined. Her efforts in editing my dissertation were hugely appreciated too. When I grow up, I want to be as well-read as her.

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CHAPTER ONE

1.1Introduction

"The man jus' upped my rent las' night.
('cause Whitey's on the moon)
No hot water, no toilets, no lights.
(but Whitey's on the moon)"
Gil Scott-Heron- Whitey On The Moon
(Whitey on the Moon lyrics © Carlin America Inc) 1970

When Gil Scott-Heron wrote his defiant and bitterly ironic anthem, '*Whitey On The Moon'* (1970), he was lamenting what he saw as the violently skewed values of an American society which was triumphant in the whimsical exploits of the privileged, whilst ignoring the oppressed. In what has been described as*: "a biting fusion of pop culture criticism and radical politics that prophesied an end to white supremacy"* (Thompson, 2018) Scott-Heron's lyrics are an act of defiance; speaking back to a society celebrating the moon landing, by drawing attention to the disconnect between the white Americans who were celebrating, and the Americans of colour who were barely surviving.

In the poem, Scott-Heron spoke out against a society which would celebrate the spending of $153 billion (equivalent in today's terms) (Thompson, 2018) to send three privileged, white men to the moon, but which continued to, at best, neglect, and at worst, oppress, Americans of colour: *"When Armstrong and Aldrin planted the US flag on the moon in 1969, 24 million Americans lived in poverty* (U.S Bureau Of The Census, 1970, in Thompson, 2018).

Yet, crucially, it is reasonable to assume that the three astronauts themselves would have seen themselves as white America did; as pioneers, committed scientists and American heroes. Aldrin is recently quoted as stating: "*One truth I have discovered for sure: When you believe that all things are possible and you are willing to work hard to accomplish your goals, you can achieve the next 'impossible' dream. No dream is too high!"* (Aldrin, 2016).

It is therefore in this rupture of identity in which I hope to locate my research; I hope to channel Scott-Heron's defiance, his metaphor for the invisibility of privilege to the privileged, and examine the paradox captured by Scott-Heron's justified frustrations with and dismissal of a 'whitey on the moon'.

As a teacher and researcher, I identify as critically conscious; I recognise teaching as a political activity and foreground social justice principles in my praxis. I am also a white woman and I teach at an elite Independent boys' school in the Northern suburbs of Johannesburg. I have come to realise that this is both a conflicting, problematic, and powerful position to occupy and this prompted me to attempt to uncover whether or not other teachers who share these intersecting positions, find these positions to be conflicting, and how they navigate these intersecting and contradictory positions.

With a focus on teacher identity, the research design of this study is a school-based, qualitative study of fellow members of the English department in which I work. The research takes the form of a series of collaborative focus group interview sessions with the participants being six critically conscious, female teacher-participants.

I use the focus group sessions to formalise and capture an already existing community of enquiry, reflection, critique, support, and collaboration in which the participants and myself reflect upon our identity positions, theoretical perspectives, praxis, interactions with learners (both in and out of the classroom) and the possible conflicts that we experience within and between these issues. Data is also drawn from a Researcher Journal. The transcripts of the focus groups and the Researcher Journal are analysed using Critical Discourse Analysis and Poststructural (Feminist) Discourse Analysis, and NVivo data analysis software.

1.2 Aims

This study aims to cast light on the ways in which critically conscious but privileged English teachers in post-apartheid South Africa, teaching mostly privileged learners, in an elite context, navigate the possible conflicts and possibilities for political action, inherent in this positioning.

The study explores how these teachers construct their positions in relation to their learners, context, curriculum and classroom practice. This study unpacks this positioning within the urgent and fraught context of a South Africa that is coming to terms with the reality of persistent racism, inequality, and privilege that is frequently invisible to the privileged, especially within elite school contexts.

With an emphasis on race identity as understood by Whiteness Studies (but without denying the intersectional nature of identity) and education as understood by Critical Pedagogy, the study focuses on teacher identity through the lenses of Poststructuralist and feminist notions of identity.

As a committed educator myself, one who feels that my work is important and, dare I say, sometimes brave, I do need to ask, am I just a Whitey On The Moon? In this research, I therefore intend to problematize the uncomplicated and comfortable positionality of 'pioneer', 'committed critical pedagogue' and 'hero'.

1.3. Research Question

To what extent do critically conscious, privileged, English teachers, teaching in an elite schooling context, find themselves having to negotiate the contradictory positions within which they find themselves?
How do they negotiate these contradictory positions?

1.4. Rationale

1.4.1 Defining key concepts.

Critically Conscious

The notion of a '**critically conscious**' teacher is drawn from the school of Critical Pedagogy which views teaching as an inherently political act, and refers to a teacher who, in terms of her identity position and classroom practice, foregrounds her commitment to disrupting socialization and drawing attention to power structures that perpetuate injustice and structural inequality. She considers her work as a teacher to be political action. (Allen and Rossatto, 2009).

Within this paradigm the teacher functions to either maintain the status quo including societal injustice, exploitation and oppression, or must actively work to empower her students by having them question that status quo, reflect upon the hegemony, and their own positions within it.

The following quote provides a thorough explanation of the term as it is used in this study:

> *Becoming critical concerns taking cognisance of social inequality and understanding structural inequality. It is about recognising one's own place in the social world, i.e. the relationship between the self and the social, and taking responsibility for that position…..Becoming critical is thus less about empowerment and full enlightenment than it is about the development of knowledge of the self and social world, even though this will be a partial and limited knowledge.* (McKinney 2003: 65)

'**Conscious**' implies being alert, awake and engaged; the inverse of unconscious. It refers to a teacher who is alert to structural inequalities and the hegemonic discourses that support them. It suggests that the teacher is informed about current affairs and contemporary socio-political debates. The colloquial term *woke* is useful here to understand the anti-racist position of this teacher.

Privilege

'Privileged' refers to the often invisible, unearned, advantages that one's position offers (in this case, whiteness). This is understood to refer to "*white people's privileged locations in broader structural relations*." (Schultz and Fane, 2015: 140). A full list of examples of these advantages is outlined in Peggy McIntosh's seminal essay, *White Privilege: Unpacking The Invisible Knapsack.* (1988).

According to Pennington and Brock (2011) 'white privilege', when applied to school settings, can be defined as *"a way in which white teachers avoid discussions or critiques related to their racial position in the school."* (p. 2). This focus is informed by Whiteness Studies, as I explore the ways in which teachers who are positioned as privileged (in this case, as white and middle class) and yet also as critically conscious, navigate the possible conflicts in this positioning when teaching the privileged in an elite context.

Allen and Rossatto (2009) provide a simple and useful definition of what they call the Multicultural Educator as one *"whose pedagogy directly challenges systemic privilege."* (p. 164).

Within schools of thought such as Pedagogy for the Privileged, the term "oppressor student" is frequently used. Allen and Rossatto (2009) define this structural identity as *"a student who is a member of an oppressor group (white, male, middle- or upper-class, etc.) and a benefactor of oppressor group membership*." (p. 165). However, the South African context is unique, and I felt that the term oppressor was too closely related to our very recent oppressive history of Apartheid; the word in our context is weighted beyond what the primarily American and British contexts of Pedagogy For The Privileged research could claim. I therefore use the term 'privileged learner/teacher' as described above, but I understand it to mean the same thing as oppressor learner.

'**Elite'** refers to the independent boys school where the research was conducted. Fees to attend this private school go up to in excess of R250 000 for boarders, per year, and as a consequence most of the student demographic is affluent, and substantively, white.

Race

It is important to note that the notion of race used in this research considers race, as most contemporary scholars do, to be a social construction as opposed to a biological or genetic reality (Nakkula and Toshalis, 2006, In Richard Milner IV, 2007). Richard Milner IV points out that scholars view race as "*socially, legally, politically, and historically constructed*" (Richard Milner IV, 2007:397), and race is therefore, a human construction. In this context, therefore, I refer to '**white'** as a race-position which is a social construction, but one which shapes the experiences of the individual in many ways. I differentiate this from '**whiteness**' which is a reference to a system of power, to which a person seen as 'white' has access. This is explained in detail in Chapter 2.

I must, however, acknowledge the potential limitations of an analysis of social realities based solely on race. Motala (2010, in Spreen and Vally, 2012) insists that social science and education researchers remain vigilant to the limitations of a reduction of identity to only that of race:

> *…its use reveals only the weakness of analysis since it has less explanatory power than might be understood through a much broader range of analytical categories, including income and poverty levels, social class, gender, geographic location, nationality and a wide a range of characteristics…(2010:15, in Spreen and Vally, 2012:9).*

Furthermore, whilst this study foregrounds race privilege, I do recognize that race does not operate alone but rather as one dimension within a matrix of possible fluid identity positions. As the participants all identify as middle-class women, and we teach in a monastic school, gender and class emerge as valid focuses.

In relation to the use of the term **'people of colour'**, I was guided by the identifier used by the participant of colour in the study, who did not refer to herself as 'black', but rather as 'brown', and who informed me that she prefers the term 'of colour'. Race terminology is fraught and in trying to select a signifier which was respectful, current, and academic, I settled on 'of colour', whilst still acknowledging its limitations; that it is an identity named in relation to whiteness, that it is an Americanism, and that it does not allow for the nuanced analysis of power of Biko's version of 'black' which encompasses all oppressed peoples of Apartheid South Africa (Mangcu, 2014).

1.4.2 Locating This Study 'In the World'.

My learners and myself arrive at school every day in an affluent, leafy suburb in Johannesburg. The car park is a veritable buffet of high-end luxury vehicles. Our school campus is architecturally impressive, with classic stone structures, arches, and large, open, manicured green spaces. We have access to facilities that include well-equipped classrooms with Apple TV, smart-boards, and imported ergonomically designed chairs and desks. Our learners have access to new subjects such as Robotics and we have a fully-equipped Music Centre. Our sports facilities are considered so enviable that National teams hire use of them in order to do their training when visiting South Africa. We have on our staff a number of teachers with Masters and Doctorate degrees. Every year we hold a Matric Dance for our Grade 12 learners. I estimate that the dance costs in excess of R300 000 per year.

Our school is a private school, known in South Africa as an Independent School. (ISASA, 2020). These schools serve approximately 2.9% of South African learners (Walton et al, 2009). Many of the most prestigious of them are single-sex schools, established before the official campaign of white supremacy and racial-segregation known as Apartheid. All of them operated during Apartheid to serve the white community. In some instances, their independence allowed them to push against the racist laws in order to 'allow' learners of colour to attend. Many of these schools can therefore claim the children and grandchildren of ANC struggle veterans as their alumni, and many of these schools did subvert the apartheid regime through their support of resistance movements and efforts to include exceptional learners of colour or those of high-profile struggle leaders. However, these learners of colour were the exceptions to the rule, and the schools were historically, and continue to be, predominantly white. Not only do I teach at an Independent school, but I attended one myself. This description of Independent Schools is therefore drawn from my personal experiences as a white South African teenager, and as a white educator.

In early March of 2015, amid student calls for the decolonisation of the University of Cape Town, a student protest was brought into national and international focus when

Chumani Maxwele threw a bucket of human excrement over the campus's prominent statue of Cecil John Rhodes. The #rhodesmustfall student movement gained national and then international traction and prompted the spread of massive student protest movements such as #feesmustfall. Universities around the country were (and still are) finding themselves the sites of mass protest action, prompting rigorous national debates about de-colonisation, institutional racism, workers' rights, symbolic violence and transformation, among other things. The scale, impact, vigour and at times, violence of the protest action and associated debates were unprecedented in post-Apartheid South Africa.

Just two years prior to the birth of this new national student movement and consciousness, my 2013 Grade 12 English class tackled a project that required them to reflect on their identities as 'Born Frees'. This term refers to those born after the fall of the apartheid regime, born into the new South African democracy (Mattes, 2012). The consensus amongst my learners was, 'we *are* born free, we are a non-racial, rainbow nation, there is no desire or need for a discussion about race, racism or transformation.'

The majority of the class were white, upper-middle class, South African learners; their lack of engagement with issues of racism and oppression had not been surprising. I felt at that time that I should take what I believed was the self-evident position of a facilitator-educator. I had been taught that a teacher should remain 'neutral' as far as possible in order to allow all voices to be heard. In this instance, the teacher should aim to facilitate discussions, giving all perspectives equal validation and all learners' voices equal space. I believed that I could/should leave my personal politics outside the classroom.

However, I have always positioned myself as conscientised. I am that annoyingly earnest individual who sees the political in everything. I throw around terms like white fragility, white privilege, institutional racism and hegemony with reckless abandon. But this had been outside the classroom. The importance of Critical Pedagogy will be discussed later in this rationale but what is central here is that teacher identity and the impact that it has upon pedagogy, became a preoccupation of mine. In 2013 I had believed that it was sufficient and possible to deal with social issues as a neutral facilitator; presenting current positions/theories to my learners in an apolitical way.

However, the political landscape of South Africa has changed since then, as has my awareness of the significant, necessary, and at times uncomfortable work that needs to be done in privileged classrooms.

In the context of massive protest action and the urgent resulting debates that were now finding their way onto Independent School campuses, I found that a gulf developed between those of my learners who were acutely aware of issues like systemic racism, and those who were bewildered, defensive or ill-informed. I needed to ask to what degree I was responsible for bridging the gulf between these attitudes.

The consequence of this is that I found myself urgently re-examining my own positioning as a teacher in relation to some fraught content, but also in terms of how I conceive of my identity as Critical Pedagogue. As an English teacher, our curriculum requires that I teach critical perspectives such as Postcolonialism and Feminist literary theory and that I deal with Apartheid and post-Apartheid South Africa in the content of the subject. However, of what value is Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1968) when almost every individual in my context, including myself, is privileged?

My research question grew out of a personal and professional dilemma in the context of a highly-charged social and historical moment. Surely I needed to use my politicised-self as a resource? The nation was and is in crisis. Surely I had been naïve to imagine that a democratic classroom in which all experiences and ideas were given space and credence, would lead us directly to transformation. Perhaps I needed to be more radical? But there were risks to my identity within my particular context. Was I seeking to position myself as pushing against the status quo, and if so, did I fear the cost of this positioning? To what extent do I feel am I disconnected from the real struggles that South African youth face? Most critically, of what significance is any of this personal grappling, whilst myself and my students are cloistered in an enclave of privilege? **Am I just another Whitey on the Moon?**

Furthermore, if I was now finding my own positioning highly fraught and problematic, did that mean that other English teachers who self-identify as critically conscientised were grappling with their positionalities too? Did they also feel that attempting a more neutral stance was more than just problematic or irresponsible, but that it was

impossible? How did they position themselves in relation to the status quo, notions of privilege, institutionalised racism and the broader systems of structural racism in which we are implicated? Could we be unwittingly perpetuating institutionalised whiteness? How do teachers navigate the conflicts inherent in encouraging a safe, democratic space; where their learners feel heard and the nature of truth can be debated, whilst being unafraid to challenge and unsettle privilege with the urgency required in South Africa?

Like bell hooks, I wish to understand if and how my own and other English teachers' philosophical ideologies and positioning translate into actual critical praxis, as I ask myself "*What values and habits of being reflect my commitment to freedom*" (1994: 27) and equality?

When bell hooks describes teaching as a "*performative act*" (hooks, 1994: 11), she draws attention to the reciprocal nature of teaching; we teach and learn within and through relationships. Pedagogy and the ideology that informs it are, therefore, bound-up with the teacher's individual voice and identity and the ways she makes sense of her relationships with her learners as a result.

1.4.3 Locating This Study in a Knowledge Gap.

In reflecting upon my own positionality and on that of other teachers in my context, I discovered writers who argue that a teacher can and should be what Giroux (2015) calls a public intellectual, rather than a functionary; an agitator, what Shor (1999) calls a disrupter of socialisation. I also reflected upon what social justice would look like, if, as a 'Whitey on the Moon' I needed to "*commit(ting) to the moral use of power.*" (Boske, as cited in Bogotch and Shields,. 2014, p. 291).

The language used here is one of action, of activism; discourse that positions the teacher as necessarily controversial, perhaps even revolutionary. It requires the teacher to actively position herself against the status quo, and to be conscious of and confident in this positionality; "*Desire is fundamental, but it is not enough. It is also necessary to*

know how to want, to learn how to want, which implies learning how to fight politically with tactics adequate to our strategic dreams." (Freire, 1998: 50).

The mandate from these theorists is clear, but how does that impact upon the teacher's possible and/or available identity positions and what are the implications for teachers who benefit from the status quo and who teach learners who do? It also assumes that critically conscious teachers are prepared to take risks in terms of how they are perceived by their learners and the school at large. I explore how these teachers navigate these expectations and responsibilities in terms of their positionality.

There are various theoretical perspectives that inform and encourage this analysis, and foremost amongst them is the Critical Pedagogy perspective, which argues that the teacher should actively operate with the goal of social justice in mind. Freire insists that "*Education is a political act*." (1998: 63). It is interesting to note that Freire's books were banned by the apartheid state and that according to Postma, Spreen and Vally (2015), hundreds of copies of Freire's, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, "*were clandestinely distributed at black universities by activists of the Black Consciousness Movement.*" (2015: 6) The significance of Freire's work in relation to educational revolution and to understanding the politics inherent in teaching, cannot be overstated. However, these critical theories make particular assumptions about the positioning of the teacher, learners and the teaching context. It is necessary to explore these issues in the South African context in order for us to respond to the current crisis of identity and critiques of whiteness.

Importantly, Giroux (2009) argues that it is "*truly disconcerting that First World educators rarely articulate the politics and privileges of their own location*." (2009: 5). He warns against practitioners who, through refusing to "*negotiate or deconstruct the borders that define their (own) politics of location, they have little sense of moving a positionality from which they can unsettle and disrupt….*" (2009: 5). The comfortable, colonial gaze in this instance becomes, "*self-serving and self-referential*." (2009: 5). Cloistered within an elite Independent School, our community experiences South Africa as a 'First World' context, if by that Giroux means technologically advanced, secure, and a place of opportunity.

My research, therefore, explores the implications of Critical Pedagogy theory and the resulting tensions, for the identity positioning of South African English teachers in particular and their classroom practice, when the teacher, their context and their learners are not characterised by oppression, but yet live in a period of flux, in a Postcolonial context which is itself, characterised by inequalities; a dynamic which has not yet been adequately unpacked in the literature. Giroux clearly draws attention to the dearth of work in this area and his argument for the unpacking of the critically conscious teacher's positioning was compelling.

Allen & Rossatto (2009) argue that if we are to work in earnest to deconstruct and reshape oppressive hegemonies, we must "*make a shift toward paying theoretical…attention to oppressor students…it must coincide with a new belief in the possibility that oppressor students can change and that their transformation is a major component of counterhegemonic projects"* (2009: 171). They argue that this is a more optimistic, hopeful paradigm, and one which informs my focus on the identities of privileged teachers in the same way. They further make the point that doing visible work to problematize and reshape privileged identities can have a positive impact on oppressed groups who, when seeing the mechanisms for perpetuating oppression, and then seeing these being shaped for the better, will be less likely to follow an "*assimilationist, fatalistic, or repressed identity"* (Rosatto, 2005. In Allen & Rossatto, 2009: 173). I am therefore interested in achieving the same goals, when deconstructing the privileged teacher identity.

Therefore, whilst the moral and philosophical imperatives of foregrounding social justice work in education are apparent, what is just as critical is the identity work that teachers must do in examining their own positions in relation to privilege and power. Dilys Schoorman (2014) insists *"Even as we work hard to help our students acquire critical consciousness about a variety of social injustices, and their own positions of privilege in the perpetuation of that reality, we are also similarly challenged to examine our own roles in perpetuating systems of power and privilege*." (2014: 218). Anyon (2005) foregrounds the importance of documenting and analysing the corollary of the oppressed; the powerful, and the ways in which these communities create opportunities and perpetuate these systems of power, as well as the ways in which activists (those who wish to 'take action' against injustices) operate from within structures of power.

To this end, examining the experiences and systems of meaning created by and experienced by activist teachers, who themselves have access to power and privilege, and who teach in an institution designed to maintain the opportunities and power of its alumni, is a critical focus.

The Critical Multicultural perspectives of Banks (1993, 1996, 2008) and Sleeter (1996, 2003, 2004) deal with the positionality of the teacher, as do the Feminist educational theories of hooks (1994), Tisdell (1998) and Hart (1992). Taylor, Tisdell, and Hanley, (2000) cover the '*Role of Positionality in Teaching For Critical Consciousness'*, however, their focus is upon the adult educator; I extend this analysis into the high school classroom as this is a crucial site of socialisation, privilege and possible social change. In Acevedo et al (2014), there is a thorough exploration of positionality and its pedagogical implications. However, the post-apartheid, South African, elite schooling context is particular and these writers could not give a full account of the available positions and conflicts of identity experienced by teachers in this context.

Shor (1999) draws on the work of Foucault (1980) in an understanding of identity as discursively constructed and relational. This directly informs the understanding of identity positioning in this study. Importantly, Shor emphasises a notion of identity that is historically constructed and located within power relations. All learners and teachers therefore operate from a discursively constructed and politically nuanced position. Critical literacy works to make the constructed, relational and unfinished nature of identity, conscious. This notion of identity as well as the theoretical framework underpinning critical literacy with its emphasis on the role of the English teacher, inform this study.

There are several writers who explore positionality in Critical Pedagogy within the South African context. McKinney (2005) explores the positionality of the critical pedagogue and her paper provided crucial grounding for my research focus. Ferreira (2016) explores the positionality of high school students in particular, and researchers such as Morgan (1997) and Pillay (2017) focus on learner and teacher identities in the South African classroom and in tertiary education. However, as I explain above, the South African context has been rapidly and dramatically altered within the last four

years, and I believe that this necessitates a re-examining of the role of the critical pedagogue.

It is also necessary to draw on Whiteness Studies in terms of the particular constructs of race and privilege as understood by this research. Whiteness Studies provides the lens through which this research engages with Pedagogy For The Privileged, which holds insights that have yet to be related to the current privileged South African high school classroom and English teacher.

Frankenberg (1993) insists that it is necessary to explore the construction of whiteness as it is experienced by white people. She believes that research of this nature can help to transform the lived experiences of people of all races, by transforming the social construction of whiteness. As the status quo is upheld through the normalizing of deeply problematic race identities and racist hegemony, the dismantling of the status quo must begin from within the hegemony of whiteness: "*analysing the connections between white daily lives and discursive orders may help make visible the process by which the stability of whiteness- as location of privilege, as culturally normative space…-is secured and reproduced*." (1993: 242). This research therefore addresses this need to make these processes 'visible'.

It is therefore necessary to foreground the race identity of the participants, particularly as the fact that they are critically conscious can only be understood in relation to the fact that they benefit from an unequal society due to their race identities. Frankenberg (1993) provides a clear argument for more research of this kind to address the whiteness of the participants. The aims of her research echo the aims of this research: *"It examines the whiteness of white women's experience, rather than leaving it unexplored...the study enquires into the social construction of the white gaze…it is intended an investigation of the self, rather than of other(s).*" (1993: 18). This study takes this further by exploring the conflicts introduced when participants are critically conscious themselves, and are prepared to subject their own 'white gaze' to interrogation.

In *Whiteness Just Isn't What it Used To Be* (2001), Melissa Steyn presents her critical analysis of the system of whiteness in post-apartheid South Africa, and the resulting white identities. She locates this study in the context of the revolution of identity, the

opportunity for *"(un)learning*" (2001: xxxiii) that is presented by the "*dramatic nature of changes in the privileged position of whiteness.*" (2001: xxxiii). I believe that South Africa is currently experiencing the next phase of this process. The student protests both within tertiary and secondary education contexts have intensified the need for *"(un)learning*" privilege, and as teachers perhaps we need to be directing this action in our classrooms. Crucially, whiteness operates by rendering invisible, the white identity. This research seeks to address this by calling attention to the ways in which white identities operate to defend and perpetuate the status quo, to critique the status quo, and potentially navigate between both of these possibilities.

Steyn (2001) also calls attention to the need for white researchers to reflect upon the ways in which their own assumptions and locations within whiteness, inform their theoretical perspectives, interpretations and engagement with the research. Or risk simply perpetuating an un-critical lens of whiteness through which reality is constructed. For this reason it is necessary for me, as researcher-participant, to reflect openly and honestly about the process and a Researcher Journal serves to fulfil this aim.

The significance of the need to address a gap in the knowledge – to explore identity positioning from the perspective of critically conscious, white women- is further highlighted by Frankenberg when she acknowledges that she *"needed to understand not only how race is lived, but also how it is seen- or more often not seen*." (1993: 9) She argues that the white identity has not been subjected to the scrutiny that the 'Other' identities have. Like Frankenberg, I too aimed to address the fact that "*the white Western self as a racial being has for the most part, remained unexamined and unnamed."* (1993: 17)

The Educational model of Pedagogy For the Privileged looks at how these issues play-out in this particular context. However, most of the emphasis in this field has been upon the identity work that needs to be done to or with learners. This research instead, looks at the work that privileged teachers need to do themselves. The context here is not just the elite classroom, but also that of the individual white teacher's sense of self.

Lastly, a Poststructuralist notion of identity based upon the writings of Foucault (1978), Hall (1992), Weedon (1997) and Lather (1991) locates identity as discursively

constructed, and socially and historically embedded. I have to explore the implications of this when seeking to understand the positioning of the teacher and the resulting questions about agency. For this reason, the data was analysed in terms of Critical Discourse Analysis and Poststructuralist (Feminist) Discourse Analysis.

An analysis of the existing literature therefore suggests that an exploration of teacher identity, whilst represented to an extent in the literature, now requires a focus upon the privileged but critically conscious high school teacher, teaching mostly privileged learners in an elite classroom context, in a post-apartheid context.

The participants, social context and historical context of this study hopefully cast light upon an important site of socialisation and the potential revolutionary action that may be possible when teachers teach an influential demographic of learners, in an important historical moment. The ways in which these teachers makes sense of themselves in this role is the knowledge that fills this knowledge gap.

CHAPTER TWO: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter places this study in the context of relevant theoretical frameworks. As is outlined in the Aims and Rationale sections in Chapter 1, this study is located within a Critical Pedagogy Paradigm and uses a Poststructuralist notion of identity and positioning, with an emphasis on teacher identity positions in terms of power and privilege. This chapter will therefore outline the following theoretical lenses:

2.1 Critical Pedagogy
2.2 Poststructural Subjectivity and Positioning Theory
2.3 Whiteness Studies

2.1 Critical Pedagogy

2.1.1 The Aims and Origins of Critical Pedagogy

The research questions in this study make explicit reference to the **critically conscious** educator. In examining and attempting to operationalize what this could mean, it was necessary to examine the genesis of theories of critical pedagogy. My understanding of teaching as a political act is first and foremost rooted in three of Paulo Freire's seminal texts, *Education For Critical Consciousness* (2007), *Teachers as Cultural Workers* (1998), and *Pedagogy Of The Oppressed* (2005). Critical education theorists who inform the theoretical underpinnings of this study also include writers such as Ira Shor (1999) and Henry Giroux (2010, 2013, 2016).

In *Education For Critical Consciousness* (2007) Paulo Freire proposes a conscious and necessary move away from a "*technical aid*" (2007: 134) or banking model of education, which he argues is a system of dominance and oppression that

"anaesthetises the educatees and leaves them a-critical and naïve in the face of the world." (2007:135)

Instead, he proposes a pedagogy which is critical; challenging learners to think rather than to memorise. He envisions such a system as flexible, unfixed in its "constant search for liberation" (Freire, 2007:135). Therefore, within the paradigm of critical pedagogy, the teacher must resist simply imparting, testing and reproducing static systems of knowledge that maintain the status quo; for Freire, the classroom is a site of either oppression or resistance.

Giroux (2010) also emphasises the unique responsibility of teachers to drive social change when he claims that:

> *Democratic struggles cannot overemphasize the special responsibility of teachers as intellectuals to shatter the conventional wisdom and myths of those ideologies that would relegate educators to mere technicians, clerks of the empire, or mere adjuncts of the corporation.* (2010:6)

Giroux insists that education is inextricably related to societal power structures and that a "*pedagogy of disruption*" positions teachers as "*rigorous, self-reflective, and committed…to the practice of freedom,…addressing crucial social issu*es." (2015:1). Similarly, John Dewey insists that at its essence, the curriculum should have "*the intention of improving the life we live in common so that the future shall be better than the past*." (1966, p191 in Shor, 1999: 11). Stuart Hall (2007 in Giroux, 2016) also envisioned the work of the educator to be to provide learners with critical lenses of analysis that are ahead of conventional discourse, that are forward-thinking and focused on moving to a better future.

These theories underpin the notion of a critical pedagogue and a critical classroom in this study. The resulting roles and responsibilities of the critical teacher inform the exploration of the identity positions within which teachers locate themselves.

2.1.2 The Classroom in a Transitional Context

Freire locates his vision of the critical teacher and her practice within the context of a broader societal transformation or a period of transition; much like the one we are currently experiencing in South Africa (Freire, 2005). This is one of the many reasons why using a critical pedagogy framework is crucial in understanding the context of this study.

Freire emphasises the power inherent in a learner who is equipped to make sense of the changes and systems at play in the world outside of the classroom, through demystifying them within the classroom. In his critique of the banking model of education he argues that there is a direct relationship between societal power structures that maintain systems of oppression, and an education system that produces governable pawns: *"If he lacks the capacity to perceive the 'mystery' of the changes, he will be a mere pawn at their mercy."* (2005: 6). Instead, he calls for a pedagogy that engages an "*intimacy with those problems….an education of 'I wonder,' instead of merely, 'I do.*" (2005: 32).

Giroux (2010) also draws attention to the importance of a transitional context when he refers to pedagogy of disruption, which highlights the connections between the public and private, for both the learners and teachers. Richard Milner IV (2007) emphasises the importance of a shift of focus from the self as point of analysis, to system. Whilst this research does focus on the individual in terms of identity, this is understood within the context of a historically, socially, and politically rooted moment. In this way, what happens in the classroom, or indeed in any identity work with teachers, can be understood as institutional and systemic, as opposed to only idiosyncratic.

Taken together, these perspectives inform the importance of the distinct historically urgent context within which this study takes place, and the possibilities for and conflicts within teacher identity.

2.1.3 The Democratic Role of the Educator

Central to Freire's vision of a critical classroom, is the necessarily 'democratic' location of the teacher within that classroom. This is one of the central tenants of critical pedagogy that this research investigates in terms of the conflicts between and possibilities of teacher positionality that the South African context elicits.

Freire focuses on the role of the teacher and the resulting classroom dynamic in *Teachers As Cultural Workers- Letters to Those Who Dare Teach* (1998). He describes a democratic pedagogy in which all voices are heard and all shared experiences are given credence. This, Freire argues, is the only way in which teachers can access the realities of their learners' lives and in so doing, learn how best to teach them. As knowledge is socially manufactured and reproduced, it can only be accessed socially. In other words, every learner has knowledge of their social reality to share.
Freire argues that the teacher's goal is to encourage self-aware critical analyses of taken-for-granted knowledge.

Richard Milner IV (2007) also emphasises the importance of voice, both within the classroom and in education research. He identifies it as "*naming one's own reality*" (2012: 391), and insists that it is central to Critical Race Theory. Whilst most of this writing focuses on the emancipatory and hegemony-shifting power of presenting narratives and counter-narratives from communities of colour, the emphasis in this research is upon drawing attention to the raced identities of white teachers. This is elaborated in the sub-section on Whiteness Studies below.

The notion of a necessarily democratic classroom informs much of the conflicting teacher positionalities that this study explores, especially as critically conscious teachers may be conflicted about maintaining a democratic classroom as described above, when most of the learners are privileged, and in which other dissenting (less powerful and historically marginalised) voices perhaps need to be centred for the first time.

Shor (1999) reminds us that Freire in no way advocates a chaotic free-for-all in the classroom, without a sense of hierarchy. However, within a deeply divided, unequal society, it becomes necessary to examine the value of an assumption that the ideal classroom is one in which "*everyone must have an equal opportunity to speak and must respect other members' right to speak out to feel safe to talk; all ideas must be tolerated and subjected to fair assessment"*. (Ryan, 2006: 120. In Bogotch & Shields, 2014: 436). The benefit of a democratic classroom is further problematised by writers such as Steyn and Foster (2008) and Steyn and Davis (2012) within the field of Whiteness Studies, which will be explored later in this chapter.

2.1.4 The English Teacher

It is necessary to unpack the unique position of the English teacher within this framework. I suggest that the English teacher is particularly well placed and, arguably, responsible for creating a classroom that encourages critical discussion and reflection.

In *Reading The World/Reading The Word* (2005 edition), Freire draws particular attention to the political nature of texts and the analyses of them: *"a critical way of comprehending and of realising the reading of the word and that of the world, the reading of text and context*." (2005:22). The study of texts in the English classroom should therefore include the study of how meaning is created, how positioning operates, as well as analyses of discourse, voice and context. This is difficult work and requires a conscious decision by the teacher to position herself as a critical pedagogue.

Freire reminds us that *"Comprehension needs to be worked, forged by those who read and study.*" (2005:23). He sees the critical reading of literary texts as a way to subvert the traditional study of literature which perpetuates the status quo. Reading literature is an act in which our reality is constructed: "*The actual act of reading literary texts is seen as part of a wider process of human development and growth based on understanding both one's own experience and the social world*." (1983:5). If "reading texts" is considered the daily work of the English teacher, then this conceptualisation

informs the understanding of the positioning of the participants in this study as English teachers.

Furthermore, Shor (1999) summarises Freire's classroom method as focusing on the work done in the English classroom, namely reading, writing, and conversation. This study, therefore, has the critically conscious English teacher as its focus because the origins of Critical Pedagogy praxis are in literacy skills and consequently in the hands of English teachers.

Like Giroux, Shor (1999) locates Freire's model in a contemporary context and specifically in the contemporary English classroom. He sees critical literacy working actively against the status quo, disrupting the socialisation of learners, prioritising counter-hegemonic readings and dissenting voices. He suggests that there is important work to be done with privileged learners as critical education should *"...invite people into action to achieve…humane goals."* (Shor, 1999:5). This study explores the implications of these assumptions about the learner demographic for the teacher's identity positioning; particularly in relation to her learners and classroom practice when the learners are almost entirely constituted by the 'dominant class'. In other words, what does it mean to teach the privileged?

2.1.5 Pedagogy of the Oppressed

This brings into focus a further central premise of critical pedagogy that is problematized in the specific context of this research: the assumptions that the theory makes about the identities of the learners.

Freire argues that it is the, "*ability of humans to plan and shape the world for their future needs that separates us from animals*." (1998:94.) Because the "*dominant class*" intends to maintain oppression of the "*dominated class*" (1998:71), and because they have the power to construct and maintain systems that are to their advantage, the classroom serves to perpetuate their positions of privilege. This system operates by convincing the oppressed of their fallacious lack of agency by "*emphasise(ing) in*

practice the inferiority of those who are dominated." (1998:71) It is this naive consciousness that critical pedagogy therefore aims to transform into a questioning and political consciousness.

However, this research assumes a degree of naïve consciousness amongst the privileged learners in it, despite or perhaps because of the **privilege** that operates in the context of this study. The notion of agency being constructed through discourse and relationships is also relevant. The learner demographic in this case would constitute Freire's oppressive or *"dominant"* class (1998:71), in terms of race, class and gender. This research seeks to understand the ways in which this impacts upon the critically conscious teacher's understanding of her work as liberatory and revolutionary.

Despite the drive to subvert and question the status quo, and give a voice to all participants, Freire also outlines the importance of tolerance in the classroom; "Tolerance is the virtue that teaches us to live with the different. It teaches us to learn from and respect the different." (1998 edition: 42). This theoretical notion is, however, also problematized when we move into a context of privilege. How accepting should we be of attitudes that support the status quo? How accepting should we be of difference that is not neutral, but constructed within an unequal society, subject to power relations? As Freire's driving focus is very much upon uplifting and liberating the poor, particularly in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (2005 edition), these questions only arise in privileged contexts such as that of this research.

Freire insists upon the necessity of a critical pedagogy, which empowers the oppressed to gain liberation through "*the praxis of their quest for it, through their recognition of the necessity to fight for it*." (2005:45). Freire does indeed make reference to the oppressor in that:

> *Discovering himself to be an oppressor may cause considerable anguish, but it does not necessarily lead to solidarity with the oppressed. Rationalizing his guilt through paternalistic treatment of the oppressed, all the while holding them fast in a position of dependence, will not do.* (2005:49).

This study unpacks the implications of this perspective for a privileged teacher, teaching the privileged.

However, Tuck and Yang (2012) provide an important critique of an approach like Freire's to liberation through education, one which questions the emphasis of liberation of the mind as opposed to material liberation. They examine Freire's vision of a liberation which frees both the oppressor and the oppressed, with disdain- as a form of idealistic naivety, which emphasises individualism and personal revolution, over the more radical, chaotic approach of Fanon. Bearing critiques of this nature in mind, any truly liberatory pedagogy must be subject to scrutiny.

2.1.6 The Privileged Critical Educator

Even when taking critiques such as this into account, the paradigm of Critical Pedagogy presents English teachers with a clear (and appropriate) mandate, which I argue, may result in the contemporary, South African, privileged, English teacher, believing they are in a complex, difficult and potentially untenable position.

Giroux (2009) reminds us that Freire's work is distinctly revolutionary. He argues that for this reason, critical pedagogy must be viewed in the context of postcolonial theory and as postcolonial work. He argues that practitioners of Freire's theory must become *"border crossers"* (2009:1) whose job it is to push back against colonial and Western discourses of power and privilege by consciously leaving the *"cultural, theoretical and ideological borders that enclose them within the safety of spaces we inherit and occupy." (2009:1)*

Giroux insists that this means that the critically conscious teacher must displace established systems of oppression by leaving (an ideological and hegemonic) home herself and this begins with brutally honest introspection, intellectual analyses and the discomfort of realising that home is "*safe by virtue of its repressive exclusions and hegemonic location of individuals and groups."* (2009:2) The consequence for the privileged critical pedagogue is a sense of homelessness and it is this dislocation of identity that informs the questions in this research. It becomes necessary to examine the implications of this homelessness, and explore the ways in which this discomfort is actively sought, negotiated, or resisted.

Furthermore, bell hooks reminds her readers in *Teaching to Transgress* (1994) that the realm of critical pedagogy has been and is still, dominated by white theorists and figure-heads. If we want to ascribe to a meaningful critical pedagogy, we must subject ourselves as white practitioners and researchers, to scrutiny. This brings into focus why the *homelessness* described by Giroux and Freire, and the impact of this on the teacher's positionality, is a necessary focus: it is a key feature of the positionality of the majority of Critical Pedagogy theorists and practitioners, and one which therefore needs to be understood.

Giroux (2015) further explores the discomfort that is inherent to this kind of teaching. He suggests that it should be expected to be both uncomfortable and disruptive as it requires a deliberate and unwavering pushing against the hegemony. Shor also spells out that this work is not "*easy, transparent or risk-free*." (Shor, 1999: 10). It is the possible tension between the goals of the critical teacher and the discomfort or conflict that they may experience within this positionality, which this study examines.

However, knowing that it will be uncomfortable, it becomes necessary to seek to understand what practitioners do with this discomfort. I examine the patterns of ways of speaking about this discomfort which shape our ways of understanding the discomfort, which in turn position us and each other in particular ways.

These theoretical constructs, therefore, prompt the following question: How does a teacher operating within the critical pedagogy framework, adapt and operationalize their aims and role when teaching in a privileged context, when they themselves identify as privileged?

Whilst vital, patently urgent work is being done to empower the oppressed, work which will inevitably require continued focus in an unequal society, what responsibilities rest with the conscientised teacher who occupies a position of privilege, as do her learners? How does she believe this impacts upon her interactions with her learners?

There is some indication of how this would be approached in Freire's conception of the critical classroom as a place of discomfort and disagreement "*Trying to escape conflict, we preserve the status quo."* (1998:45). However, I explore the implications of this for

the positioning of critically conscious teacher in this historical moment. If we wish to do this work in an impactful way, we need to look at what discourses operate to maintain the status quo.

2.1.7 Pedagogy for the Privileged

The school of Pedagogy for the Privileged is described by Curry-Stevens (2007) as an educational model that directly examines the identities of learners and teachers who are privileged. Derived from Critical Pedagogy, it is expressly anti-oppressive and views elite institutions, such as the one in this study, as important, powerful sites of socialisation, and therefore sites where oppressive hegemonies and structures are reproduced.

Pedagogy for the Privileged insists that we look directly at the identities and mechanisms of whiteness in privileged spaces, and that we examine how these identities and mechanisms operate. Importantly, as is explained in the section on Whiteness Studies to follow, making these identities and mechanisms **visible** by scrutinising them, is the first step to dismantling oppressive systems:

> *The core contribution of pedagogy for the privileged is being able to create a classroom environment that more effectively assists privileged learners to undergo needed transformations to unlearn privilege and dominance, and work effectively as allies in anti-oppression struggles.* (Curry-Stevens, 2010: 62).

The work potentially done by practitioners of pedagogy for the privileged is significant in that it would be impossible to dismantle racism without examining the role that white people play in maintaining the status quo: *"…there is a place at the anti-racism table for white scholars. For the dominant, the entry point is the investigation of whiteness and white identity."* (George Sefa Dei, 2007. P viii. In Curry-Stevens, 2010).

Whilst the emphasis in Pedagogy for the Privileged is on privileged learners (Allen & Rossatto, 2009), some writers have examined the identity work that needs to be done by educators in these spaces.

However, Curry-Stevens (2010) poses an important challenge to the school of thought in warning practitioners that it:

> *...potentially becomes a bourgeois journey that belies the fact that there are immediate and urgent needs to be addressed while privileged learners (*and teachers- my addition*) take too much time to potentially come to a place where they are ready to be allies.* (p 62).

Furthermore, Tuck and Yang (2012) launch a scathing critique of the act of *"dressing up in the language of decolonisation"* (2012:3), using fashionable language, without fully understanding what the colonisation project is about and thereby *"domesticating decolonisation"*. (2012:3). Tuck and Yang refer to this as "*settler moves to innocence*" (Malwhinney, 1998, in Tuck and Yang, 2012), a series of positioning steps which "reconcile *settler guilt and complicity*" (Tuck & Yang, 2012:4).

The field therefore risks being complicit in protecting privilege, by focusing on the needs and identities of the privileged. In a country with pronounced and devastating inequalities, I concur with Curry-Stevens' argument that:

> *Many are waiting for an end to the damaging disproportionality….an end to dominant discourses that render them with less access to resources and lowered expectations for achievement…the waiting game has gone on too long- and pedagogy for the privileged risks adding another inning to this game. (2010: 66)*

In relation to teacher identity in particular, she adds that, whilst she considers herself an ally, as someone who is predominantly privileged *"I cannot be trusted to interpret this dynamic. I cannot be trusted to assess whether this is a reinscription of dominance, or political savvy."* (2010:65). She argues that our (hers and mine) positionality prevents us from every being able to fully understand privilege, or see the extent to which we are invested in protecting it, no matter our good intentions.

Furthermore, Curry-Stevens warns against the *"exceptional white*" (2010: 66) positioning, which serves to construct an identity as expert in the field. Curry-Stevens also warns against a field being dominated by white academics.

These are limitations of this school of thought, as well as of any study such as this in which a white person attempts to unpack white positionalities. Her solution is to argue

for accountability to the communities who are oppressed within a particular context; an oversight body to which practitioners must answer.

A more personal way in which to reconcile these limitations, is to consciously aim to move from a position of arrogance and innocence as an untroubled ally (Curry-Stevens, 2010) to one of humility; in recognising and remaining vigilant to our own complicity. This requires us to continually interrogate our positioning and praxis.

Bearing this in mind, Curry-Stevens (2010) does provide an outline of the assumed needs of privileged learners (and teachers, my addition). (Table 1). These assumptions are optimistic, as they position Pedagogy for the Privileged as a worthwhile practice, one that can yield truly transformative results.

Whilst this optimism needs to be tempered with the cautions expressed above, they are useful in providing a framework for the ways in which this study examines the positionalities of the participants, especially in terms of their identities in relation to their learners. Presumably, critical pedagogues may well struggle (as I continue to) with some of these, in terms of the extent to which they centre the emotional world of the privileged, but they are usefully aligned with Freire, bell hooks and Feminist Research paradigms (to be examined in detail in Chapter 3), which resist dehumanising any individual in the classroom, be they oppressor, oppressed, teacher or learner.

Table 1: The needs of privileged learners and teachers

The needs of the privileged learner (and teacher: my addition):
To be taught about oppression, privilege and a critical analysis of power.
To be treated as worthy of love and support.
To be seen as in pain and suffering, despite having privilege and power.
To have one's suffering recognised and affirmed by both educators and fellow learners.
To be allowed to have ambivalence about the process.
To be treated with compassion and sensitivity.
To be allowed to get this wrong.
To be gently challenged when acting imperilled or defensive.
To not make assumptions that their identity is primarily privileged.
Curry-Stevens (2010: 64)

However, it could be argued that critically conscious teachers may not believe that these bullet points are wholly compatible with the modern elite South African boys' school classroom, where the majority of students are white and affluent, but not all of them are. Consequently, one has to be very alert to the possibility that in centering the needs of the privileged, we are erasing the needs of those who do not have race or class privilege, and whose needs are more urgent.

This paradox undercuts the conflicting identity positions under scrutiny in this study; it is this ambivalence with which this study grapples. No teacher who considers themselves critically conscious would ever want to be accused of pandering to and indulging the needs of the most privileged segment of society: wealthy, white, Christian, men (Curry-Stevens, 2010).

However, in order to do this work effectively, we have to believe that learners can come to be aware of and alert to their own privilege, and even work consciously to dismantle it. This goal means that we cannot and must not fail to see the humanity of our learners, or the humanity of privileged teachers.

Furthermore, the need for trust in a critical pedagogy classroom is emphasised by Freire, who refers to a pedagogy of love (Allen and Rossatto, 2009), and also by contemporary writers like bell hooks (1994) Curry-Stevens (2010) and Allen and Rossatto (2009). Allen and Rossatto express a belief that:

> *If educators honestly and passionately express their radical love for humanity and their intolerance for oppression then oppressor students are more likely to move beyond their knee-jerk reactions...* (2009:178).

Pedagogy for the Privileged is by its nature, reflexive. Practitioners and learners cannot do the work if they are not introspecting and critically examining their own positionalities. Yet, this may be problematic as it could be seen as yet another *"liberal dalliance"* (McWhinney, 2005. In Curry-Stevens, 2010: 67). If this research is to produce meaningful outcomes, it must therefore lead to transformative action (like the aims of social justice research, examined in Chapter 3) and new engagement with and confidence in working towards transformation in our institutions.

Both Curry-Stevens (2010) and Kitching (2011) insist that any practitioner in the fields of Pedagogy for the Privileged and Whiteness Studies, must be accountable to the communities who most need redress. This study takes account of what this means in terms of subject positions of the participants.

Curry-Stevens commits to *"living in the contradictions, complexities and ambiguities"* (2010: 70). In light of this, I examine what the nature of these contradictions, complexities, and ambiguities are, and how we negotiate them.

The feminist research model is compatible with this version of critical pedagogy as it too centres the humanity of each participant, and of the researcher herself. It also aligns an acceptance of the complexities of being human, with an acceptance that as a white person in a system of white supremacy, one can never expect to have completed a journey of anti-racism. One cannot expect to ever move from a position of being complicit and naïve, to one of knowledge and 'goodness': *"a set of (good) white bodies, habits and psyches that somehow reach a finite point or coherent state of having taken 'full' responsibility for race inequality."* (Kitching, 2011: 173).

The process of identity formation, when viewed as positioning, means that we never stop being positioned by and within whiteness, and we cannot step out of positioning others in relation to our whiteness- we can never hope to reach a completed identity of white ally- and we must therefore continue to be alert and reflexive, as we can never claim to be post-race.

The theoretical framework of subject positionality will be outlined in the following subsection.

2.2 Post Structural Subjectivity and Positioning Theory

2.2.1 Moving from Discourse to Subject Positions

Having chosen to locate myself as a teacher of transgression (hooks, 1994), looking for opportunities to deliver Gramsci's counter-hegemony (Freire, 1983), it becomes necessary to explore my own positioning and that of other teachers who self-identify as conscientised, critical teachers. Giroux (2010) calls for a notion of identity that moves beyond stable notions of *self* and *other.* Poststructural theory is very useful in providing a theoretical and workable alternative.

Before an explanation of subjectivity and positionality, it is necessary to unpack why it would be valuable for a teacher to reflect on their identity in this way. Brookfield (1995) posits four lenses through which a teacher may reflect on their practice: the autobiographical; through their students' eyes; from the perspective of their colleagues; and through engagement with theory. The importance of critical self-reflection and conversations with peers informs the methodology of this study in that it comprises of focus group sessions with peers, and a Researcher Journal. The focus is adapted from Brookfield to allow for participants and the researcher to reflect on their positioning through these different lenses.

The analysis of identity that this study considers, is one which must incorporate a recognition of the historically contextualised, relational (socially embedded) and fluid nature of identity. As critical pedagogy theory views both teachers and learners as subjects moulded by and responding to complex societal power relations, the nature of identity to be used must also take the issue of power into account too.

The poststructural perspective on subjectivity offers an analysis that presents the notion of self as de-essentalised, fluid and discursively constructed (Andreouli, 2010) and is therefore the best suited for this study.

This paradigm of identity views the concept of self as occurring in the interactions between the self and others. Identity is therefore given meaning in the social- in relation to others. (Andreouli, 2010). For this reason, language (as socially constructed, employed and manifest) becomes the primary site for understanding identity. Baxter (2016) therefore summarises the relationship between language and identity as *"identities are constructed by and through language, but they also produce and reproduce innovative forms of language."* (Foucault in Baxter, 2016: 34).

However, language is not a neutral medium. It is loaded with, constructed within, and perpetuates societal power relations. Barthes (1978, in Acevedo, 2015) views language as operating as an "institution of power" (p33).

Foucault's notion of discourse as power-knowledge is central here. Ferreira (paraphrasing Hall) describes discourses as:

> *...bodies of knowledge that have the power to constitute and delimit the field or discipline that they represent, a process which encompasses the production of a particular kind of human subject associated with that discipline.* (2015: 4)

Foucault argues that identity is continuously formed and reformed: *"accomplished through actions and words rather than some fundamental essence of character."* (Baxter, 2016: 38). Every individual may be positioned alternatively and sometimes simultaneously as; included or excluded; powerful or disempowered; centred or othered; privileged or marginalised, by discourses. Crucially, these influences are historically determined, fluid and multiple. Discourses therefore shape reality by shaping our experiences of the world, our social interactions and our sense of self.

(Foucault, 2005, in Acevedo, 2015). For this reason, the self can never be understood as stable, decontextualized or separate to issues of power. Foucault thus sees the humanist emphasis and drive to truth, as a "*will to power*" (Foucault, 1980: 109-133. In Baxter, 2016: 35) in reference to regimes of truth; versions of the world; narratives about knowledge which establish power relations between those who know, and those who do not know. (Baxter, 2016).

Hall (1994, in Steyn, 2001: 23) defines identity as *"the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past."* It sounds obvious to argue that South Africa's present is a result of our past. But what is perhaps less obvious, is that our current identity positions are contingent upon this past.

With Foucault as a foundation, Positioning Theory and in particular Critical Feminist Positioning Theory, pays careful attention to the intersectional nature of identity and the interplay between social (individual interactions) and societal (structural) power relations. Feminist Poststructuralists emphasise subjectivity as a site of struggle. (Baxter, 2016). Andreouli (2010) defines subject positions as "*the attribution of character, group membership and other meanings to an actor, while (including) rights and duties (that) refer to the moral order associated with this position*." (2010: 14.5). This fits well with the emphasis in Critical Pedagogy on challenging an oppressive status quo. This is relevant to critical pedagogy which foregrounds the multiple and social nature of identity. With an emphasis upon critical thinking, dialogue and the experiences that each individual brings into the classroom, positioning theory recognises the participatory nature of education, whilst allowing a critical analysis of the power relations that shape our sense of self and the other.

Taking up a subject position requires an individual to perform certain markers of that positionality; Judith Butler described these as "*performative acts"* (Baxter 2016:40), particularly in relation to gender identities. Performance as a product or manifestation of positioning is a useful construct to examine when looking at identities within the context of this study; especially in relation to the identities and discourses associated with *critically* conscious and *privileged* teachers.

2.2.2 The Role of Agency

Importantly, an examination of discourses does not negate the recognition of the agency of the teacher; identity formation is an interplay between the choices made by individuals in terms of the subject positions within particular discourses which they choose to occupy, and the ways in which they are positioned by others through discourse. (Baxter, 2016). Davies and Harre suggest that we demonstrate agency in the ways in which we **choose** to:

> ...(*re)produce ourselves in our lived autobiographies…. In order to produce some form of consistency and coherence between our multiple subject positions, we tell ourselves and others stories about how we have lived and how we intend to live our lives. This need to develop storylines involving events, characters and moral dilemmas is an attempt to resolve the ways in which we are continuously positioned by discursive practices in contradictory ways that disrupt the sense of sustaining a coherent identity*. (in Baxter, 2016:42).

These narratives about who we are form the basis of the data in this study.

2.2.3 Emotions Through a Poststructuralist Lens

Whilst the aims of this study are to examine the positioning of the participants, and thus their identities in relation to power, one cannot separate this from the ways in which they express their emotional experiences. Ahmed (2004, paraphrased in Matias and Mackey, 2015: 5) posits that emotions are "*enveloped in cultural politics that, when read critically, can be performative expressions, which describe the intricate process between individual and collective bodies."* This means that emotions should be invaluable data in this research.

Kitching (2009) engaged with teacher identity in relation to how emotions were verbalised by participants and the ways in which they made sense of their own emotions in relation to teaching. He frames the examination of emotional states in a poststructural analysis as an *"excavation of reified discourses around teaching which constitute felt*

emotion." (2009:143). Therefore, emotions are not examined as self-evident, but nor are the participants' real emotional experiences dismissed.

Kitching's aims are similar to mine in that he intends to *"prioritise a decentred view of teacher subjectivity and related emotional experiences as a more mobile means of understanding emotional labour in changing times."* (2009:142) He finds that notions of 'teacherdom' and teacher identities can and should be unsettled in order to allow for a more complex, problematized understanding of teacher identity. This was a useful way of framing my own research.

Rosenberg (1990, in Kitching, 2009) identifies emotional labour as *"management of emotional display at particular times for work purposes."* (2009: 142). In particular, Kitching examines the complicated links between expressions of emotion and identity, when there is a perceived clash between the participant's ideas of self, and their own ideas about who and what the institution expects them to be, thus prompting the participant to believe they are presenting a façade. This clash of subjectivities is expressed as a negative state, which further frames how the teacher makes sense of who they are as a teacher. This form of emotional labour in the work place is valuable in framing my examination of teacher identity, especially in light of the theoretical links to poststructuralism and positioning theory. As Kitching explains:

> *Subjectivation may be an important tool in understanding how teachers' emotional displays are self-regulated with and through discourses that provide the grounds for recognising their feelings and behaviours as acceptable/unacceptable.* (2009:143).

Kitching divides his findings into three "*discursive possibilities"* (2009:142) listed below. These were a valuable touchstone for my own findings:

1. **The (anticipated) choice of a teacher as moral/ethical educator**
2. **The expert**
3. **Social control and emotional display.**

(Kitching, 2009:145-146)

In deepening an understanding of the emotional labour of the critical pedagogue, it was important to examine this in relation to the very specific context of teaching privileged learners. Writers such as Allen and Rossatto (2009) address this directly.

In attempting to challenge an oppressive status quo, the privileged learners act as representatives of the oppressor group. Unsurprisingly this leads to fraught interactions in the classroom. Teachers respond with a variety of emotional patterns in response to what is perceived by them as a hostile atmosphere. These include; anger, depression, fear of retaliation, and resignation. Allen and Rossatto find that some teachers rationalise their resignation and resulting disconnection from the social justice agenda in the classroom- by arguing that the learners' privilege is reason alone for critical pedagogues to not centre the learners' needs in the classroom. This further distances the teacher from the learners and does very little to advance the goals of pedagogy for the privileged, which was examined in detail above.

What is important to note here, is that the emotional world of the teacher is significant in shaping their identity, which in turn determines how they interact with learners, and their praxis, and therefore must be examined in relation to discourse and subject positions.

Lastly, I am cognisant an analysis of discourses would require me to explore which ones are in conflict, and how the vying for status and power manifests. Foremost in my mind must be Foucault's assertion that "*as discourses always represent and constitute different political interests, these are constantly vying with each other for status and power*". (in Baxter, 2016: 37).

2.2.4 The Use of Conversation

Warhol (2005, in Baxter, 2008) insists that all texts are "*dialogic in nature: they cannot be read or heard in isolation.*" (2008:10). Therefore, meaning must be sought and understood amidst a "*dialogue of interacting voices*." (Baxter 2008: 11).

In '*A Bricolage of Voices: Lessons Learned from Feminist Analyses in Educational Leadership'* (2014), Sherman-Newcomb posits a form of qualitative research that allows for a variety of voices and forms to come together to create something new, something that is more than the sum of its parts. Whilst the focus group methodology of this study could be viewed as one dimensional, the dialogic nature of this methodology produced a bricolage of voices woven together. The use of Discourse Analysis should then allow the researcher to pull the conversations apart in various ways, and then put the discourses, voices and 'ways of being' back together in a wholly new way. I aim to produce an original tapestry, or rendering of multiple perspectives, that allows for the complexity and fluidity of subject positions to be seen and understood from within an organized system or pattern of meanings. Thus the creative potential of drawing on various voices also has explanatory potential. Denzin and Lincoln (2000) suggest that a bricoleur is a quiltmaker, as she "*pieces together a body of perspectives that, together, help readers understand a complex problem that cannot be explained by one of the perspectives alone.* (2000: 4).

Shor (1999) refers to the importance of dialogue in the empowering classroom. C.S Pierce (in Pardales**,** 2006) refers to a community of enquiry, as do Giroux (2010, 2014, 2016) and Freire (2007, 2005). Orzel (2014) argues that: "*for schools to be inclusive, scholars suggest that dialogue must be at the heart of inclusive leadership practices*." (2014:436). The loose structure of the focus group sessions provided an opportunity for participants to share their stories, reflect upon them and critique them, much as researchers themselves. Insana et al (2014) reminds us that "*we all live "storied lives" and, in particular, that narrative is a typical way that teachers describe and make sense of their professional lives."* (2014:452). In light of this coherent academic context, much of research design relies on conversation as the data.

By using this design, I intended to formalise and capture an already existing community of enquiry, reflection, support and collaboration in which the participants and myself as researcher-participant, reflected upon our identity positions, theoretical perspectives, praxis, interactions and relationships between ourselves and our learners, and the possible conflicts that we experience within and between these issues.

A focus group also allowed me to gather both data directly from what the participants shared, as well as information about the interactions that we had with each other. In a sense, the research questions grew from the fertile soil of the many conversations that we had already had of this nature. This methodology therefor enabled me to avoid research conducted *to/on* participants, to research conducted *with* colleagues. This casts our pre-existing relationships in a new light. Rather than being a possible limitation of the study, the fact that I am a part of this community, and that the other participants and I had already been grappling with the nature of our subject positions within an elite school, meant that the research could be viewed, as Schoorman (2014) posits, as a "*service to the community*" (2014:223), as it was an attempt to address the existing needs of that community.

This methodology is also compatible with Freire's emphasis upon the transformative and revolutionary power of dialogue (Freire, 2005). His description of dialogic pedagogy when applied to research, centres a collaborative relationship between the researcher and the researched community. The investigation should be prompted and shaped by the needs of the community and conducted with the community as co-investigators. A focus group methodology would align with this ideology. In fact, it would be very difficult for me to conduct research of this nature- that posits social justice work as an imperative- if I was not in fact immersed in the community. I therefore consider my existing relationships with the participants as a strength and necessary feature of the study. However, I remain cognisant of the fact that as I too am a participant of the study and a member of the community, whilst the strengths of autoethnographic elements do apply (as outlined in detail in 2.4 of this dissertation), so too do the possible limitations, including the limitations to my objectivity.

Dialogue as understood in this study, is not casual, polite conversation. It is the "*means through which we "interrogate our work as teachers."* (Insana et al 2014:451) and must therefore be rigorous and challenging. Dialogue of this nature must be done within a context of equality and openness. Participants must be willing to be uncomfortable, to disagree and to feed on "*difference in ideas and interpretations, rather than requiring consensus.*" (Insana et al 2014: 451) The prompt questions and (loose) framework for each meeting ensured that rather than polite conversation, or only personal stories, we had to explore what we believed these stories revealed. The focus group sessions

yielded dialogue which was focused on interrogating our own subject positions and one other's, as well as the ways in which we understood ourselves within our particular context.

2.2.5 Narrative Research

The loose framework of the focus group sessions is a form of narrative research in which participants spend time telling their stories about who they are, with as much detail and reflection as possible. Each focus group session provided an opportunity for the participants to tell stories about who they are when they are teaching in this particular context, at this point in history. Due to the flexible framing of each session, there was time and space for participants to change their minds, to recast their subject positions in numerous different ways, as they listened to each other's stories and retold their own.

Whilst the poststructural notion of positionality resists a notion of a single, stable, coherent and authentic self, I was struck by Elbow's (1986) depiction of stories as *"the masks through which we can be seen, and with every telling we stop the flood and swirl of thought so someone can get a glimpse of us, and maybe catch us if they can*. (Elbow, 1986:69). I adapt this to refer to the glimpses of subject positions that can be revealed. Insana (2014) describes stories we tell ourselves and others as a way for us to "*catch ourselves in a moment in time and reflect on who we are; also, as we choose how to narrate our lives for others, they catch a glimpse of us in the stories we tell them*." (2014: 447). Whilst this research is not aiming to capture any 'true essence' of personhood, it is hoped that the stories reveal glimpses of discourses-of-personhood which can be analysed.

The use of stories of personhood or "*lived autobiographies"* (Baxter, 2016: 42) is consistent with Poststructuralist Positioning Theory. Davies and Harre (in Baxter, 2016: 42) conceive of these stories as coping mechanisms employed in the face of discursive practices which continuously position us *"in contradictory ways that disrupt the sense of sustaining a coherent identity"* (Baxter, 2016: 42). In seeking a coherent,

stable sense of self, we produce and reproduce our subject positions by "*telling ourselves and others stories about how we have lived and how we intend to live our lives*." (2016: 42). In asking participants to share their lived autobiographies, the researcher should have access to the discursive practices in which we "*develop storylines involving events, characters and moral dilemmas"* (Baxter, 2016: 42) as we attempt to resolve a fracture of self.

2.2.6 The Use of Artefacts

A week prior to Focus Group 1, participants were asked to select an artefact that speaks to their identities as critical pedagogues. The artefact could have been a text, an image or an object, or even a song or film clip.

Boske (2014) argues that artmaking and creative tasks such as selecting a symbolic artefact and thinking about how to explain this symbolism to one's peers, help participants to reflect deeply upon their identities as teachers, in shaping "*critical reflection….as spaces to construct meaning-making through the senses."* (Boske, 2014: 296-297). *"Utilizing the senses encourages school leaders to give feeling to form and form to feeling. (Langer, 1953, in Boske, 2014:297)* The focus groups needed to be framed by a task in which we could all participate, as equals, and which framed our discussions on identity by beginning with moving from the ephemeral and abstract, to something that could be held, examined, passed from person-to-person. It also helped to set the tone for the focus group sessions; the meeting would be participant-centred, and they would have agency and ownership of the process. The artefact task is also in-line with the aims of the research; "*when school leaders engage in reflection on assumptions and predispositions, especially about oneself, their sense-making may lead to transformative learning of self*" (Mezirow, 1990, in Boske, 2014: 297).

2.2.7 Data Analysis and Beyond

2.2.7.1 Introduction to a Hybrid Approach to Analysis

The research question of this study places at the foreground issues of identity and power, and how these manifest relationally and within a particular context. A combination of discourse analysis approaches was applied in order to critically explore the possibilities for *being*, as a critically conscious, white, middle-class English teacher in this particular historical and social environment.

The theoretical framework of this study draws upon the partially compatible, partially contradictory fields of Critical Pedagogy and Whiteness Studies, and the understanding of identity and language derived from Poststructuralism.

As researcher, I do not view language as transparent. Discourse Analysis provides a critical tool with which the identities constructed through language can be critically explored, to unpack the meanings beyond the surface. By using Discourse Analysis, the transcripts of the focus group interviews and the researcher-participant journal were analysed in a way that allowed for an exploration of identity in terms of power embedded in language.

I use Richardson's five assumptions of language as a point of departure when deciding on an approach to Discourse Analysis (Richardson, 2007. In Chelf, 2018), namely;

a) Language is never neutral; it is always political and inextricably bound-up with issues of power.
b) Language is social and forms the basis of human activity.
c) Identities are constructed within language.
d) Language shapes and directs our behaviours.
e) We can use language to change our behaviours.

Discourse is the means through which we can access the process of subjectivity unfolding. (Foucault, 1972, 1969; Hall, 1992, 1996, 2001; Weedon, 1997; Davies,

1994). Hall (1996) understands subjectivity as a fluid and continuous process of being, whereas identities may be understood as "*points of suture*" at which specific subject positions are occupied. Therefore, identities are "*points of temporary attachment*" (Hall, 1996:5) which provide an opportunity to explore the ways in which discourses provide different possibilities for being. In this study, the term 'identity' refers to this snapshot moment of location, and the term 'subject position' may be used synonymously.

However, there are various approaches to Discourse Analysis which vary in terms of theoretical lenses, processes, and intended outcomes. I outline the specific use of Critical Discourse Analysis and Poststructuralist Discourse Analysis and Feminist Poststructuralist Discourse Analysis, below.

Luke (1995) identifies Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as drawing on

> *...poststructural discourse theory and critical linguistics, focusing on how social relations, identity, knowledge and power are constructed through written and spoken texts in communities, schools and classrooms*. (1995: 39).

Thus, CDA is clearly compatible with the theoretical framework of this study, its aims and the kind of data collected.

Critical Pedagogy and Whiteness Studies demand that research examine and disrupt oppressive and unjust systems of power that operate institutionally and within broader society. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) shares this emphasis. It can be seen less as a specific recipe for analysis, and more as a set of intended outcomes; that research must produce insights into the ways in which discourse produces and maintains social inequality (van Dijk, 2001, in Mazid, 2014).

However, this framework and the use of CDA require the researcher to accept the grand narrative of critical race theory; the kind of single truth that Poststructuralist theory and Poststructuralist Discourse Analysis (PDA) attempt to deconstruct. According to Baxter (2008) the primary goal of PDA is to:

> ...contest the *authority of more established and theoretical approaches such as CA and CDA…(and to) serve a resistant value in challenging fashionable or entrenched approaches that inevitably transform themselves into 'grand narratives… grounding truth and meaning in the presumption of a universal subject and predetermined goal of emancipation*. (Elliott, 1996:19 in Baxter, 2008:13).

Ironically, in order to avoid becoming the thing which it seeks to deconstruct, PDA must be ever evolving and self-reflexive. The analysis in this study therefore needed to evolve as it was applied.

According to Baxter (2016:47), the advantages of PDA can be expressed as follows:

> *The value of PDA over CDA….is that identities are constructed as multiple, dynamic, fluid and ever-changing, and these are not perceived as fixed within a single, static, powerless position. PDA therefore restores a sense of agency to those individuals or social groups considered to be disadvantaged or disempowered. They are never permanently positioned within a dichotomous villain–victim relationship, but can self-reflexively transform their identity position through acts of negotiation, challenge, self-reflexivity and resistance.*

It is hoped that applying the principles of both of these approaches to analysis (CDA and versions of PDA) allows for an eclectic approach, which requires the researcher to accept the inevitable contradictions that may arise; an approach which could actually empower me to explore the contradictions of subject positions referred to in my research question.

2.2.7.2 Critical Discourse Analysis

Van Dijk (2001:325, in Mazid, 2014:xix) defines CDA as:

> *…a type of discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context. With such dissident research, critical discourse analysts take explicit position, and thus want to understand, expose, and ultimately resist social inequality*.

It is this notion in CDA of the researcher 'taking a specific position' that ensures cohesion with the theoretical paradigms in this study, with my emphasis upon Critical Pedagogy and Whiteness Studies; both of which position the researcher as taking the position that we live in an inherently racist and unequal society in which whiteness is centred and rendered invisible at the same time (Steyn, 2001). CDA offers a *"critical, politically engaged research framework.*" (Weatherall, Stubbe, Baxter, 2010:236).

For proponents of CDA, language is viewed as a form of social practice (Fairclough, 1992, Richardson, 2007. In Chelf 2018)). Language is a communicative event (Fairclough, 1992. In Chelf, 2018) in which the analysis of meaning operates at three

levels; the text, the discursive practices, and the resulting social practices. According to Richardson:

> *It is the point of CDA to show how discourse conceals this (the opportunity to exercise power to create social change) from us, normalizing inequalities and closing down the possibility of change* (2007, in Chelf, 2018:6).

Significantly, this feedback loop between language, attitudes, and the organisation of a community (and society at large) produces and reproduces power relations and power structures (Fairclough, 1992).

This approach therefore aligns with Whiteness Studies which presupposes that the discourses that shape white identity, particularly in elite institutions, serve to make whiteness invisible, and therefore impossible to dismantle (Steyn, 2001). However, this approach is necessarily a hopeful one, as it theorises social practice as contingent upon the textual and discursive levels of meaning. This implies that if we wish to change social practices that are oppressive, we are empowered to work backwards and uncover the discursive practices that maintain this status quo, and then we can change these.

Simply put, the ways in which we speak about a subject, our choices of words and our arrangement of those words, reveals our attitudes to that subject. If we simplify discourse to mean attitudes, an analysis of these discourses should help us to understand how the words we choose position us, in relation to our context, but particularly, in relation to different communities; as insiders or outsiders. The way in which we talk about a subject can change our view of that subject; it shapes our values, attitudes and analyses of ourselves and others in relation to that subject. Ultimately, these discursive practices produce and reproduce relationships and social practices. They shape a community such as a school, at many levels; including at a whole school level and at a departmental level etc. (Fairclough, 1992).

Therefore, if white educators, within white educational spaces, wish to contribute to the dismantling of whiteness, we need to change our social behaviour, and we can only begin to do this by understanding the patterns of discursive practices and the resulting identity locations that these produce. Ultimately, this study must be ethically and theoretically applicable insofar as it provides practical insights into the dysfunctional

and functional ways in which white identities may be supporting or could be dismantling the status quo. CDA should allow us to achieve these aims.

Weatherall et al refers to a model of CDA identified by Wodak (2008, in Weatherall et al, 2010:222), which she then adapts to include: (i) the wide, historically informed societal context, (ii) the specific societal context in question, (iii) the genre in question, including consideration of the participants, (iv) relevant discourses (named and identified), (v) specific linguistic features. This broad framework was useful to bear in mind. Weatherall et al also reminds us that unlike CA which does not allow for the analysis of discourse necessary to make sense of evolving subjectivities and power, CDA is transparent in acknowledging the researcher-derived and researcher-named discourses (as opposed to speaker-derived).

2.2.7.3 The Importance of Context in Critical Discourse Analysis

Like Dixon & Durrheim (2000), and Nuttall & Mbembe (2008) I also take cognisance of the importance of place in this research. Kitching (2011) too insists that any research examining white identities must interrogate the ways in which, "*sites and symbols like 'the estate' and 'the school' co-construct hierarchised identities; selfhood is performed in relation to these places, rather than loosely being associated with or reflectively signified by them*." (2011:170). Place is particularly relevant in any examination of discourse, which is often shaped by, reproduced, and regulated by institutions. (Baxter, 2016). The institutional context establishes what forms of knowing and being are possible. However, "*competing or resistant*" (Baxter, 2016:38) discourses are possible through relationships and meaning-making that occurs with peers within that institution.

The specific identity positions available are very much predicated upon the specific location of a private boys' college, in an affluent area of Johannesburg. When and Nuttall and Mbembe (2008) refer to a "white suburban city" (2008: 20), this speaks to the specific type of school in which this research takes place as a 'white suburban school' and all of the existing power relations and practices that this implies.

Weatherall et al (2010) also cites the importance of context in CDA as the main point of distinction between CDA and CA (conversational analysis) in which the "*interaction is the context.*"(Stubbe et al, 2003:355. In Weatherall et al, 2010:221). Therefore, CDA centres the specific context of the interaction, which in this study, is key in terms of the research question and the theoretical framework of whiteness studies and post structuralism.

Lastly, it became necessary to integrate CDA with versions of Poststructuralist Discourse Analysis in order to address the more fluid notions of power and identity inherent in a Poststructuralist framework. This was a decision consistent with the tradition of CDA as model that *"has fostered multidisciplinary and methodological eclecticism within its research programme*." (Kopytowska, 2012:ii, in Mazid, 2014:xix)

2.2.7.4 Poststructuralist Discourse Analysis (PDA)

This study understands identity as discursively located, unstable, and socially and historically embedded. (Andreouli, 2010). According to Richardson (2007, in Chelf 2018), CDA allows a transparent and self-aware analysis, as it acknowledges that meaning is, "constructed through human interaction among the author, the text, and the reader" (p6). PDA takes this further: "*the rational conscious subject is decentred*" and grand narratives are "*read against the grain*." (Davies, 2005:312). This works as a counter-balance to the grand narratives of both white supremacy and of Whiteness Studies. So, whilst there is significant overlap between CDA and `PDA, there are some shifts in observational power which makes combining them valid and useful when examining privileged identities.

Operating within a Poststructuralist paradigm, identity is understood as shaped, expressed, and analysed through language and the power relations expressed therein, namely; discourse (Weatherall et al, 2010). Power is understood as the "*strength of a subject's positioning within different social relationships, in terms of status, construction of self, etc*." (Weatherall et al, 2010:229). Power in this sense is constantly shifting, but PDA provides a tool with which to recognise and analyse *patterns* of power and powerlessness.

Baxter (2008) posits that Poststructuralist Discourse Analysis (PDA) is a particularly useful tool in the context of educational research as it provides a "*flexible yet systematic tool to make sense of the complexities and ambiguities of classroom discourse.*" (2008:2), although, in this study the data collected is from a series of focus group sessions. PDA is a rational choice in relation to the theoretical paradigm of this study as it allows the researcher to highlight the "*diverse subject positions, viewpoints, voices and fragmented messages*" (Baxter, 2008:2) embedded in the focus group conversations.

Norton (1997 in Baxter, 2008) draws attention to the possibilities for resistance presented by PDA. This framework highlights the moments in communication when social activism and change may be occurring; that of 'heteroglossia' (Bakhtin, 1981, in Baxter, 2008)- revealing silenced voices. This research seeks to examine both the dominant discourses around the critically conscious white teacher but also, as it emerged through the research process, those that may be routinely silenced especially in relation to gender.

Walkerdine (1990, in Baxter, 2008) also contributes significantly to the notion in this study that a teacher may simultaneously occupy two or more contradictory subject positions within a few moments of conversation. This notion: that participants themselves, as well as the subjects of their conversations (their students and colleagues), could be both powerful and powerless, was a key pattern that would emerge from the data analysis.

2.2.7.5 Feminist Poststructuralist Discourse Analysis (FPDA)

Feminist Poststructuralist Discourse Analysis (FPDA) is a useful variant of PDA in that it supplements CDA by adding a counter-point to a researcher-led approach. As outlined above, this study took a feminist research approach, and so it makes practical, ethical, and theoretical sense to include a feminist means of analysis; one which recognises and addresses the unique humanity of the participant and the researcher. Davies (2005) reminds us that we are "*subjects-in-process, subjects-in-relation*" (2005:36) and therefore agency in FPDA must be understood as the "*recognition of the power of discourse*" (Davies and Gannon, 2005:312).

This study drew upon FPDA as understood by Judith Baxter as it is epistemological; "*interested in the various ways in which the speakers make sense of the world and the knowledge frameworks they draw upon*." (Weatherall et al, 2010:228). In this way, the participants' own understandings of their thinking and their identities is seen as a valuable and central point of analysis, and as a way to empower the participants and to avoid silencing any voices in the study. This further allows a balancing of the two agendas of this research; to allow for the range of expressions of identity to be voiced and validated, as per FPDA, but to also seek to understand these voices with a view to deconstructing the "*regimes of truth"* (Foucault in Weatherall et al, 2010: 228) that perpetuate an unjust status quo (CDA).

Baxter clarifies in her paper 'Post Structuralist Discourse Analysis' (2008) that what she refers to as PDA is now commonly known as FPDA. For the purposes of this research, they are therefore seen as synonymous. Davies and Gannon (2005) provide a useful summary of Feminist Poststructuralist Research, which directs my analysis of discourse in relation to FPDA. This summary, when understood in relation to whiteness as well as gender, and *adapted* for the purposes of this study, puts the analysis in this study in context (Davies and Gannon, 2005: 313- 315):

Table 2: Summary of Feminist Poststructuralist Research (Davies and Gannon, 2005: 313-315)

1)	Data reveals the ways in which identity is understood and performed.
2)	The focus is upon the insights that analysis may provide in relation to "the process of subjectification and the kinds of gendered (and raced- my addition) subjectivities that are available within a particular discourse."
3)	"Discourses do not originate in the subject, yet each subject takes them up as her own, defends them, desires their maintenance, and understands herself in terms of them."
4)	The language in texts may be "deconstructed and broken open to show the ways in which the real is constructed."
5)	"Researchers are not separate from their data…They use their own bodies, affects and relations with others as texts to be read."
6)	Science as a form of knowing is problematized.

7) Neither the participant, nor the researcher, may be the final "arbiter of meanings in any text." There is an emphasis upon and an acceptance of ambivalence and contradiction in any interpretation.
8) The analysis seeks to "trouble that which is taken as stable/unquestionable truth."
9) The individual is not fixed, and while an individual shifts locations and subject positions, they also shift in relation to others.
10) Power is "contingent and unstable."
11) FPDA is interested in the "folding and unfolding of history." In this instance, the different configurations of whiteness and gender.

Davies (1989/2003; 1995, in Baxter 2008) makes the valuable point that CDA or PDA can be extended beyond the research world, and can be a useful form of analysis in the classroom; a teaching tool. As my participants are themselves educators, PDA provided meta-language with which we could overtly deconstruct our own discourses, hopefully resulting in "transformative action" (Baxter, 2008:6) both in and out of the classroom.

Baxter (2008) suggests that PDA is invaluable as it "*reveals rather than suppresses the discursive struggles to fix meaning according to different and competing interests.*" (2008:15). This is significant in relation to this study as both the study and PDA aim to "*increase the understanding of participants' own practices and the situations in which these practices are carried out*." (Baxter, 2008:15-16). This in turn allows for a complexity of perspectives and a degree of self-reflexivity as the basis for practical and critically aware action by the participants in their field of English education, allowing the participants and the researcher to make well-informed educational decisions.

2.2.7.6 Limitations of Analysis Method

This kind of analysis may seem abstract, woolly and subjective; too researcher-driven. In fact, Baxter (2008) reminds us as researchers that we are not discovering discourses that exist 'out there', but are systems of meaning that are generated by the researcher.

Baxter also critiques CDA in particular for a 'bird watching' approach to analysis in which the researcher, bolstered by a strong sense of their theoretical framework, and

the in-group understanding of colleagues in that who work within that same framework, believes that they are 'spotting' and cataloguing discourses that exist in the world, without tempering findings with the acknowledgement that all language and systems of meaning are constructed, and therefore that the systematic process of analysis is important.

In light of this, Baxter's recommendation that CDA and PDA be combined is a rational and necessary approach:

> *PDA is arguably a necessary antidote to CA and CDA, in that it offers a supplementary approach, simultaneously complementing and undermining other discourse-analytical methods….. Thus while CDA in principle seeks to deconstruct how hegemonic power relations position individuals or groups, and in so doing may produce a single, oppositional reading that may eventually become authoritative, a Poststructuralist, supplementary approach encourages the possibility of several competing readings. This means that no single reading of a text is regarded as fixed, but that every reading can be reviewed and perhaps contested in the light of competing voices, perspectives or methods of analysis. (Baxter, 2016:47).*

Whilst any qualitative methodology could be critiqued in terms of a lack of objectivity, the kind that would be required in a quantitative, positivist approach, Chelf states that:

> *Qualitative study embraces a constructivist paradigm that multiple realties exist; therefore, the qualitative researcher does not seek generalizability but rather* ***transferability****. Transferability can be defined as resonance with the reader that the findings are subjectively valid*. (2018: 49).

Furthermore, in order to ensure that the analyses of the study are therefore robust and rigorous, a software programme called NVivo (Chapter 3) provides a tool to record and track my interactions with the data as a form of audit trail. (Chelf, 2018).

Lastly, the subjectivity of Discourse Analysis can be understood not as a weakness, but as a valid feature of a research tool which should produce analyses that function as "*tangible representation(s) of perception*." (Chelf, 2018: 51). In reference to both the analysis methods, and the fact that I am immersed in the context as researcher-participant, I turn to Griffiths who resists the notion that any research can ever be truly objective. In addressing the need to be transparent, rigorous and authentic in my interactions with the data and within my own researcher-journal, I view my own subjectivity not as a weakness- a bias, but as a "perspective". (Griffiths, 1998: 46. In McKinney (2003: 79).

2.3 Whiteness Studies

Now that the relationships between power, language and identity have been unpacked, I move from the broader context of Pedagogy for the Privileged, to the narrower focus of Whiteness Studies:

> *The singular coherent white and male, heterosexual, and elite narrative no longer survives with comfort and security within any of our fields. Indeed, the study of whiteness tilts and exposes, not only by adding previously silenced and alienated voices but also by studying the very rules that have covertly governed the conversation.* (Fine, Weis, Powell Pruitt, Burns; 2004: viii)

This research aims to draw attention to and explore, amongst other things, the white identities of the participants. As Kitching (2011) outlines, the paradox of race not being 'real' but yet still experienced as a personal and structural reality, can to some extent be conceptualised within the fields of Critical Race Theory and Whiteness Studies. As a social construction (as explained in Chapter 1), race constructs and is constructed by our social realities and identities. As race is clearly a salient construction through which to understand the possible conflicts that the participants experience in terms of identity positions, the particular field of Whiteness Studies provides a critical lens through which to understand the conflicts, because the purposeful and active maintenance of the system by those who benefit from the system, is foregrounded (Kitching, 2011).

Furthermore, my choice of Whiteness Studies as a theoretical lens for this study, is necessary when attempting to understand race positionalities and power in terms of systems as opposed to personal behaviours. It is a lens which allows a move from macro realities to the micro, and back again:

> *Shifting from the self to the system allows researchers to work through the danger of rejecting the permanence and pervasiveness of race and racism because they, individually, do not see themselves as racists or contributors to injustice, inequity, or oppression.* Richard Milner IV (2007: 397)

Kitching (2011) describes Whiteness Studies as a means of:

> *…provoking new ways of accounting for and challenging the reality of race conflict…focusing on acts of supremacy….a peopled system of active complicity*

with racial heirarchisation, which benefits whites… (2011:167).

Whiteness Studies insists that any drive to dismantle a deeply unjust and oppressive system must begin by understanding how white identity is constructed and perpetuated within that system; *"race trouble arrived at the scene precisely at the moment when people began thinking they were white'* (Leonardo, 2009:62. In Kitching, 2011). As Matias and Mackey (2015) ask; *"How can one commit to antiracist teaching if one doesn't understand the underlying reason for why it is needed in the first place?"* (Matias and Mackey, 2015: 4).

Steyn (2001), Mbembe (In Prinsloo, 2016) and Twine and Gallagher (2008) all seek to place the theoretical construct of whiteness in historical context, whilst maintaining their emphasis upon the South African context too. Steyn directs attention to writers such as Delgado and Stefancic (1997), Fine et al (1997), Frankenburg (1997) and Hill, (1997) in her contextualising of the field internationally. She explains that these writers put "*the construction of whiteness on the table to be investigated, analysed, punctured and probed… as the site where power and privilege converged and conspired to sabotage ideals of justice, equality and democracy."* (Fishkin, p430, 1995, in Steyn, pxxvi, 2001).

Steyn (2001) defines whiteness as, "the racial norm, the invisible centre that deflects attention from itself by racializing the margins and constructing them as the problem. Whiteness then believes in its own homogenous neutrality." (2001:162). The powerful consequence of this was that for the first time, whiteness was no longer invisible, the assumed objective default, othering and pathologising all other identities. By centring whiteness as the subject of study, academic engagement allowed a transparent and a revolutionary 'waking- up' to the reality that whiteness maintains its power by perpetuating its invisibility.

This research thus continues in this vein, to centre whiteness, not to validate it, but to render the positionality of the white teachers in this study, visible, and therefore open to scrutiny.

Of course, in addressing the social, political, emotional, economic and psychological fallout of apartheid, the focus upon whiteness as a necessarily problematic and destructive construction, is critical. In his address to the Wits Institute for Social and Economic Research (in Prinsloo 2016) Achille Mbembe insists that the *"demythologising of certain versions of history must go hand in hand with the demythologising of whiteness."*

Whiteness in education, and in particular, the ways in which it operates for white educators, has come under scrutiny in recent years. Writers such as Cochran-Smith (2004) and Picower (2009 and 2017) argue that the high numbers of white teachers, (especially in privileged schools- my addition) in a country so marked by inequality and a history of legalised white supremacy, has "*implications for the role white teachers play in creating patterns of racial achievement and opportunity*." (Picower, 2017: 3).

As an English teacher, Toni Morrison's focus on how this operates in literature is particularly interesting. In Playing In the Dark (1992, in Twine and Gallagher 2008) Morrison explores the ways in which whiteness positions white identities as so normative that they are invisible, by constructing *"literary tropes that frame all races but whiteness as marked categories."* (11). The aims of this research are to push against this by making white identities visible, racialised and problematized.

However, much of contemporary Whiteness Studies resists a singular notion of whiteness. Giroux (1997, in Steyn, 2001) argues for a more nuanced approach that acknowledges the many varied subject positions available to white people within whiteness. This is optimistic and allows for the credibility of white allyship and non-racism. Steyn suggests that it is more useful to speak of "*whitenesses*" (Steyn, 2001:xxx) that, whilst all moving within the constructed dimensions of power and privilege, also occupy intersectional and varied locations. Twine and Gallagher (2008 and 2017) suggest that what they call "third wave whiteness" (2008: 6) acknowledges the multiple, varied and intersectional natures of individual and group identities. This theoretical stance allows Whiteness Studies to 'speak back' to Critical Pedagogy in allowing for a less binary and static notion of identity, thus avoiding essentialising race identities.

In fact, writers such as Jupp and Lensmire make an explicit call for research of this nature which "examines the identities of white teachers who, with more and less success, are attempting to come to grips with their own complexity and complicity in a white-supremacist system and seeking to learn how to fight against it" (Jupp & Lensmire, 2016: 987. In Tanner, 2017: 3). They locate studies such as this one, which critically explore how participants and the researcher herself make sense of their identities and their work within their specific contexts, as necessary and important in the effort to "*advance critical knowledge in education research and teacher education*" and "*inform and enhance social justice projects in the present moment*" (Jupp and Lensmire, 2017: 28. In Tanner, 2017: 3).

What it does not do, however, is allow the researcher to fall victim to liberal colour-blindness defined by Steyn as *"the discourse of mainstream popular struggle (Mamdani, 1996), as it seeks to establish equality and bridge differences."* (2001:xxxi). This form of non-racialism is ignorant to the existence of whiteness, seeking to end racism by refusing to talk about race. Operating within the paradigm of Whiteness Studies requires a stance of antiracism, which demands that we look, however difficult it may seem, directly at the social constructions that shape our lives and maintain inequalities.

The significance of exploring white identities within white spaces, particularly those of teachers seeking to engage with social justice principles, and particularly in South Africa, cannot be overstated. Steyn (2001) insists that:

> *the construction of race has been used to skew this society over centuries. If we prematurely banish it from our analytical framework, we serve the narrow interests of those previously advantaged, by concealing the need for redress. To deal with the expressions of power, we need to call it by its name.* (2001:pxxxii)

Twine and Gallagher (2008) provide impetus for this research when they identify contemporary Whiteness Studies as providing the possibility for the kind of (un)learning of whiteness that Steyn refers to. Importantly, they frame this in terms of the critical analyses of the *"cultural practices and discursive practices employed by whites as they struggle to recuperate, reconstitute and restore white identities and the supremacy of whiteness in post-apartheid."* (2008:13). I am interested in how this is manifested in white identities that actively push against these impulses. Frankenberg

(1993) argues that research of this nature is crucial, particularly in relation to critically conscious teachers, because it provides a framework in terms of "*reconceptualising the grounds on which white activists participate in antiracist work."* (1993:242).

Furthermore, it began to be valid to use focus group conversations which would provide the opportunity for teachers to critique, reflect upon and share their experiences of multiple subject positions, provide a framework for capturing the *"production of white identities…as people move across public, private…spaces."* (Twine and Gallagher, 2008:13). Third wave whiteness is also characterised by the kind of *"micro-political analyses of diverse cultural sites"* (Twine and Gallagher, 2008:15) that this research intends to provide.

However, the answer to this lies not in the singular focus upon the paternalistic uplifting of the oppressed, but in the difficult and uncomfortable work of reflecting on our own complicity in oppressive systems. The focus groups in this study should prevent the work of the critically conscious teacher being reduced to *"an act of compassion for an 'other', an optional, extra project."* (Frankenberg, 1993:6). This research will position anti-racism work as tied up in the identity-work of its participants. The focus groups also provided the opportunity to reflect upon how this paradigm shapes our interactions with our learners and colleagues. In this way, the classroom experiences of the teacher-participants and teacher-researcher, were an important if indirect focus of critique.

Therefore, like Frankenburg, I hoped to enable truly anti-racist work by naming the thing that is Whiteness, recognising our present as contingent upon our past, and locating everyone in relation to racism.

However, it is essential in relation to this kind of identity work to work to maintain an awareness of the limitations of our objectivity. Not only am I, as researcher and participant, immersed in the study, but as a white person in a system of whiteness, potentially naive to how this system is shaping my positioning and analyses of others' positioning. (Curry-Stevens, 2010) Tempering my aims in relation to this research, is an acknowledgement that I can never claim to fully see or know how whiteness is operating.

2.3.1 Critiques of Whiteness Studies

There are, however, critiques of Whiteness Studies, most importantly those from a Poststructuralist approach to identity, that accuse Whiteness Studies of being deterministic. These critiques warn that Whiteness Studies runs the risk of replacing biologically deterministic paradigms of identity, with social constructionist ones (Nayak, 2006; Youdell, 2006, 2011, in Kitching, 2011). Nayak, 2006, in Kitching, 2011) critiques Frankenberg's study referred to above, (date), and argues that she presents race as socially constructed and reproduced, yet her sampling of and reference to her participants as 'white women' embodies their identity, and reifies their race.

This is a concern of mine, and one which cuts to the heart of the conflicts and paradoxes of identity which prompted this investigation: it is difficult to correctly insist that race is wholly socially constructed, and yet in our discussions of identity, if not tempered by a Poststructuralist counter-balance, we make it real.

However, Kitching (2011) argues that "articulations of CRT and Whiteness Studies are not tied to one determining/determinist explanation, and in their intersectionality, they do not necessarily view race as always and everywhere *the* fundamental axis of oppression." (2011:167). As is examined in the section below on Whiteness Studies in the South African context, this study also attempts to take a nuanced, intersectional approach to identity. Furthermore, whilst it is worth noting here that despite these critiques, whiteness studies remains for me, the most valuable lens through which to understand current race relations in South Africa. This is primarily because I believe that it forces white South Africans to look in the mirror, to see the hegemony, and then to recognise the structural, institutionalised nature of racism and inequality. As Kitching (2011) suggests, these critiques of whiteness studies has necessitated a "politics of querying" (p170), which has guided my approach in this research.

In fact, Deborah Youdell (2006, 2011, in Kitching, 2011) argues that Poststructuralist examinations of identity, "are not exempt from the forms of disciplinary power which attempt to order, to cohere, and to understand decidedly complex subjects." (p170).

Significantly, theorists such as Mac an Ghaill & Haywood (2011), Leonard (2009), Nayak (2006) (all in Kitching, 2011) allow for ways in which to understand power in relation to whiteness, which justify my attempt to develop a taxonomy of subject positions. These theorists posit that an analysis of power can move beyond a binary of the oppressed and the oppressive. They identify the value of examining how power is manifest, resisted, and reproduced in relation to a variety of subject positions, and the ways in which these subject positions interact and contradict others: *"Leonardo describes thinking about race as a discursive formation…as being 'theoretically critical of race and being race critical of theory while still employing race categories'.* (Kitching, 2011. P 171).

This is particularly valuable in that it allows me to problematize a notion of the stable white identity, which is important in revealing whiteness as a construction which operates by rendering the white identity seemingly unproblematic and natural, to the point that it disappears from scrutiny.

Bearing this in mind, I recognise the intersectional nature of identity positions, however, my particular focus is on race. This focus did not preclude the exploration of a myriad of other identity positions, in particular class and gender. Furthermore, I was aware of the risk of whiteness research to become too self-referential. To this end, Critical Discourse Analysis as well as Poststructuralist (Feminist) Discourse Analysis were used to encourage a degree of critical distance.
This stance is recommended by Kitching (2011):

> *Ultimately, the lesson learned in accounting for race inequality, in understanding racial identity and in narrating/deconstructing the politics of dominance and subjugation is not to pit 'objectivist', 'subjectivist' and 'post' accounts against each other (Nayak, 2006; Leonardo, 2009; Youdell, 2011). It is a case of moving between and using eclectic stances, and of recognising the 'genealogy of these approaches, the fraught interrelations that exist between these theoretical positions, and the modes of complicity that bring them together*. (Kitching, 2011: 171)

Kitching also argues that this can be a*"creative use of the paradox of race-conscious scholarship: working both with and against conceptual tools that have yet to be effectively replaced' (*Warmington, 2009: 281. In Kitching, 2011: 171) This is explored in the Data Analysis chapter.

2.4 Conclusion

Within all of the theoretical lenses, one thing is clear: this work must begin with brutally honest introspection.

Critical Pedagogy and in particular, Pedagogy For The Privileged are hopeful models- they assume there is work that can be done that can produce less oppressive, more socially sophisticated privileged learners; young people who actively work to make their context less oppressive (Curry-Stevens, 2010). This research hopes to contribute to answering the question; can the same therefore be said for privileged teachers?

The starting point for this work must be examining how mechanisms of privilege operate. We must make them visible in order to open them up to scrutiny. In this sense, the premise for Pedagogy for the Privileged is very much like the premise of Whiteness Studies. Both insist that as white identities are at the heart of structural racism, identity work must be done with white teachers and leaners.

However, I must be cognisant of legitimate concerns that this research could become a " bourgeois journey" (Curry-Stevens, 2010:62), which becomes self-indulgent, myopic and self-congratulatory or self-flagellating, rather than focusing on the hard work of shifting the status quo. It is therefore necessary to be humble and avoid the sense that we can see-all and know-all, because as white, privileged researchers and teachers, we can only know and see what our positionality allows us to.

Also, whilst this identity work is uncomfortable and necessary, it could be argued that it is soft, easy, and superfluous, when compared with the urgent needs for educational reform for the marginalised and disempowered. I am mindful of the fact that this kind of identity work is a luxury, it is at the top of a hierarchy of needs, and we can only attempt to do it because all of our more pressing needs are met on a daily basis. This should make us humble and alert to the risk that it could become too inward-looking. We can only aim at best, to be a troubled-ally, and not an untroubled ally (Curry-Stevens, 2010: 62) We must avoid striving to be the "exceptional white" (Curry-

Stevens, 2010: 66). That is not the goal. The goal of research such as this must be aligned with working to dismantle oppressive social systems of meaning.

In light of this, I grapple with whether or not is it valuable and useful to apply Curry-Stevens' (2010) framework for Pedagogy for the Privileged (Table 1), to studies such as this one. Or do we as educators, bearing in mind the recent, brutal, engineered system of oppression and repression of Apartheid South Africa, feel that this approach is this too kind and forgiving; too patient? This study can examine whether-or-not critical pedagogues believe it is, and what effect this has upon their sense of self.

Indeed, the literature encourages me to examine whether or not it is possible to simply live in the "*contradictions, complexities and ambiguities*." (Curry-Stevens, 2010). This links with feminist research models which explicitly recognise the complex, messy, multifaceted subjectivity of participants and researcher. Brooks (1995) suggests we examine ourselves though others' eyes- this reveals more about how we see ourselves.

This relational and demonstrative notion of identity suggests that who we believe we are, is to a large extent an act of agency- we make choices about what *kind* of teacher identity position we wish to inhabit and consequently perform. This research therefore examines what choices we as teachers may be making in terms of taking up, reinforcing or rejecting particular positionalities (Davies and Hare, 2007). We construct narratives about who we are and why we are. I hope to access these narratives. Kitching (2009, 2011) in particular describes a set of discursive possibilities for teachers. This research seeks to apply this analytical tool to the South African educational context, which poses a unique set of challenges and dynamics, especially within the elite school (Allen and Rossatto, 2009).

Whiteness Studies provides a more specific lens suited to the South African context of extreme disparity and recovery from a brutal state-engineered system of white supremacy. The fact that within the privileged school, we often have to rely upon white educators to consciously and with intent, address social justice issues in the classroom, suggests that it would be naïve and irresponsible to neglect a close

examination of how their race positionality impacts upon how they see themselves, the work that they do, and their relationships with others.

Within Whiteness Studies, the aim is therefore to start to reconstitute and restore healthy and non-oppressive identities, rendered dysfunctional by the system of white supremacy (Steyn, 2001). This research is an attempt to make these identity formations visible, not to centre and validate them, but to open up the hegemony to scrutiny- to destabilise and decentre what has become naturalised as Truth and Value- to demythologise whiteness (Achille Mbembe, in Prinsloo, 2016).

The literature makes a convincing argument that we cannot give well-intentioned, critically conscious white teachers a free pass to avoid this kind of critical self-examination. In fact, as these teachers are the ones who are actively addressing these issues in their classrooms and in the staffroom, often acting as gatekeepers of the social justice agenda, they need to be particularly vigilant. Frankenberg (1993) emphasises the importance of this kind of identity work, especially with critically conscious teachers. The focus must therefore be on white identities needing to be reconstituted and reframed, and this begins with problematizing white identities. Frankenberg (1993) suggests that we "*reconceptualise the grounds on which white activists participate in antiracist work."* (1993:242). This research hopes to see this kind of work not as a paternalistic project, but as one of critical self-examination.

Furthermore, like the optimistic tone in Pedagogy for the Privileged, Whiteness Studies allows us to remain hopeful and open to the possibility that genuine allyship can occur. It also allows us to acknowledge that positionalities are intersectional and whiteness as a system, despite its efforts to convince us otherwise, is not homogenous (Steyn, 2001, 2008, and Twine and Gallagher, 2008.) This is why the Poststructuralist approach to identity is so important.

Third Phase Whiteness Studies de-essentialises race identities, recognising that identity is more nuanced and complex. It therefore becomes valid and necessary to examine small instances of identity-making that occur in the movement between private and public moments. Consequently, it is essential that part of the research is

looking for moments when race is essentialised, and in particular, which race is essentialised by whom.

There is an important caveat to this work- and a critique of Whiteness Studies which cannot be ignored; this is a theory which is premised on the validity of white people examining white identities, behaviour and meaning-making. Whilst bearing this limitation in mind, this research allows me to identify a taxonomy of subject positions through a "politics of querying" (Kitching, 2011:170).

If we as critically conscious educators care about social justice, then we must begin by examining how our race positionality shapes our experiences of what happens in the classroom and in the staffroom. The starting point for this work cannot be the curriculum, lesson plans, or demographic-driven. It must be introspective, reflexive, and conscious of how our positionality is shaped by a very specific set of historical and institutional ideologies, and the choices that we make within these. Before we can attempt this work with privileged learners, we need to get a grip on what this work looks and feels like, with ourselves as the subjects of study and transformation. (Curry-Stevens, 2010).

The literature and theoretical framework of this study prompts me to ask of myself and other '*whities on the moon'*, who believe we are doing important work up there in space; what does this mean for my own sense of self and how do I believe this shapes the work that I do as a teacher?

To answer these questions, I must acknowledge the privileges that put the *whitey* on the moon (Gil Scott-Heron,1970). I must then find out what the whitey on the moon makes of floating around up there in space.

Most of all, I must work to decentre the whitey on the moon, and ultimately, bring the whitey back down to earth, so that the real work can begin.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction

In this chapter I outline the theoretical framework and practical steps of my research methodology and data analysis process. I begin with details of the participants and research site; I provide the demographic and institutional data, which is important to fully contextualise this research, as well as a broad outline of the ways in which our department attempts to bring social justice work into the classroom. I also explain the selection of participants.

I then move to examine the theoretical approaches to the research methodologies which shape my own research, linking these to my own aims and theoretical lenses. I begin with an examination of qualitative research models in general, and then move to unpack my choice of a feminist research model in particular. In this section the focus then moves to details of the exact steps and content of the focus group sessions and data collection from these and the Researcher Journal, including a theoretical framing of the Researcher journal.

The focus then moves to Data Analysis. First, I provide an outline of the Nvivo software used and link it to my theoretical framework. I then provide practical details of the steps that I undertook using Nvivo.

Finally, I examine the ethical considerations of the study.

3.2. Research Site and Participants

The participants are six middle-class, Grade 10 English teachers from an elite, independent, English-medium, boys' school in Johannesburg. One of the participants is a woman of colour, the other five are white. I positioned myself as both researcher and participant. In total including myself, there are 7 participants.

The participants range in age from 28 years to 41 years. Their teaching experience ranges from 6 years to 15 years. They were all born and educated in South Africa. Their actual names are substituted with pseudonyms.

The research site is the school in which the participants and I teach.

Table 3: School data- as of the year of research

Grade 12 School Fees for 2017	+- R110 120-00

Total Learner population	605 (High School) 640 (Prep School)
Race	Black: 170 Indian: 58 Coloured: 34 Other: 16 White: 967

Total Teacher population	67 (High School) 46 (Prep School)
Race	Black: 10 Indian: 3 Coloured: 2 White: 98

Although the school context is that of privilege, the learners are not homogenous and reflect a mix of race, class, and religious identities, although they are all male. This study would have been counter-productive and deeply problematic if it had rendered invisible any positions that are not white and privileged. For this reason, the stimulus questions require teachers to reflect on their experiences and subject positions in relation to both privileged and non-privileged learners. Definitions of both these terms are provided in the theoretical framework.

The participants are selected from my English department based upon my personal and professional familiarity with them as colleagues. This is loosely a form of purposive sampling according to these criteria:

- The participants are teachers who actively engage with social justice issues and who view their work as political action. They are *critically conscious*.
- The six participants who are white all fall within the category of privileged in terms of Whiteness Theory, however, the fact that we are also all women allows for a more nuanced, intersectional exploration as they negotiate moments of power and disempowerment.
- It was important to invite my colleague who is a woman of colour, 'Melissa' to participate. Her presence made for some very interesting and at times uncomfortable reflection. Whilst she understood the focus upon white identities, she was keen to offer her experiences as a counter-point, which turned out to hold a much-needed mirror up to the ways in which whiteness operates. If one examines her contributions, it is likely that she too appreciated the opportunity to reflect on her experiences and to have them validated. However, I acknowledge that it is potentially problematic for her presence to be viewed as a 'teaching tool' for white teachers.

The participants and I have worked together for an average of 5 years. The fact that we are work colleagues enabled meaningful engagement in the focus group sessions as we grappled with issues within the same environment and curriculum. The pre-existing relationships also framed the focus group sessions as more relaxed and supportive.

However, as researcher, I acknowledge the possibility that pre-existing relationships increase the complexity of the conversations. The paradigm of feminist research and a discussion of my own positioning are outlined later in this chapter, but it is necessary to point out here that this model acknowledges the humanity of the researcher and participants and draws attention to the complexities of human relationships. It also acknowledges that identity and meaning-making are subjective. As such, I endeavoured to deal with these complexities in a transparent, reflective and reflexive way. (Perumal, 2017). The critical tool of Discourse Analysis assisted in this.

It is useful to provide an overview of the nature of our English Department, and some of the characteristics which I believe make it a working environment in which I have been able to put social justice teaching and Pedagogy of the Privileged into practice. However, whilst in the following paragraphs I give an overview of the ways in which we attempt to put Pedagogy for the Privileged into practice, I am cognisant of the fact that this study focuses on teacher identity and not on the actual teaching that is taking place. Therefore, the overview that I provide is in no way a complete or exhaustive list of all of the social justice work that we aim to do within our classrooms, nor am I suggesting that we get it right all the time.

Within our department, we are given a good degree of freedom to teach in an idiosyncratic way. I have experienced that we are given a sense of professional ownership of our classrooms which means that whilst as a department we reach a consensus of *what* will be covered, *how* it will be covered is influenced by our individual preferences and interests. Frequently this means that collaboration is especially engaging and dynamic, as we often approach texts from different angles, and we can therefore learn from each other. Sometimes, we disagree strongly, which also reinforces a robust and varied engagement with the curriculum.

In order to contextualise my focus upon our department as a community of teachers who identify as critical pedagogues, I provide a broad outline of the ways in which we are encouraged to shape and reshape our curricula and teaching strategies, as well as some elucidatory examples. Whilst there is a different Grade Co-ordinator for each grade, texts, whether they are transactional (like newspaper articles or editorials) or literary (novels, plays, poems, and films) are selected through much consultation and

discussion. We explicitly prioritise de-colonality in our choices. This means we are conscious of colonial hegemony and the weight of the 'canon', and we look for ways to either balance this with texts written by/about people of colour/women/queer writers, or ways in which to do post-colonial or feminist readings of more traditional texts.

In practical terms this means that we have over the years transformed poetry selections from almost entirely white poets and a limited number of resistance-era poets of colour, to include contemporary poets of colour and poems about varied human experiences. We developed a Grade 9 poetry unit looking exclusively at different forms of protest poetry, linking significant protest poetry from the past, to contemporary protest poetry and issues. In Grade 10, we do a unit on spoken word poetry including The Harlem Renaissance, the birth of rap with Gil Scott-Heron, punk poetry with Patti Smith, dub poetry with Benjamin Zephaniah, modern freestyle with Toni Blackman, and South African Praise poetry with Jessica Mbangeni, as well as slam poetry. Poetry selections for Grade 11 include Terrance Hayes and Jacqueline Saphra, as well as feminist and queer poets, and contemporary South African poets like Lebogang Mashile and Setlhamo Motsapi. We try to have the same conscious approach to our selection of novels, short stories, and films.

Beyond text choices, we are mindful that decolonising a curriculum goes beyond inclusivity and diversity but is also about critical literary theories. We believe we put this into practice by doing (for example) post-colonial readings of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, feminist readings of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, and we problematise set-works such as *The Dream House* by Craig Higginson, by looking at positioning and tropes such as 'the native savage'. In order to achieve this, we begin by examining the critical literary theories, often exploring the historical contexts and philosophies informing them.

We attempt to avoid an 'unproblematic reading' of any text. This extends into our emphasis on critical literacy, in which we spend a great deal of time examining contemporary transactional texts in relation to power and positioning. For example, in Grade 10 and 11 we designed units called 'Power, Language and Identity. These lessons are often heated, as we encourage our learners to look at their identities (and our own) in relation to structural and institutional power, as well as the ways in which the

language we use reinforces these power relations. We approach every text as a site in which power is expressed, and encourage learners to be critical consumers of texts, as well as thoughtful and self-aware producers of texts.

3.3 Research Design

This research is qualitative and school-based and consists of a series of focus group sessions with teachers, which took place over a school term. I also produce a Researcher Journal.

3.3.1 Qualitative Design

A qualitative 'general' design is ideal for aims that seek to describe and understand human perceptions, attitudes and values. My aims were focused upon capturing and exploring thick (as opposed to wide) systems of meaning and a series of focus groups allowed for an exploration of meaning in a textured and deep way. It also allowed for the use of the analytical tool of critical discourse analysis. These aims and analysis methods speak directly to this study.

Denzin and Lincoln (1994) describe qualitative research as, "involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter…attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them." (p2). This informs the design in that this study set out to capture and unpack the discussions of members of a real-world English department, exploring our lived experiences of a conflicted positionality, within the natural context of the school in which we work together. It also emphasises the meanings that the participants ourselves make in relation to our identities, whilst allowing for a critical analysis in the data analysis. This enables the recognition of individual agency and aims to understand the participants as complex individuals and their context as multidimensional, unique and multiple, but also historically constructed. Therefore, the design allowed equal attention to be given to the participants' lived experiences, histories and thoughts, as well as foregrounding an

understanding of these identities as discursively constructed and mediated. Furthermore, the notion of identity (Hall, 1992) as a **process** necessitates an exploration of that identity over time, hence the extension of the series of focus groups over a term.

Qualitative research is also ideally suited as it allows for a nuanced, complex and at times, contradictory perspective. Qualitative research is informed by and embraces many different paradigms and is transparent about the ways in which the researcher is interested in a naturalistic investigation of human identity (in this case), whilst at the same time acknowledging how that understanding is shaped by particular theoretical lenses, which may themselves, be in tension. Denzin and Lincoln (1994) frame research of this nature as " *drawn to a broad, interpretive, postmodern, feminist and critical sensibility. On the other hand, it is drawn to more narrowly defined positivist, postpositivist, humanistic conceptions of human experience and its analysis*." (1994:4). In this study there are tensions between a Poststructuralist notion of identity as unstable and fluid, and power as therefore unstable and fluid, and the assumptions underpinning Whiteness Theory; that race identity and identity politics reflect more essentialised notions of identity. This was unpacked in Chapter 2, but it is valuable to note here that a qualitative study presupposes and allows for these kinds of conflicting understandings of identity. For this reason, I attempted to work with both notions of identity in Chapter 4, and to negotiate and reflect upon the contradictions transparently.

Furthermore, Shalem in Perumal (2007) suggests that allowing participant teachers to share their experiences, conflicts and reflections shows sensitivity to context as well as allowing a "rich, multidimensional portrait." (2007:XI). Like Perumal, I aimed to, "*engage the complexity of these women's lives, as well as the contradictions, tensions and ambivalences inherent in their work*" (2007:XI) within the richly textured and flexible format of a series of focus group sessions.

3.3.2 Feminist Research Design

This design is also influenced by feminist research in which both the researcher and research participants are humanised, the complexities of identity acknowledged, and

the research process embracing of subjectivity, emotions and agency. Perumal (2007) refers to the "*recurring motifs" of feminist research as, "reflexivity, voice, difference and power dynamics*." (2007:19). This study sought to capture and reflect upon these, particularly in terms of how they could be understood through the lenses of Whiteness Theory, Poststructural identity theory and Critical Pedagogy. Furthermore, the use of a Feminist Research model allowed me methodological freedom: "*there are many methodological approaches to feminist post-structuralist research – since the emphasis is on the process of exploration rather than the following of a method*." Davies (2005: 315).

Importantly, feminist research draws attention to the politicised nature of all experiences, be they private or public. The use of focus group sessions and a researcher's journal was informed by this notion; that the day-to-day interactions, experiences and reflections are saturated with the political, and are products of and reproducers of the power systems that shape our society. The poststructural feminist writings of Davies (1994), Lather (1992), and Weedon, (1997) draw attention to the ways in which socially constructed notions of identity and access to power, shape the ways in which my participants and myself were to make sense of the subject positions that we occupy.

Whilst the ways in which emotions are conceptualised and expressed in this study are data that is subject to critical distance afforded by discourse analysis, the feminist research model allows me a degree of freedom in seeing an emotional state as worthy of understanding. Furthermore, any exploration of emotions in this study, must understand them in relation to the particular context of the focus group sessions, which by their nature encourage a degree of off-loading. The degree to which emotions are understood as potential units of critical analysis was examined in Chapter 2.

Lastly in terms of feminist research, the design took into account the power dynamics that exist between researcher and participant by being transparent and honest about these and providing for a democratic and flexible framework that changed depending on the needs of the group and the lived-experiences of the participants. (Perumal, 2007). The hope was that the series of sessions encouraged a collaborative, companionable, and supportive space in which the participants exercised agency and ownership of the

process, rather than the researcher occupying a position at the top of a power hierarchy. However, this is a context in which we challenge each other and there are frequently moments in which truth is contested. This is not a context of polite conversation. Indeed, as researcher there are some moments in which I felt extremely vulnerable, angry, self-righteous, and frustrated.

Feminist research is a framework that allowed me to acknowledge and respect the paradox that the participants and the myself as researcher, could simultaneously be seen as authentic individuals, but also as socialised products of societal powers structures.

Finally, in the spirit of the researcher as 'bricoleur' (Denzin, 1994), this research allowed for the process to be interactive, shaped by my own identity positions and life experiences as researcher and participant, as well as those of the participants. Research of this nature seeks to adapt and adjust according to the developing needs of the group and the group dynamic. For this reason, the framework provided below was loose and flexible. It also necessitated an additional source of data whereby the same issues were explored through a second methodology, one that brought my role as both researcher and participant, into focus; hence the ethnographical element of the Researcher Journal outlined in 2.4.

Throughout Term 3, the conversations of the focus group sessions naturally bled into the choices we made in our classrooms, as well as informal conversations we had with each other. In this regard, the focus group sessions acted as touch-points whereby teachers re-connected and re-focused, having spent time in between each focus group; teaching, planning lessons, gathering resources, having conversations with colleagues, and reflecting on the work of the critically conscious teacher. Each session then provided a space for collaborate planning, discussion and support.

3.4. Data Collection

3.4.1 Overview of focus group session format

The research design took the form of four +- 1hr focus group sessions, which took place over a three-month school term (Term 3) in 2017.

For each focus group session the participants plus myself as the researcher-participant, met in my classroom, at the end of a school day, in the school in which we all teach. My classroom was a convenient, quiet, familiar and relaxed setting for all of us. I provided refreshments. I believe that the environment was a safe and informal space, and the participants were enthusiastic about attending each focus group session.

Due to work commitments, the number of participants varied slightly across the four focus group sessions. There were 4 participants in the first two meetings, and 6 in the second two meetings.

By the end of the process, each teacher-participant, including the researcher-participant, had done the following:

Table 4: Outcomes of Focus Group Sessions For each Participant

- Contributed to focus group conversations about their identity positions.
- Developed these ideas into critical reflections on their own identity positions, and each other's.
- Provided resources to the focus group for reflection within the focus group sessions.
- Collaborated to share and develop critical teaching ideas.
- Taught a minimum of two critically oriented lessons.
- Shared reflections on these lessons and others, as well as sharing examples of learner work produced in response to these lessons.

Data collection took place through audio recorded and then transcribed records of group conversation as this provides the opportunity to explore how participants do, 'identities in talk' (Andreouli, 2010).

As a researcher-participant, I took part in the dialogue, at times providing prompts or asking questions, and at other times, reflecting and sharing in the same way as the other participants did. These conversations were loosely framed by the artefact task or stimulus that I provided (see Protocol in Table 5 and stimulus questions in Table 6 below), but the aim was to allow the conversation to develop organically and ultimately produce a "*bricolage of voices"* (Sherman-Newcomb, 2014).

At times the conversations made reference to conversations that occurred outside of the focus groups. In order for the transcripts to capture the full depth and texture of the participants' input, I attempted to ensure that any references to outside conversations were summarised within the focus group so that the content of the focus group was clearly contextualised.

The 4 focus group sessions yielded over 4 hours of audio recordings, and **39 570 words** once transcribed.

The aim of this research is to conduct deep, textured, thorough analyses. I examine the data in multiple ways through the use of NVivo software, and my own analytic approaches. I included two analyses chapters which cover the extensive analyses of discourse undertaken. For these reasons, the fact that the data itself was drawn from a limited number of focus group sessions can be argued to be acceptable, as the analysis was always focused upon depth and variety as opposed to breadth.

3.4.2 Focus Group 1: Reflections on Identity and Theory.

Prior to the first meeting, participants were given the request to provide an artefact as per the description in the Protocol below (Table 6). They were told that they would be asked in Focus Group 1 to share the artefact that they had chosen and their reasons for selecting it. The intention was to elicit narratives about each of the participant's personal journeys towards and thoughts about their identities as critical pedagogues. As researcher-participant I did the same. The artefact itself is not data for analysis, the conversations generated by the artefact are.

Table 5: Research protocol for Focus Group 1

Protocol
I have invited you to participate in these focus group meetings because I am interested in the ways in which we make sense of our identities and the work that we do. This will be in terms of our understanding of teaching English as a political activity, and our commitment to antiracism. I am interested in how this may conflict with the fact that we ourselves are privileged, and have chosen to teach in a privileged context. You are free **not** to answer a question you do not feel comfortable with. You will guide the course of the focus groups based upon your needs, within the framework of a conversation about teacher-identity and race, or any other identity issues that you feel impact your identity and teaching practice. Are there any questions you would like to ask me before we start? I have asked you each to bring in an artefact or self-portrait; anything that you feel represents your beliefs/practices as a teacher who is interested in the politics of teaching, particularly in terms of race identity. I have done the same. If you are comfortable to begin, please could you share this with the group? Or I can start if you wish.

The participants asked for me to present my artefact first, which I did. During thee course of the rest of the hour we discussed my own artefact as well as those of two other participants. There was a series of semi-structured questions projected onto a screen and printed copies for each participant to guide the conversation if necessary.

The conversation and questions also aimed to unpack the conflicts or sites of tension within this positionality. Included here were questions about how the participants understood their positionalities as white South Africans, teachers in an elite school and the intersectional nature of their identities.

The following questions were on hand to use this and in all of the focus group sessions. They are divided thematically for ease of use:

Table 6: Stimulus questions

- How do you think your colleagues would describe your political identity?
- How do you think your learners would describe your political identity?
- Upon what do you think they would be basing these assessments?

- How would you describe your identity categories? What categories are important? Why?
- How would your learners describe your identity categories? Why?
- How aware are you of your race identity?
- How aware do you think others are of your race identity?
- Has this changed in the last 3-5 years? If so, how? Why do you think this is so?
- What emotional impact has this had if any?
- To what extent do you feel your identity as white/woman/middle class affects the choices that you make in the classroom/ curriculum/pedagogy/relationships with learners and staff)?

- Do you believe it is necessary to foreground social justice principles in your teaching? Why/why not?
- How do you respond to the statement, 'Teaching is a political activity'?
- How does this statement relate to your work as an English teacher?
- How does this statement relate to your work as a teacher in an elite school?
- In what ways do issues of social justice (eg sexism, racism, homophobia) come up in your lessons?
- Do you believe that you do this intentionally or do the issues naturally arise?
- How comfortable are you with directly addressing these issues in your teaching?
- How much has this changed over the past 3 years?
- Could you share an experience in the classroom/staffroom when these issues arose and you engaged with them?

- Could you share an experience in the classroom/staffroom when these issues arose and you felt uncomfortable about addressing them?
- To what extent does the classroom demographic affect your answers to the previous questions?
- To what extent does the elite context of the school affect your answers to the previous questions?

At the end of the session participants were asked to reflect on the process and make recommendations or requests for future meetings.

3.4.3 Focus Groups 2 And 3: Collaboration and Continued Unpacking of Identity.

The exact structure of each of the sessions was determined by the needs of the group and the organic movement of the processes both within and without the sessions.

These sessions continued to explore the positionalities of the teachers as well as our classroom experiences, conflicts and praxis of critical pedagogy, via a discussion about our artefacts.

My original intention was to scaffold sessions 2 and 3 so that they included the sharing and developing of teaching materials, collaborative planning, and feedback from lessons.

However, the conversations that grew from the artefacts developed into very complex, rich dialogues, which took up all of the focus group sessions. This meant that we spent each of the four sessions sharing our artefacts and discussing their meaning as a group. I felt very strongly that in the spirit of feminist research, if that was what the needs of the group were, and it was very much in line with my aims and research question, that I should allow the sessions to deviate from my original lose plan.

Ultimately, even though the broad framework evolved into being a focus on the artefact conversations, we did spend time discussing and sharing our praxis. The conversational-work we did focused on identity in relation to our students, the curriculum, other teachers, the school as a whole, and each other; all of which was the texture of data that I had intended to gather. We shared details of classroom (and out-of-classroom) experiences in terms of teacher positionality, we discussed our experiences of negotiating our positions, and we explored the different dynamics we experienced with different classes and what this meant for our identities and praxis.

3.4.4 Focus Group 4- Reflections and Looking Forward.

Most of this session continued as per sessions 1,2 and 3. Questions were also oriented around the way forward and our reflections on the process; what do we believe we could do differently and better as conscientised teachers in this context? What have we gained, if anything, from this process?

Table 7: Summary of Focus Group Sessions

DATE	COVERAGE	PARTICIPANTS PRESENT	NUMBER OF WORDS TRANSCRIBED
26/9/2017	• Researcher artefact- signed copy of Nelson Mandela's Long Walk To Freedom. • Jennifer's artefact- Tippex. • Taylor's artefact- eggshells.	Researcher, Jennifer, Taylor, Melissa, Tracy,	9697
27/9/2017	Conversations prompted by first session continued.	Researcher, Jennifer, Taylor, Melissa, Tracy,	8228
10/10/2017	• Tracy's artefact- photo of protest organised at prior school. • Melissa's artefact- a film trailer for Freedom Writers.	Researcher, Jennifer, Taylor, Melissa, Tracy, Rebecca, Kim	10614
14/11/2017	• Rebecca's artefact- spectacles.	Researcher, Jennifer, Taylor, Melissa, Tracy, Rebecca, Kim	11031
			TOTAL 39 570

Table 9: Conventions for transcriptions (Adapted from McKinney, 2003: 94).

!, ?, "" etc	I have used conventions of punctuation to make the transcription of spoken language into writing more readable, conveying my understanding of the spoken words.
Bold	Shows word stressed
(...)	Hesitation of speaker
Name:	Indicates the name of speaker. Researcher is indicated as such.

3.4.5 Researcher Journal

The content of the journal constituted researcher-participant data. In this capacity, I made entries after each focus group session and whenever necessary to capture my reflections on my own identity positions, practice and on the research process.

The entries progressed chronologically, but the exact structure of the entries was open and varied, allowing for entries to include prose reflections, notes, diagrams, or any other form of reflection.

I made use of a double-entry format with a margin down the middle of each page, so that I could go back to an entry and reflect on it in a later, dated entry.
This was recorded digitally and yielded 10 journal entries, and **4161words.**

3.4.5.1 Theoretical Framing of Researcher Journal

The fact that I am immersed in the context of this research is an integral part of the research design. It is useful to note that my familiarity with the unique school setting and the kinds of conflicts of positionality that characterise teaching in it, is a valuable asset. I had in fact have been teaching at this particular school for 10 years, by the time this research was completed. It is reasonable to argue that my relationships with my colleagues allow me access to them and their conversations in a more direct way than if an outsider were facilitating the conversations. As we have a pre-existing relationship, I am privy to many of the issues which shape their teaching experiences, and I am seen as an insider, and therefore someone whom can be trusted. Furthermore, placing my own relationships and practices under scrutiny is an advantage to me as a researcher in that I am given the opportunity to change and improve my praxis (McKinney, 2003). In this regard, critical autoethnography is a useful lens.

However, I must acknowledge that these advantages are potentially in tension with the degree to which I am immersed in the relationships with the participants and in the

research context. Furthermore, I would need to ensure that my broader knowledge about the participants was managed in such a way that always foregrounded protecting their dignity. The limitations and the advantages are inherent consequences of my research methodology, and in my assessment of the potential limitations and risks, I found that on balance, the model outline below would allow me to be responsible for and transparent about these.

Writers define autoethnography as:

> *a method for studying the self-characterized by first-person narrative representation and data collection and analysis within social contexts. Autoethnographic work is intensely personal, tightly focused on the self, …a study of the self and as a methodological tool in education to examine race.* (Pennington & Brock, 2011: 4-5)

Adding the 'critical' framework to autoethnography is a significant addition. It focuses the lens upon the impact of power upon identity. The critical theory examined in Chapter Two insists that any introspection not only be reflexive, but that it examines the interplay between identity and social hierarchies of power. This can be explained as follows: "*a critical autoethnography attempts to do more than just reveal how one fits into the power structure- it attempts to deconstruct the very power structure that gets exposed."* (Potter, 2015: 1436). Critical ethnography is therefore a combination of ethnographic methods with the aim of shifting the research environment towards social justice goals. McKinney draws attention to the fact that critical reflexivity is key to Critical Ethnography (Anderson, 1989 and Jordan & Yeomans, 1995. In McKinney, 2003).

In the context of Whiteness Studies, it functions to *"capture the drama of representation, legitimation, and praxis [as] a part of an on-going dialogue between self and world about questions of ontology, epistemology, method, and praxis."* (Jones, 2005:766. In Pennington & Brock, 2011: 5).

In this study I take on the enmeshed and multiple roles of teacher, researcher, colleague, and friend. As such, it is necessary for me to transparently reflect upon the nature of these multiple positions and the ways in which my own positionality acts upon and is shaped by the research-process. This is done in a Researcher Journal in which I make

detailed entries in response to each of the focus group sessions as well as at various other points which provided meaningful analyses. I use the journal to record my reflections upon my own positioning as researcher and as critical teacher, my personal/emotional responses, academic/theoretical reflections and anything else that I felt was relevant. There is a dual-entry system in that the main entries are made chronologically, but a column on the right allows me to comment on earlier entries. The journal is then used as data in the analysis.

The purpose of the researcher-journal is two-fold: it functions to locate me firmly as a participant in that my own thoughts are subject to analysis, and it operates as a measure of reflexivity to push against the immersed nature of the research. This reflexivity operates to both "*avoid essentialising participants voices*" and *"destabalise the supremacy of whiteness by situating the knowledge we produce in ethnographic research as located, partial, and subjective."* (Chadderton, 2012: 376. In Tanner, 2017: 4).

The collaborative nature of the focus group sessions assisted in shifting the framework from researcher-centred; in which the researcher acts as an expert, to one where all participants are empowered to be meaning-makers. Critical reflexivity, in the form of a Researcher Journal, is also crucial to the research design in this regard.

The research design features this kind of auto-ethnography as it allows me to operate as both insider and outsider. As researcher, I am part of the social unit to be investigated and I spend time immersed in the case study, these are features of ethnography (Knobel and Lankshear, 2004). This was necessary as the research took place within my own working context and with my colleagues as participants. It is also an attempt to deconstruct a hierarchy of researcher-participants, which could have positioned me as 'expert' or 'saviour'. (Schoorman, 2014).

The journal also opens my own positionality up to scrutiny; I am forced to confront my own positioning and to explore this with a greater degree of transparency and self-reflexivity. Griffiths (2014) posits that the reflexivity inherent to autoethnography provides a degree of transparency which makes it possible for readers to assess the

writer's "*positionality and truthfulness (in terms of both sincerity and accuracy)*" (Griffiths, 2014: 234).

In terms of poststructural notions of identity, sharing stories as well as the kind of 'confession' undertaken in the Researcher Journal, can be seen as examples of "*technologies of self*"- mechanisms by which we create and recreate our own subjectivity- the ways in which we position ourselves as certain kinds of people in relation to the institution. (Foucault, 1986, 1988. In Worthman & Troiano, 2019: 265).

Crucially, according to whiteness theory, and Steyn (2001) in particular, my positionality as a white South African implicates me in a system of oppression in which my privilege is enabled at the cost of another. I am a beneficiary of structural racism and I am therefore part of the system that I wish to explore. This required the critical reflexivity and introspection allowed by a Researcher Journal . As was outlined in the rationale section, it was my own attempts to grapple with my identity as privileged that prompted this research. The rationale of this research is therefore firmly rooted in the conflicts and dilemmas faced by myself in my own experiences and this would be addressed in this ethnographic element, however the design is not in and of itself, ethnographic research.

Frankenberg (1993) draws attention to the notion that human subjectivity is contingent on the forces of history. In order to engage with identity positions meaningfully, the researcher should work towards an engagement with her own subjectivity. I too hoped to make an "inventory" (Frankenberg, 1993:240) of the self- like Gramsci's; "*product of the historical process to date which has deposited in you an infinity of traces, without leaving an inventory."* (in Frankenberg, 1993:240).

Furthermore, central to feminist research is the emphasis placed on the identity and self-reflection of the researcher herself. Typically, qualitative, feminist design allows for a degree of self-disclosure. Perumal explains that research of this nature stresses "*reflexivity, which involves a process of self-awareness and self-consciousness, of 'researching' one's own position in the research process, in order to reflect the researcher's interaction with the process."* (2007:19). Feminist research insists upon

the personalizing (as opposed to de-personalising) of the research process, in which the researcher is located within the research.

This methodology allows the researcher to directly address concerns around validity, objectivity and generalizability, by transparently acknowledging the subjective, individualized nature of the research. As Griffiths (2014) argues *"Reflexivity gives readers information to help them make judgements about the writer's positionality and truthfulness (in terms of both sincerity and accuracy)*" (2014:235). Like Griffiths, I too am "*keen to connect everyday experiences to philosophical abstractions about social justice; I am also trying to give you, the reader, enough material for you to evaluate my judgements about the events I describe*." (Griffiths, 2014:235).]

The use of a Researcher Journal, together with the focus group sessions, did potentially allow me to interrogate the ways in which critically conscious teaching and social justice in education, are conceived of, by those who believe they are practicing it. Denzin (2006), emphasizes the importance of the researcher doing their own identity-work, when he writes that research of this nature "*challenges, contests, or endorses the official, hegemonic ways of seeing and representing the other*" (2006:422). Pennington and Brock (2011) assert that this kind of critical autoethnography is key to any research conducted by a white researcher, within the framework of Whiteness.

However, as Griffiths warns "*it would be difficult not to tell an autobiography of heroic success or of heroic failure, and in doing so, to highlight my own agency rather than contexts and structures*" (2014:236). This is something to which I must remain alert.

In summary, whilst I am alert to and mindful of the limitations of my own subjectivity and positioning, I see these as integral to the research and my aims:

> *[e]mancipatory research puts the researcher back into the research. This means that the researcher does not have to pretend that she/he comes in with a 'blank slate' but rather acknowledges the embedded prejudgements and allows them to be critically scrutinised.* (Gitlin, Siegel and Boru 1993: 205. In McKinney, 2003: 79)

3.5 Use of Nvivo Software

3.5.1 Introduction

NVivo is a software programme specifically designed to aid qualitative research and mixed methods research. As a platform it assists with the following: the storing and organising of dense data, the managing of ideas and demographic information; the categorising and coding of data; the visualisation of data in multiple configurations; and the discovering of data trends and patterns. (Bazeley and Jackson, 2013).

I follow the best practise guidelines for reporting of QDAS (Qualitative Data Analysis Software) recommended by Paulus, Woods, Atkins, and Macklin (2015: 10). These include the following:

Table 9: NVivo Best Practice Guidelines Used in This Research (Paulus, Woods, Atkins, and Macklin. 2015: 10).

1) Identify which software version was used.
2) Use active rather than passive voice when describing software use, so as not to give the impression that the software rather than the researcher is conducting the analysis.
3) Provide a description of what the software is generally used for, avoiding (or explaining) jargon, along with a rationale for its use, e.g. specific advantages that the software offered for the analysis.
4) Cite the resources consulted when learning the software.
5) Describe the features used at each step of the process, including screen captures and program outputs.
6) Substantiate any claims of improved study quality with specific details…reflect on the merits and limitations of QDAS use in the study, especially whether it achieved the intended outcomes.

In learning how to use the software, I consulted the NVivo website for the developers QSR International; which has detailed online tutorials (qsrinternational.com). In August 2018 I attended an NVivo seminar at Wits, run by Professor Wayne. E. Wright from Purdue University. I also read a number of sources with academic and practical details about the software. (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013, Bhattacharya, 2015, Bernauer, Lichtman, Jacobs, & Robinson, 2013). Bazeley & Jackson (2013) was the most notable text as it provided detailed instructions as well as discussions about the use of QDAS.

I used the Mac version of NVivo 12, version 12.6.0.

I found that NVivo appeared to be underused within the Humanities at The University of The Witwatersrand, and I saw this as an interesting opportunity to explore the value of using a software programme such as this in education research.

NVivo, or indeed any QDAS, does not replace the need for the researcher to undertake the kind of close, deep analysis of data, of traditional approaches, but it does potentially make the process more efficient and streamlined.

3.5.2 Advantages of Using Nvivo in this Study

The most notable advantage of using Nvivo is in harnessing the capacity of software to sort, store, link, and identify patterns, without having to take the data apart and then put it back together. Bazeley (2018) asserts that:

> *Managing sources in a way that allows for their analysis both as separate entities and as a common body of knowledge has always been a problem for qualitative researchers dealing with voluminous and messy data.* (2018: 3)

Some argue that any software which creates distance by lifting discourse out of context "*would be the very antithesis*" to approaches such as CDA. (1979:198 in MacMillan, 2005: 5). NVivo software, however, allows the user to slice and splice the data in various configurations, without ever losing its original shape or access to the original context of the portion of data. It also allows the researcher to 'drill-down' into the data or categories of the data. Significantly I could do this instantaneously, as opposed to

the inhibitively time-consuming manual process (Bazeley and Jackson, 2013). This functionality also freed me up from more mundane data handling which gave me the space and time to "*approach the data with curiosity- asking 'what if I cut it this way?' knowing that changes can be made quickly*." (Marshall, 2002:67. In Bazeley and Jackson 2013: 8).

As I analyse identity through **talk**, the data (transcriptions and Researcher Journal) is complex, layered, dense, and nuanced. CDA and PDA suggest that I need a means of organising my analysis that would allow me to look within, under, and through the surface meaning of the words, without losing sight of the original context. QDAS provides both closeness to the data (familiarity and fine-textured examination), and distance (for "*abstraction and synthesis*") (Richards, 1998 in Bazeley and Jackson, 2013: 8). In light of this, I found NVivo to be a practical and useful tool.

A further advantage is that, according to Bazelely and Jackson (2013), the use of a computer should encourage a researcher to work methodically and with attention to detail. However, they warn that the software in and of itself does not ensure this. The analysis will be as thorough as the researcher doing the analysis. Some sources argue that when used correctly, QDAS can reassure readers that qualitative research is a rigorous, thorough, valid and robust method of investigation (Morison and Moir, 1998; Welsh, 2002; Davidson and Skinner, 2010; Siccama and Penna, 2008; Catterall and Maclaren, 1998. All in Paulus, Woods, Atkins and Macklin, 2015)

Furthermore, as researcher-participant, I had to be vigilant of the ways in which my own interactions with the data were shaping the analysis in certain ways, particularly as I began with deliberate speculation and inductive investigations in the beginning stages of my analysis. The use of NVivo enables the analysis process to be more transparent- the programme tracks all of the analyses choices and queries run, as well as their results. This information can be accessed by other researchers or supervisors.

Lastly, the varied visualisation options, query tools, and analysis models mean that one can examine one's data in a broad range of graphic ways. Not all of these are valid or useful for every study, but I found a fair amount to be valuable. They provided me with some distance from the data, which I believe provided me with the opportunity to look

at the data in fresh ways, potentially recognising interesting patterns and focuses of inquiry which I may not have otherwise identified.

3.5.3 The Use of NVivo in Relation to my Conceptual Framework

Critical Discourse Analysis looks at how language is a sample of systems of thought within a particular historical location that make certain things 'thinkable' and 'sayable' and regulates who says them. (Foucault (1969 and 1972). CDA is political- concerned with how power and inequality operate in society. Hodges et al (2007)- define CDA as a means of looking at how language constructs social practices. My data is therefore the language (transcribed conversations) AND the institutions/contexts within which language is produced AND the individuals who produce and who are produced by the language. Bearing this in mind, NVivo allowed me to look at the relationships between demographics (race, age, number of years teaching etc), what is said, how often, when, and how each participant speaks in relation to particular 'nodes' (discourses), in relation to the other participants, and the data as a whole. This splicing of the data in multiple ways allowed me to recognise patterns that would not otherwise have been possible with a more static, one dimensional representation.

Critically conscious teachers must displace established systems of oppression by leaving an ideological and hegemonic home. This begins with honest introspection and intellectual analysis. Homelessness and dislocation are at the heart of the research. This is an uncomfortable, conflict-bound process. The analysis of data therefore needed to function as a critical lens and my relationship to the data had to be transparent. Furthermore, in this kind of practitioner research, where I needed to analyse my own work, and my own context, I needed a tool that could provide me with some analytical, critical distance from the data. Analysing my own discourse is an ethnographic element, which places me both within and without the data. I needed to be able to be *without,* to a degree. Furthermore, the participants are close colleagues. This again poses the question-how do I analyse with some critical distance?

There are two separate issues to address here.

Firstly, I use the feminist research model, which necessitates the personalising of the research process (Perumal, 2007). So, I did not set out to find some kind of 'objective, scientific' position from which to look at the data. However, I did need some degree of critical distance. In line with my theoretical framework, I had to be cognisant and transparently reflect upon the power dynamics between researcher and participants. NVivo allows for a number of checks and balances to be in place which support greater transparency. Paulus, Woods, Atkins and Macklin (2015) claim that:

> *QDAS has long been lauded for its potential to make the researcher's sense-making process around data analysis more explicit (Dambkowski, and Hammer-Lloyd, 1995, in Paulus, Woods, Atkins and Macklin, 2015) and thereby more transparent (Bringer, Johnston and Brackenridge, 2004, in Paulus, Woods, Atkins and Macklin, 2015).*

The entire process was recorded. Any ideas that I annotated, any queries that I ran, any data decisions about what to examine or ignore, were recorded. I therefore needed to be able to reflect upon and justify all of the choices made. To a certain extent, the use of QDAS makes the researcher more accountable for their decision-making. I am hopeful that this enabled a degree of self-reflexivity and engagement with why and how I made certain analytical decisions.

Perumal (2007) also suggests that feminist research examine voice difference and power dynamics. NVivo provides interesting ways of visualising these issues through dynamic and interactive graphics and query tools. The specific use of these is examined in the next section.

Secondly, in terms of Critical Pedagogy and Whiteness Studies, I recall Shor who explains that work of this nature isn't "easy, transparent, or risk-free." (1999: 10). As a white researcher I am implicated in a system of privilege which operates by rendering my whiteness invisible. Like Curry-Stevens, 2010), I must remain humble and alert to the limitations of my own positioning. Furthermore, making the invisible, visible, is a central tenant in Whiteness Studies (Steyn, 2001:162). The notions of race privilege and whiteness assume a naïve consciousness amongst white learners and teachers, as white identity is frequently rendered invisible/normative. Whiteness Studies aims to

hold a mirror up to the hegemony so that we may recognise the structural and institutional nature of racism and inequality. I am hoping that NVivo assisted me in finding these 'mirrors' by providing a transparent, multi-layered and varied platform, ideally not as a distraction from my own positioning, but a way in which to continuously be made to encounter it.

Whiteness Studies makes whiteness the subject of study so that we can see how whiteness maintains its power by perpetuating its invisibility. This study aims to render the positionality of white teachers, visible. Furthermore, Achille Mbembe argues that we must demythologise whiteness (in Prinsloo, 2016). NVivo was potentially a useful tool in allowing me to explore the data and then represent my findings in graphic, multidimensional ways. As such, I was aiming for an analysis that was the opposite of mythology; more grounded in measured and careful observation and analysis.

Furthermore, the multidimensional tools of NVivo allowed me to more fully explore the intersectional nature of identity. Twine and Gallagher (2008:6) refer to a "3rd wave of Whiteness Studies" that recognises that we occupy varied and intersectional locations. The 'case classifications' section allows me to keep track of the demographic and biographical details of my participants, and examine the ways in which the different variables intersect with the discourses employed.

The 'query' tools and visualisations allowed me to run preliminary analyses in order to identify particular trends, patterns and connections that I might not otherwise have recognised. I am hoping this high-level exploration of potential trends assisted in providing a degree of critical distance.

These broad-brush analyses did not replace close analysis, but they provide a quick way to get started when facing such dense and large data.

3.5.4 Cautions and Concerns:

NVivo cannot be a tool of analysis in and of itself. It can help me structure ideas and assist in the beginning stages, but the ideological significance of language is contextually-bound, and so limiting the analysis to isolated words and phrases is methodological inconsistent.

Therefore, the value of the software is not in expecting it to **do** the analysis, but in using it to handle the data and organise, track and record my interactions with it. Whilst there are those who dismiss outright the use of QDAS for discourse analysis (Macmillan, 2005), it is important to remember that despite it being Qualitative Data **Analysis** Software, it does not think for the researcher (MacMillan, 2005). In relation to Discourse Analysis- it does not analyse the discourse, and it "*cannot develop theories from data….it is not a substitute for the 'analyst's core role' of searching for meanings behind any given data set.*" (Dixon, Ritchie, Siwale, 2006: 411. In Paulis, Woods, Atkins and Macklin, 2015: 3).

The guiding principle in using QDAS is that the researcher should drive the selection of functions and choices made, with the theory and methodology foremost in mind, and not allow the analysis to be shaped and driven by the restrictions and functionality of the software. QDAS must therefore remain a tool and not a research-shaping paradigm. (MacMillan, 2005).

3.6 Data Analysis Procedure

3.6.1 Broad Sweeps Using NVivo Visualisations

Data in the form of transcriptions and the Researcher Journal on Word documents was uploaded into the NVivo software. Each focus group session was uploaded as a separate data set.

NVivo visualising applications provided initial broad sweeps of the data. These allowed me to look for interesting patterns in the kinds of words used and the frequency/patterns of their usage. Ware (2000:3, in Bazeley and Jackson, 2013:218) describes the Nvivo visualisations as providing the "*ability to comprehend huge amounts of data, allows the perception of emergent properties that were not anticipated….and facilitates understanding of both large-scale and small-scale features of the data.*" The software compiles visualisations on the basis of the words/phrases most used across the data. This is a valuable way into a dense and complex data set.

3.6.2 Coding of Participants as NVivo Cases

Nvivo allows the researcher to create Cases: "*a bounded, definable unit of analysis (eg. A person, a place, a policy) rather than a concept….nodes can have demographic, categorical or scaled data-referred to as attributes- associated with them*." (Bazeley and Jackson, 2013: 122). A Case is therefore a storage container in which the researcher can store everything she knows about each case. In this research, the Case node is used to store demographic data about each of the participants.

The researcher decides what demographic variables to include for each Case- which are useful and necessary- based on the particular aims of the research. I determined that the following variables would be relevant to this study: race, age, years spent teaching in

an elite/private school. In NVivo the values which can be chosen within each variable (eg. Age- 38/39/30) are called Attributes.

Once the Attributes are allocated to the Cases, every word in the data was coded (categorised) to a particular case; i.e. every word in the data is coded to the participant who said it.

3.6.3 Asking Questions of The Data: Open-Coding and Inductive Coding

The visualisations from NVivo, as well as my understanding of Critical Pedagogy, Poststructuralist identity theory, and Whiteness Studies guide the inductive open-coding detailed below, in which discourses that I believe speak to the research question, are identified (Chelf, 2018).

Open-coding can be understood as doing multiple close readings of the data line-by-line, noting tentative observations about what is seen and using this to build categories and concepts. It supports the inductive approach which, whilst informed by a theoretical grounding, sees the researcher doing a close reading of the raw data to generate categories for analysis, rather than imposing pre-determined categories upon the data. (Corbin and Strauss, 2008)

Bazeley and Jackson (2013) describe this open-coding stage in NVivo as "*detailed, slow, reflective exploration of early texts-doing line-by-line coding, reading between the lines, identifying concepts and thinking about all of each concept's possible meanings as a way of 'breaking open' the text, recording what is learned in both codes and memos."* (2013: 70).

In line with my theoretical framework, the question of power is foremost. As Critical Discourse Analysis recognises language as a sample of systems of thought within a particular historical location, open-coding identifies which things were evidently

thinkable, sayable, and which identities were therefor be-able. (Weedon, 1997). Who regulates these things and who says them is also examined.

Every line of transcribed conversation from the focus group sessions is read and I loosely identify broad patterns of discourses that addressed my research questions. This is not a linear process- the data is approached experimentally, hence the inductive approach.

To begin with, broad questions are asked of the data. Some of these were prompted by the patterns illustrated by the NVivo graphics, but all are delineated from my theoretical framework:

Table 10: Initial questions asked of the data

- What could be potential examples of direct answers to the research questions?
- Which discourses do we use? Which discourses do we resist using?
- How at this time, in this place, do we construct (understand) whiteness, critical thought, teacher identity, and social justice teaching?
- What unspoken ideas are guiding a shared meaning?
- What attitudes in the group are made desirable/undesirable and how are they made desirable/undesirable?
- What are the particular effects of certain discourses on other discourses in the group?
- Which seemingly mundane performative identity markers (as understood by Judith Butler in Chapter 2) were revealing?
- What strategies do we develop to justify our own identities?
- Are there discourses of in-group and out-group?
- Where participants are asked to do a conscious analysis of hegemony, are they aware of the strategies they are using?

In asking these questions of the data, what I learned was organised into a long list of more focused questions/observations about patterns of discourses (the 'codes and memos' referred to by Bazeley and Jackson (2013). These ideas emerged inductively and were recorded on a memo in NVivo.

3.6.4 Creating Nodes from the Open-Coding

The long list of tangled, overlapping ideas was then organised into a more coherent system for coding using the mind-mapping application in NVivo. This functions like ordinary mind-mapping software, in that it allows the researcher to plot their ideas graphically, showing the links between the ideas with lines or arrows. The ideas are represented as a parent idea (main idea), child idea (an off-shoot of the main idea, below it), or a sibling idea (connected to another idea at the same level). (See Figure 1).

I found that the discourses that emerged from the open-coding described above could be organised into clusters of discourses. I plotted these ideas onto the mind-map application, as either parent, child or sibling ideas, sometimes creating new names for the main idea that could hold a cluster of related discourses. I also removed what I identified as repetitive ideas. Then, because it is interactive, I could move ideas around, connect, disconnect and reconnect them, and experiment with what model was the most streamlined and complete, and captured the connections between the various discourses. NVivo also allows the user to use colour to depict connections between ideas, or to set some ideas apart. This process is outlined in Bazeley and Jackson (2013).

The final mind-map (Figure 1) consists of a central idea labelled ‘sites of conflict’, as my focus had to always remain on issues of power. There are 10 parent ideas which lead off this, each with their own set of child and sibling ideas.

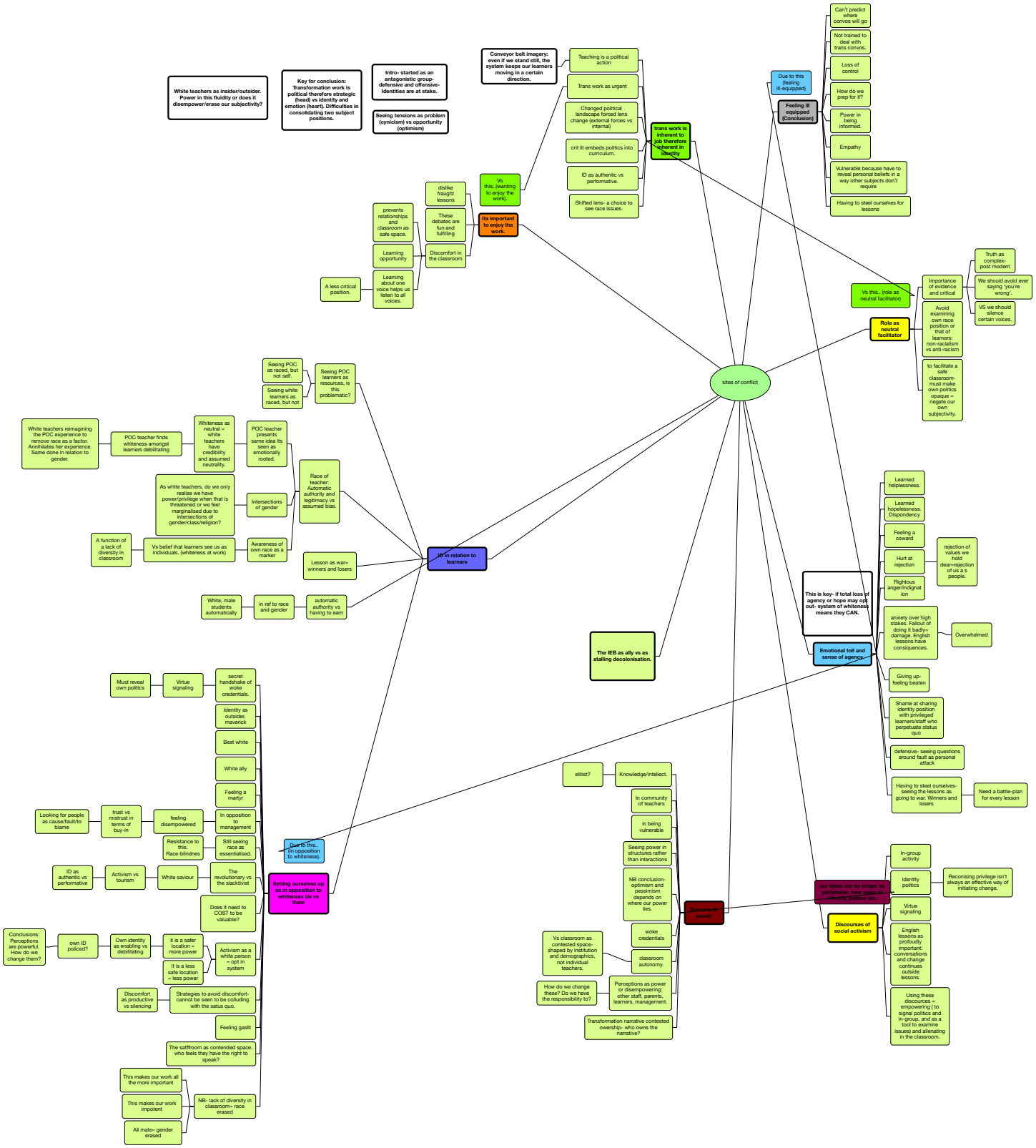


Figure. 1: NVivo Mind-Map of ideas generated by open-coding

NVivo provides a function which allows the user to turn this mind-map structure into a coding structure, i.e. transforms the mind-map into a list version of 'nodes' into which the user can code their data. Whilst I refined my categories further before turning them into discourses to code, I can see how this would be a time-saving function.

The term 'nodes' refers to the organising and storage system of categories for coding in NVivo. They are flexible- they can be "*expanded, changed, reconfigured, or removed*" (Bazeley and Jackson, 2013:90)- and are generated by the researcher through their repeated interactions with the data, not by the software.

The term 'node' appears in information technology to refer to "a terminal point or a point of connection in a branching network." (Bazeley and Jackson, 2013: 75). Like the nodes on a plant from which branching occurs, the nodes in NVivo become:

> *…points at which concepts potentially branch out into a network of subconcepts or dimensions. In Nvivo you make a node for each topic or concept to be stored, much like designating a hanging file for the cut-up photocopies in a manual system. What NVivo keeps there, however, are not the actual segments of data, but references to the exact location of the text you coded in the source document.* (Bazeley and Jackson, 2013: 75)

The researcher can then code and slice their data in terms of these nodes, applying multiple nodes to one extract. The researcher can then access all of the references coded to each node, as well as examine the references in their original context. This is an adavantage of QDAS as this gives a "*recontextualized perspective on each concept as all text relating to it is brought together. Seeing your data in terms of category ...gives a stronger sense of what that category is about*." (Richards, 2009. In Bazeley and Jackson, 2013: 4).

Furthermore, in just one of the analytical possibilities, I can examine the data in terms of each Case (participant) or Attribute (age, race, years teaching at an elite school), and each node or a combination of nodes.

According to Bazeley and Jackson (2013:90-91), the use of an NVivo node structure has the following advantages:

Table 11: Advantages of NVivo Node structure (adapted from Bazeley and Jackson. 2013:90)

1) Organization: The hierarchies help create order out of randomness or chaos. The logic of the system means you can find nodes and you can see where to put new ones.
2) Conceptual clarity: Organising nodes helps give meaning to them; sorting into hierarchies prompts you to clarify your ideas, to identify common properties, see missing categories, and sort out categories that overlap…and you can clearly see the structure of your data…The coding system, when established, will 'tell' your project. (Richards, 2009)
3) Well-organised trees provide a useful tool for ensuring the thoroughness of your coding as you progress. Whilst coding to one node, you can refer to your entire coding hierarchy and see if there are other nodes which apply.
4) Identifying patterns: As you code, you may notice patterns to the coding, for instance, that a certain participants is frequently coded with the same nodes, or that certain codes frequently collocate. This can be further investigated with the query and analysis tools that NVivo offers. The use of these is detailed in Chapter 4.
5) Create a meta-concept or cluster nodes theoretically.

3.7 Ethical Considerations

Formal informed consent was collected from the participants and the management of the school, as per the ethics requirements of the University of the Witwatersrand, which included, confidentiality, informed consent, and a degree of anonymity. However, as the participants all knew each other and continued to work together both during and after the research process, there were a number of measures that needed to be in place.

Given the risk factors of possible resistance/defensiveness and/or explosive discussions that are unavoidable in this kind of work, I ensured that participants were aware that they could withdraw from the process at any time. I also arranged counselling with the on-site psychologist, if it was required. Participants were made aware of this support and could request it at any point.

The focus group was built upon the already existing community of support, reflection and engagement with notions of race/class/gender/religion/sexuality identity. Conversations on these issues were had between the participants and the researcher before, during and after the research was undertaken, and there is an established atmosphere of trust and support three years in the making.

The methodology of the study is guided by Feminist research models, which acknowledges the humanity of the researcher and participants and draws attention to the complexities of human relationships. As such, I endeavoured to deal with these complexities in a transparent, reflective and reflexive way. The entire process was intended to be supportive, collegial, and non-threatening and the input of the participants will shape the process.

Meetings took place on our school campus and during free periods or at the participants' convenience. Refreshments were provided.

It was difficult to ensure total anonymity as I engaged with colleagues from my school and from within my department. I was both researcher and participant, and therefore

people who know where I work, would be able to identify the school. The English department consists of 11 teachers, 9 of them women, so it was possible to offer a degree of anonymity, however, the precise contributions of each participant to the conversations may have revealing details. I removed these, as well as any details that precisely revealed the identity of the school, but these issues were made clear to the participants.

Pseudonyms were used for each of the participants. Once transcribed, data was cleaned- I removed any identifying names/places or details as per the ethics considerations.

The identity of the school was obscured by providing only very broad details. The specific details regarding location, size, religious denomination and whether or not it is both a preparatory and a high school, were not be given.

Participants were also given the opportunity to do a 'participant check' of the final dissertation. They could comment on the data and findings and their input was included if they wished. Regretfully, whilst all of the participants expressed a desire to read this research and to provide feedback, time pressures in relation to school marking deadlines did not allow them to do this in time.

I do require a fair amount of time and input from the participants and because these particular participants, including myself as researcher, spend a lot of time together, working though many of these curriculum decisions and debates anyway, I believe that participation was not too burdensome. The work done by the participants also fitted in with the curriculum planning and teaching requirements of our work as English teachers.

Furthermore, the research question grew out of a personal and professional dilemma in the context of a highly-charged social and historical moment. Conflicts of identity of this nature have characterised my many informal discussions with my colleagues and those selected as participants had spent much time expressing their own dilemmas and concerns of the same nature.

It is therefore hoped that through their participation in the research, participants may have found support, a familiar and comfortable space to share their thoughts and feelings, and to be challenged in a constructive way, as well as a space in which to collaborate on teaching strategies and materials from which we all benefitted.

It is also hoped that the conversations enabled us to develop transformative and critical teaching materials and strategies in order to address a transformation agenda. The school in which the study is set had recently committed itself to a large-scale transformation programme to be run over a year or more with the Wits Centre for Diversity Studies (beginning in April 2017). This meant that all staff were expected to be examining their own identities and how they relate to and are seen by others. The focus groups therefore provided a well-timed sounding-board for participants to examine our experiences of the transformation programme, with a particular focus on our identities as English teachers.

Audio-recordings were made on a smart phone and then transferred to a laptop file within 24 hours, to be stored in a cloud file. Both the smart phone and the laptop are password protected and the cloud file is only accessible to myself via secure login details. Transcripts and the Researcher Journal were stored in the same way.

Any printed transcripts/extracts from the Researcher Journal were secured in a locked cupboard in my classroom. I am the only one who has a key.

The data itself features as extracts in the dissertation, but the outcomes of the discourse analysis constitute the findings of the dissertation and will inform the discussion of results.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS PART ONE

4.1 Introduction

In Chapter 2, I argued that the lenses of Critical Pedagogy, Pedagogy For The Oppressed, and Whiteness Studies necessitate a conscious decision on the part of the educator to position themselves against the status quo and to foreground a social justice agenda in their work. This imperative is particularly marked when that educator works within a privileged context, and when she herself benefits from race privilege. Whilst South African schools have seen a number of significant changes since 1994, many private, elite schools remain white spaces and therefore, spaces in which white privilege remains unseen and unchallenged. I argue that the necessary first step to this process is in examining how this educator conceives of her identity, as the subjectivity of a white, middle class, privileged educator should be a troubled or problematized positionality. I present a Poststructuralist model of identity, which allows me to examine the ways in which discourses shape identity, and visa versa.

In the first section of this chapter **(4.2 Data Analysis: Visualisations**), I outline the results of the broad-sweeps of the data done with the use of NVivo visualisations. Here I comment briefly on the insights gained from NVivo Word Clouds and Word Trees.

In the next section (**4.3 Data Analysis: Nodes as Discourses**) I provide a table of the resulting discourses (or nodes) that I established (Table 13) based upon the patterns of meaning and power that emerge from the open-coding process outlined in Chapter 3. I also provide graphs (Figures 6 and 7) to illustrate which parent-nodes were significant in terms of their frequency of coding.

Following this, in **4.4 Data Analysis: A Textured Analysis,** I use the frequency graphs of 4.3 to shape my examination of how the discourses operate by providing examples

of talk coded to the parent-nodes, as well as providing a discourse analysis of the data in relation to the theoretical lenses. I provide a textured discourse analysis of how the nodes operate both in the focus group conversations, and in the Researcher Journal.

In the second **Data Analysis (Chapter 5)** I look at selections of talk which allow me to explore how the discourses interact, how they reinforce, contradict or deconstruct each other, and how this interaction impacts upon the participant's subjectivity.

4.2 Visualisations

The NVivo Word Clouds (Figures 2 and 3) are used to identify the 200 most commonly used words across all the focus group transcriptions. The words are sized in relation to how often they appear.

In generating the Word Cloud, I made use of the 'stop-words' setting in NVivo. These are words that we exclude from the query. I selected the participants' pseudonyms and the most commonly used words such as 'and', 'the', 'a', 'also' and categorised them as stop-words. The Word Cloud takes account of root words too. In other words, 'feel' included the words 'feelings' and 'felt', in order to streamline the results. The Word Cloud is used to examine if, even on the surface, the focus group sessions produced conversations in line with my aims.

The Word Cloud (Figure 2) indicates that talk about teacher-identity and the internal world of the teacher dominate the conversations. Words such as 'know', 'think' and 'feel' give an indication of this.

Furthermore, (Figure 3) demonstrates the Word Cloud produced by NVivo when I remove all generic words directly tied to teaching, such as 'teacher', 'classroom', and 'lessons', and request the top 40 words. Figure 3 is an interesting and reassuring representation of the surface substance of the conversations, because at the very preliminary stage of analysis it indicates that the conversations yielded data that did directly address issues of race and identity. The words 'think', 'feel', 'know', and

'identity' are clearly the most prominent, prompting me to consider what this might suggest in terms of discourse as knowledge-making and identity-producing.

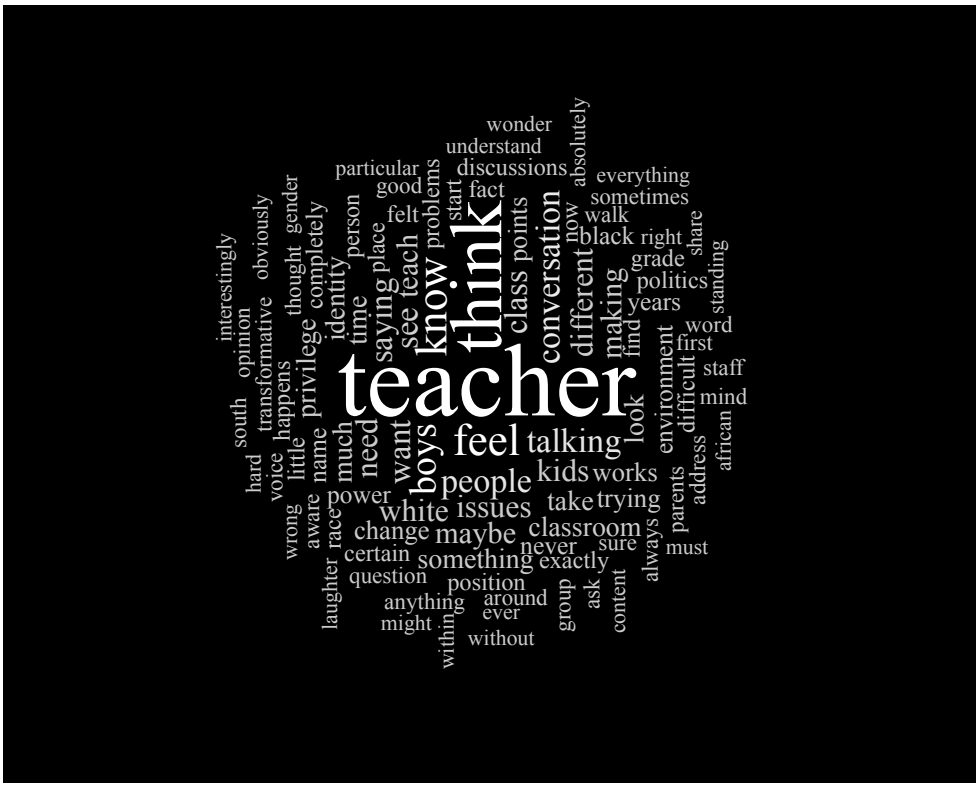


Figure 2: NVivo Word Cloud of top 200 words

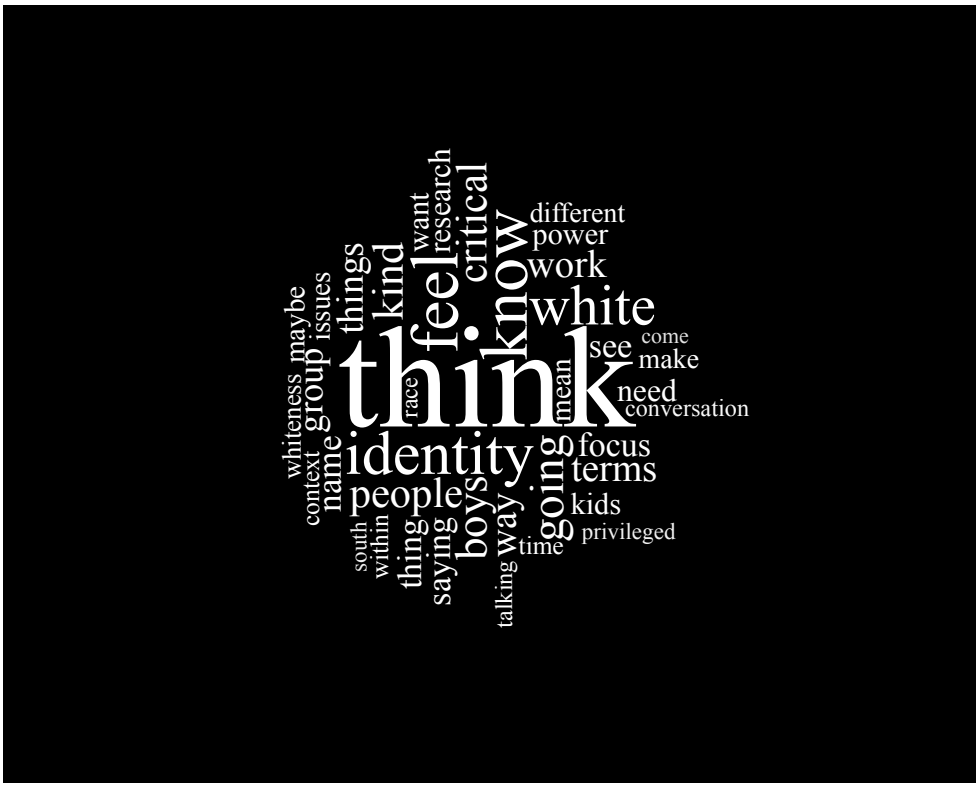


Figure 3: NVivo Word Cloud of top 200 words with generic words removed

The second NVivo visualisation employed is the Word Tree. Here a word selected by the researcher appears in the centre of the Word Tree. The branches to the left of this central word show the words/phrases which appear before the central word in the data. The branches to the right show the words/phrases which appear after the central word. The font size represents the frequency of a particular word of phrase. Clicking on a particular branch highlights the whole context (words before and after the central word) in the data.

In the Word Trees below (Figures 4 and 5) I examine the words 'privilege/privileged' and 'white/whiteness' as they appear in the focus group sessions. The words in blue indicate that the Word Tree includes instances of the root words; 'privilege' for 'privileged', and 'white' for 'whiteness'.

In the 'privilege/privileged' (Figure 4) and 'white/whiteness' (Figure 5) Word Trees which follow, the graphics indicate that the words privilege/d and white are often linked to words such as affluence/wealth/rich, power, and words indicating maleness. This indicates the need to examine the role of gender in the discourse analysis. It also flags that in much of the data, the participants' talk focuses on privilege as economic, which is potentially an interesting marker of silences around the many different ways in which white privilege manifests, beyond financial wealth. Furthermore, the words privilege/d and white are often tied to talk about the learners and other school staff, and not in relation to our own positioning. This indicates the importance of examining the discourses that erase our own race-identity as a function of privilege and whiteness.

The Word Trees also indicate a combative pattern of talking about privilege and whiteness; there is frequent use of 'they' and 'them' vs the 'us' and 'we' of the participants. This directs another focus of the analysis in this chapter- an examination of the role that a combative/oppositional discourse plays in the ways in which we make sense of our work and our relationships, as well as the role of in-groups and out-groups in teacher identity.

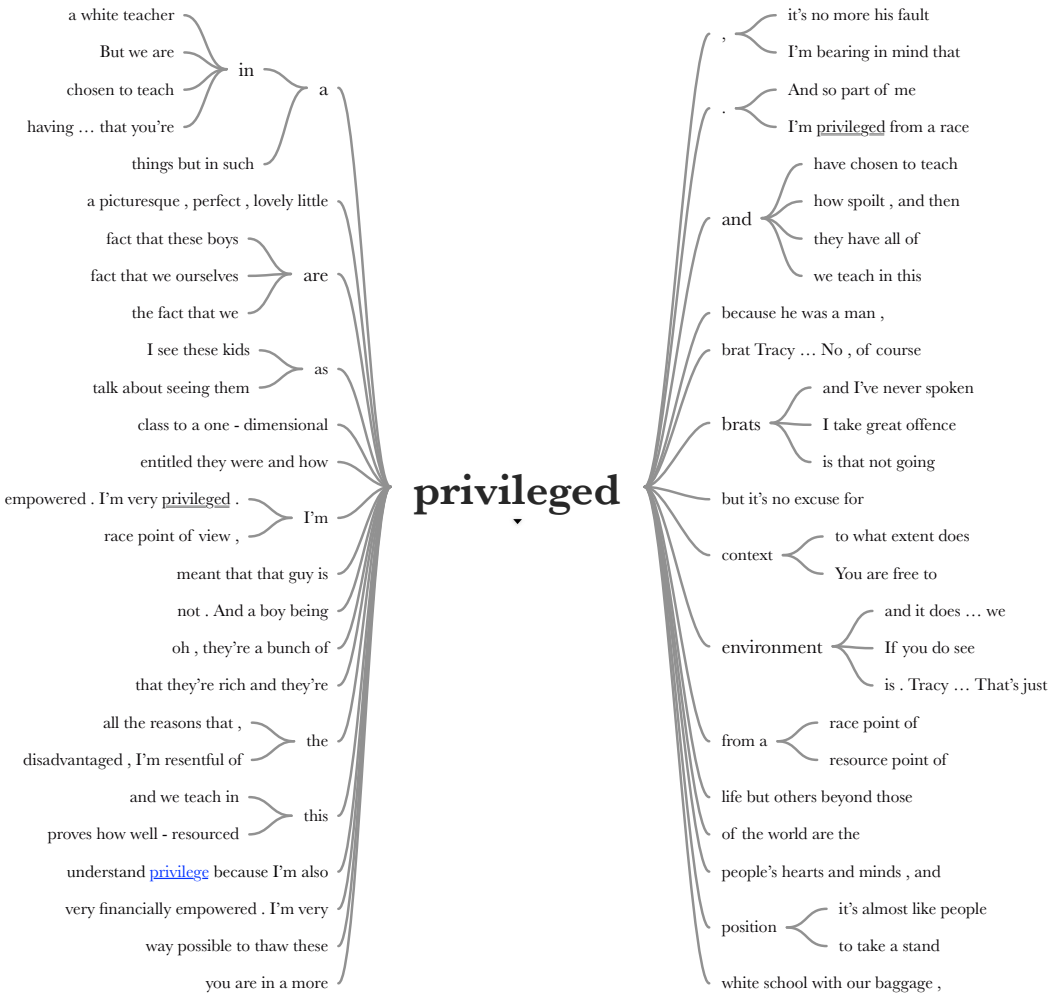


Figure 4: NVivo Word Tree: Privileged

Figure 5: NVivo Word Tree: Whiteness

Overall, these visualizations indicate an important focus for the analysis; where and how participants construct and understand their own positionalities in relation to privilege and whiteness. This could only be meaningfully understood through discourse analysis rather than content analysis because, as the preliminary observations of patterns examined above demonstrate, we (the participants) speak more about race and privilege in terms of 'others' than we do in relation to ourselves.

4.3 Nodes as Discourses

The process of open-coding as outlined in detail in Chapter 3, allowed me to narrow the discourses down to the seven parent-nodes below:

Table 12: Parent Nodes

- **The Binary of Social-activism- Authentically Critically Conscious vs Woke Performance**
- **Identity in Opposition to Whiteness**
- **Intersections of Gender**
- **Not Waving but Drowning; Emotional Toll**
- **The Neutral Professional**
- **The Public Intellectual**; **Normalising/Centering of Whiteness**.

Each node represents a **discourse,** and not an objective fact. Every line of data is coded to at least one of these nodes. Within each parent-node, there are child-nodes. These are detailed in Table 13 which follows.

The data coded to these child-nodes is aggregated to the parent-nodes, i.e. coding done in each of the child-nodes is automatically represented in a parent-node. However, coding done directly to a parent-node can remain there without needing to be allocated to a specific child-node. This is to ensure that data which fits into the parent-node in general, without fitting into a specific child-node, is appropriately coded. It also means

that the parent-nodes can be assessed in terms of weight/how much data has been coded to them, as all the coding done to their child-nodes is represented.

In order to ensure that each discourse was derived from my theoretical framework, I ensure that each one addressed at least one of my theoretical paradigms. This is indicated in Table 13 with the use of CP (Critical Pedagogy), PPT (Poststructuralist Positioning Theory), or W (Whiteness studies). The headings in bold caps-lock are the parent-nodes, and the nodes below each parent-node are the corresponding child-nodes. The order in which the parent-nodes, and within them their child-nodes, are arranged is not significant at this point. I include this table in order to provide a clear framework for the parent-nodes and their child-nodes, demonstrating how exactly they are organized in relation to each other.

Table 13: Complete Node/discourse structure

THE BINARY OF SOCIAL ACTIVISM- AUTHENTICALLY CRITICALLY CONSCIOUS VS WOKE PERFORMANCE	**Theoretical paradigm**
Critical literacy is embedded in curriculum	CP
Empathy and compassion	CP, PPT
Teaching is political	CP, W
This is urgent work (disrupt the conveyer belt of socialisation)	CP, W
Activism tourism	W, PPT
Identity as performative	PPT
IDENTITY IN OPPOSITION TO WHITENESS	
Does it need to cost to be valuable?	PPT
Fears of being seen to collude with whiteness	W
Lessons as war	PPT, W
Opt in = more or less safe?	W
Pushing from the margins	CP, W
The perceptions of us by others as disempowering- perception is reality and we are powerless to change it.	PPT

Seeing the enemy in structures of power- whiteness as entrenched and perpetuated by those in power.

Attributing blame	PPT
Feeling gaslit	PPT
Lack of recognition	PPT
Mistrust seeing collusion	CP, W, PPT

INTERSECTIONS OF GENDER

All male classes= erases gender	CP
Gender as empowering. Feeling empowered because of or despite gender	PPT
Lived reality erased by others (denial of gender dynamics)	CP, PPT
Marginalised by gender. Having to fight for legitimacy	CP, PPT

NOT WAVING BUT DROWNING- OWN EMOTIONAL TOLL

Avoiding discomfort	CP, W, PPT
Emotional exhaustion	CP, PPT
Fear of loss of control and unable to prep. Anxiety over high stakes	CP, PPT
Feeling a coward and feeling ashamed	CP, W, PPT
Hurt at rejection of own values	CP, W, PPT
Learned helplessness and hopelessness	PPT
Righteous anger	PPT
Vulnerable and defensive (have to reveal own politics)	CP, W, PPT

THE NEUTRAL PROFESSIONAL

Non-racialism	CP, W
Safe classroom prioritised	CP
Discomfort prevents real change	W, CP
Belief one can and should hide own politics	CP
Never say ‘you’re wrong’ to learners	CP
Truth is complex- resisting grand narrative of structural racism/sexism	CP, PPT

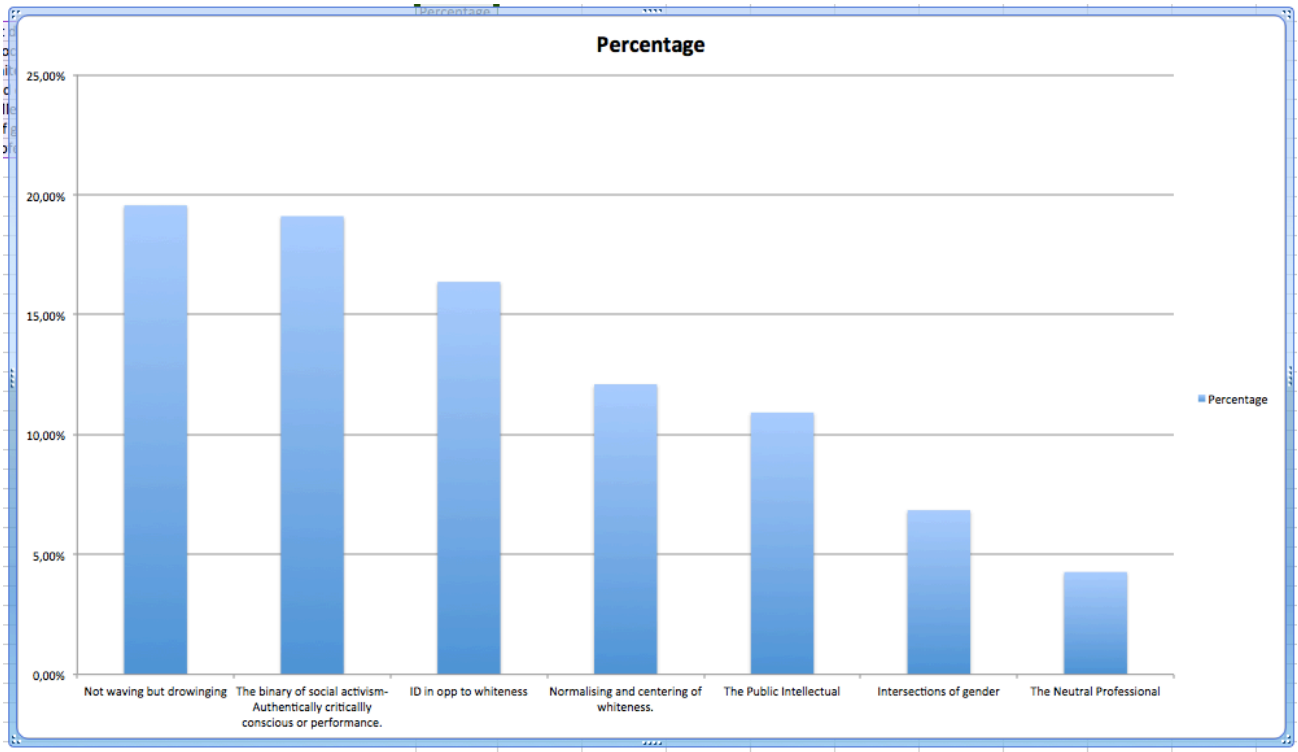
THE PUBLIC INTELLECTUAL	
Classroom autonomy vs classroom as contested space (shaped by the institution, not the individual)	W, CP
Discomfort is necessary	CP
Knowledge and intellect = power	CP
Other's perceptions of us as empowering	PPT
Ownership of the social justice narrative: in-group activity	
Having the language = power	CP, W, PPT
Peripheral ideas are now mainstream	CP, W
Secret handshake of woke credentials	PPT, W
Strength in community of teachers	CP, W,
NORMALISING/CENTERING OF WHITENESS	
Assumed neutrality-authority-legitimacy of the self. Belief that students see you as an individual	W, PPT
Seeing POC positions as emotional	W, PPT
Seeing race as essentialised	W, PPT
Seeing other students/staff as raced, but not self	W, PPT

As a point of departure, I use NVivo to collate the frequency with which I have coded each discourse (parent-node) across all of the focus group sessions and the Researcher Journal. This allows me to identify the most frequently coded discourses. I include the graphs in Figures 6 and 7 because they illustrate visually, the frequencies with which each discourse is coded, in relation to the other discourses. I use this information to shape my engagement with individual discourses in the analyses chapters. These visuals therefore provide a useful frame of reference, especially because in my analyses, I cut across parent-nodes.

The first graph (Figure 6) compares the percentage of data that is coded to each parent-node in the Researcher Journal. The second graph (Figure 7) compares the frequency of coding between parent-nodes as they are coded in each of the focus group sessions. This indicates which nodes were coded the most frequently **within** each focus group, and in **total** across the study. Because each line/phrase of data could be coded to

multiple nodes, the percentages in Figures 6 and 7 show the cumulative percentage of data that is coded to that specific node. I use the results from this frequency graph to structure section 4.4 in this chapter.

Figure 6: Node coding frequency in Researcher Journal



The confessional nature of the Researcher Journal contributes to the fact that **Not Waving but Drowning** was the most frequently coded parent-node here. Following that, the two most frequently coded nodes are **The Binary of Social Activism** and **Identity in Opposition to Whiteness.** This is a similar pattern to the frequency of coding in the Focus Group sessions (Figure 7). Furthermore, in both instances, **The Neutral Professional** is the least coded parent-node.

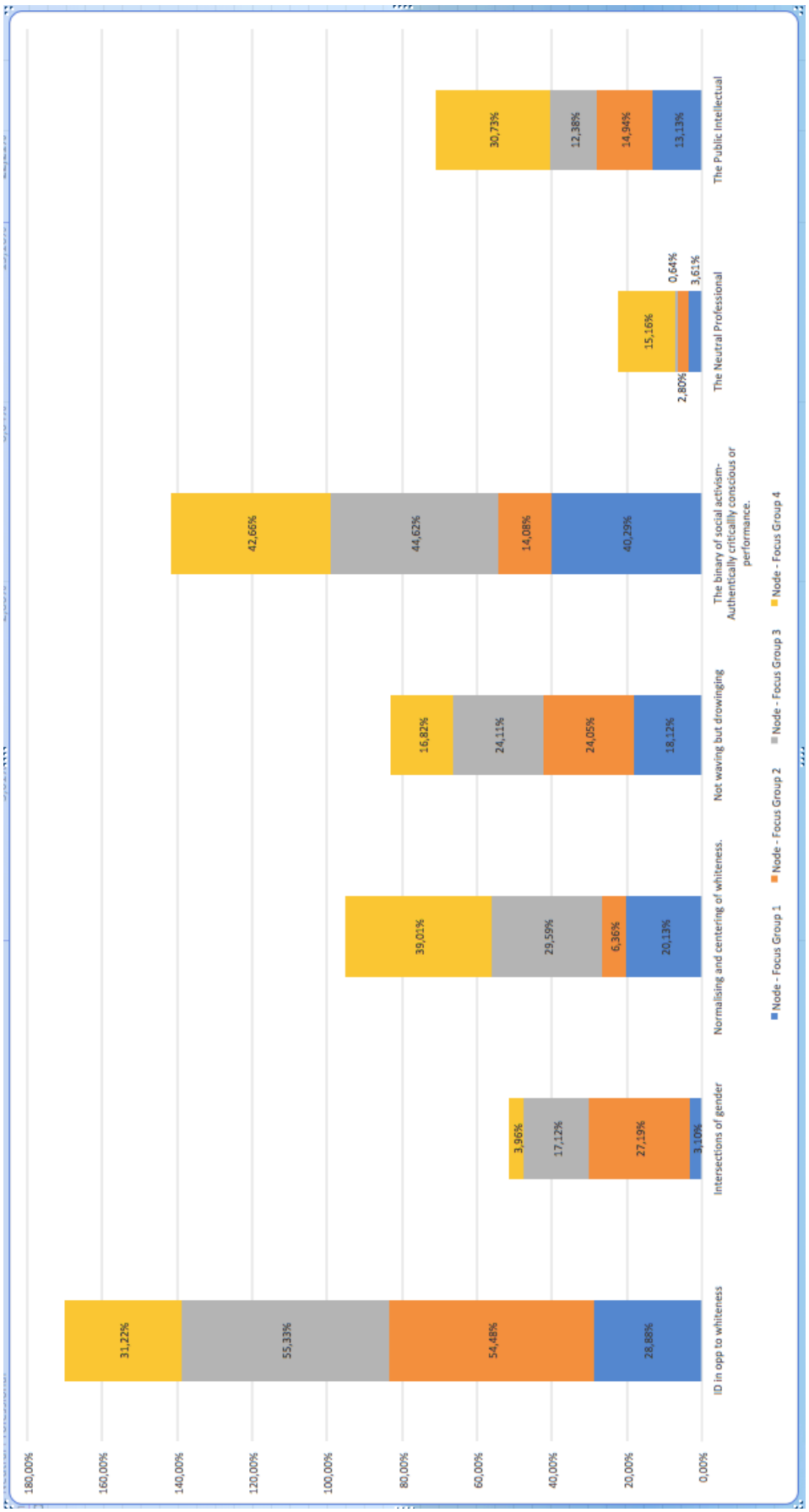


Figure 7: Percentage Coverage- frequency of coding made to Parent Nodes

As Figure 7 indicates, the most frequently coded parent-nodes in the focus group sessions were the following in descending order:

Table 14: Most frequently coded Nodes

1. Identity in Opposition to Whiteness
2. The Binary of Social Activism
3. Normalizing and Centering Whiteness
4. Not Waving but Drowning
5. The Public Intellectual
6. Intersections of Gender
7. The Neutral Professional.

I use this order to structure my engagement with each of the discourses below (4.4) because as a participant, my talk is also referenced in the focus group data. In some instances, when the child-nodes are frequently coded, I look at them in detail too.

4.4 A Textured Analysis

Using the results from the graphs in Figures 6 and 7, I address the most frequently coded discourses in terms of the insights that they provide in relation to the research question. I begin with the most frequently coded discourse.

4.4.1 In Opposition to Whiteness

In reference to Figure 7, the discourse in which we position ourselves **in Opposition to Whiteness** is the most frequently coded parent-node. My research question asks **how critically conscious English teachers negotiate and negotiate the contradictory positions in which they find themselves**. This discourse does a great deal in providing an answer. Overall, the discourse allows the participants to exercise agency and respond to a potentially fragmented and dislocated subjectivity, with "*acts of negotiation,*

challenge, self-reflexivity and resistance." (Baxter (2016:47) by expressing who we are NOT. However, in my analysis I problematize this strategy as it appears to simultaneously erase our whiteness as we seek to find a coherent sense of self within a white, privileged context. In particular, our positionality as white women is brought into focus by the experiences of a woman of colour. This is an important outcome of the analysis, as CDA explicitly locates the purpose of research as needing to *"to understand, expose, and ultimately resist social inequality*." (Van Dijk (2001:325, in Mazid, 2014:xix)

When utilising this discourse we speak about our subject positions in terms of what we are *not*. In this positioning, two binary categories of white people are constructed, the bad whites ("they", "them") and the good whites ("us", "we", "my", "I"). "They" are understood as Freire's dominant class (1998:71), the privileged of Pedagogy For The Privileged, and white people at the centre of power in Whiteness Studies. This operates in terms of how we position ourselves in relation to our learners and their families, our colleagues, the school as an institution, and those in management positions within the school. These categories of people are constructed not as individuals, but as "the class", "the boys", "the parents", "management", who are seen as holding a homogenous, negative position, representing the oppressive status quo to which I refer to in this study as whiteness, encompassing their race, privilege, and in many instances, their maleness.

4.4.1.1 We are not our learners

When examining this discourse in relation to our identities as *not like our learners*, the following example of talk coded to this discourse highlights a number of features of the discourse:

> *...the latest class I've had, which has been the most difficult on many levels, has come out with some quite shocking mentality and viewpoints and racist viewpoints. I felt, whilst as a white teacher, speaking to white kids, I felt incredibly ashamed that they had that viewpoint and embarrassed, actually...*
> Taylor, Focus Group 1.

Reference is made to how "*difficult*" the class is. The discourse establishes "*difficult*" classes (with connotations of them being unpleasant, uncooperative) as being difficult by virtue of their ideas and opinions being contrary to what the critically conscious teacher believes in. The learners are positioned as having consensus about these "*racist viewpoints*". This creates an impression that the racist ideas are held en-masse; the class as a unit has expressed the viewpoints, not as individuals, and there is no reference made to any individual learners disagreeing or not aligning with the class's consensus. The result is that within this discourse, the teacher stands alone in the classroom, in opposition to these "*viewpoints*" and therefore, in opposition to whiteness. It is in the opportunity for resistance (Norton, 1997 in Baxter, 2008) that this discourse allows, that critically conscious English teachers can imagine ourselves heard and validated by each other, because in positioning ourselves as standing alone in the classroom full of "*racist viewpoints*", we are expressing our resistance to those viewpoints, without having to act in that moment in the classroom.

In terms of power, it would seem that in the extract above Taylor believes the status quo is deeply entrenched and that it would be "*difficult*" to affect change in the face of this. The reference to the class "*coming out with*" these viewpoints suggests that they are deeply held beliefs which are being revealed. This suggests that the problem is far bigger than this one interaction in the classroom and that these ideas are deeply entrenched. This pattern of meaning suggests an understanding of whiteness as being maintained by those who benefit from it the most ("*they*"). However, often within this discourse, the emphasis remains on the macro, and not on the micro interactions in which the teacher, as a white person herself, is complicit. In this way, we frequently see whiteness manifesting as "the racial norm, the invisible centre that deflects attention from itself by racializing the margins…Whiteness then believes in its own homogenous neutrality." (Steyn, 2001:162).

Paradoxically, the teacher is at the same time acutely aware that her whiteness aligns her with the white identities of her learners, and that in order to maintain a coherent sense of self as critically conscious, it is necessary to position herself as ***not*** like those white people. It is important to point out that due to the demographics of the school, it is entirely possible that all of the leaners in the class to which she refers, were white, but it is most likely that the discourse captures the whiteness of the space- as prioritising

and normalising white supremacy (Steyn, 2001). It suggests that the actual demographics of the class are less of an issue, than the kind of narrative that dominates; one which normalises white privilege and prioritises white needs and comfort. In this way, we see that whiteness is not about the number of white bodies in the room, rather it is a type of hegemony. This is an important distinction that as critical pedagogues we need to have foremost in mind; if we hope to do sustainable and meaningful work to dismantle oppressive systems, we need to do more than shift the demographics in a 'numbers game'.

Furthermore, this teacher indicates by her reference to being "*incredibly ashamed*" and "*embarrassed*" that what is comfortable and taken-for-grated by these learners, is uncomfortable for her. This discomfort and shame is specifically understood in relation to her being white and therefore being implicated in the "*racist viewpoints*" being expressed. Referring to her shame and embarrassment serves to make a strong statement about how different she is to the white class. Shame identifies the flaw as one's own, we feel shame about *who* we are, rather than something we may have *done.*

However, in choosing to share these feelings with us, Taylor regains hegemonic power within the conversation with the other participants, as in expressing a moral indictment; her judgement of their attitudes as shameful, she represents herself as maintaining moral rightness and therefore as maintaining power in her narrative of this classroom interaction. This by implication presents a strategy for navigating the conflicting identity positions in which we find ourselves as critically conscious, but privileged and teaching in a privileged context: we can possibly maintain a degree of stability of self if, when coming together with others like us, we can share and agree upon how morally wrong the 'privileged-other' is. I refer to the 'privileged-other' as the "*them*" to which the participants construct themselves as different. They are privileged, like us, but they are othered and to a degree dehumanised in our attempts to express how different we are to "*them*".

In other examples of the discourse **in Opposition to Whiteness**, the participants express disdain for the attitudes of the learners, as "*mouthpieces*" for their parents. A note of disgust cuts through the ways in which the families represented in these comments are constructed. In the comments below, there is reference made to "*sides*";

the side of the parents and therefore their children is constructed as ill, and the discourse allows the participants to position themselves as on the other "*side*", the side of "*redressing the bal*ance":

> *I just sat through the Grade 4 (*preparatory school*) speeches, and almost all of them were mouthpieces for their parents. I mean, ten year olds speaking about Zuma and Trump, and you can't tell me that that's coming from these boys. So if we're looking to redress the balance, assuming that they're getting like so much from the one side, then in order to make that balance, then almost everything we give them should be on another side.*
> Researcher, Focus Group 1.

In a further example, the participant below refers to "*these kids*" as only seeing people of colour in terms of "*servitude and corruption*".

> *….is that for most of these kids, they have their maid and J**** Z**** (a South African politician*). And that's kind of their go-to... that identity. Servitude and corruption.*
> Jennifer. Focus Group 1.

In positioning ourselves in opposition to a whiteness that we believe views people of colour as either 'servants' or 'corrupt politicians', there is a need to acknowledge that we are pushing against a multitude of hegemonic "forces". The comments coded to this discourse identify our identities as in opposition to the learners and their families in terms of what they **represent**, rather than who they are as individuals. Yet, the other participants silently accept the metaphor of a particular politician as a shorthand for corruption, because we are also products of the same whiteness of which we are so damning, and so we understand the reference as self-evident.

At times we avoid a slippage of white identity by maintaining the moral high ground, but at other times we acknowledge that the task is overwhelming and daunting. In both instances, we are positioned as isolated, different, and as carrying a burden that other whites are not:

> *These boys that came back from Grade 10 camp and how entitled they were and how privileged and how spoilt, and then sometimes it feels like we're pushing against such a huge force and so sometimes we need to be just as tough but then sometimes that backfires.*
> Researcher. Focus Group 1.

This example also highlights the commonly-observed strategy of locating negative traits within the 'bad whites', with the implication that we are not like that. Words like "*privileged*" are associated with being "*entitled*" and "*spoiled*". In this way, our own privileged positions are not under scrutiny, because we do not identify as "*entitled*" or "*spoiled*".

The question of tolerance of all perspectives as examined in Chapter 2 (Freire, 1998) is problematized within this discourse. This discourse renders the different perspectives of privileged learners as "*difficult*", "*spoiled*" and lacking in empathy. When participants make sense of their own identities from within this discourse, being tolerant of views which they believe represent an unjust status quo, is untenable.

In **Lessons as War (**a child-node within **Identity in Opposition to Whiteness),** the antagonistic nature of relationships in the classroom is crystallised. The participants position themselves and their learners as opponents. Here, lessons need to be strategic, well-plotted, in order to 'win' points and arguments. I believe that this discourse, more than any other, characterises the ways in which the participants cope with a dislocated sense of self by developing a strategy or coping mechanism. The discourse **Identity in Opposition to Whiteness** establishes us as counter-culture outsiders, battling against a mythologised reputation, and as a consequence lessons become warzones; with clear battle lines drawn, sophisticated ammunition, injuries, and victors:

> *Do you think it's a losing battle? I don't think it's a losing battle. I think it's just the beginning of a huge battle.*
> Rebecca. Focus Group 3.

> *So this is the problem that I have is that there are times where I have wanted to, and I have, I've stepped in, where boys are talking about quotas and whatever, and I'm like, right, sit down, shut up, let me show you the statistics.* Researcher. Focus Group 1.

> *Whereas for those teachers that opt out of the politics of teaching it's so much easier because you don't ever have to feel that you're ready to take on a battle. Every time we have a lesson like that we're waiting for the backlash.*
> Researcher. Focus Group 1.

> *This is the last module, I think I've seen four or whatever before, and this is the most apathetic passive aggressive group that I've experienced.*

Taylor. Focus Group 2.

And so I think, when you said the whole point of it would be to change minds, and I often think, well, sometimes I'm not sure that that's really what I'm going in…sometimes I just want to go in and prove them wrong. Like say, you know, no you're wrong, just sit down, shut up. Because the changing minds thing is so difficult and you have to be so emotionally invested and you have to have a plan, you have to have a strategy. And sometimes…I just don't know what that strategy would be.
Researcher. Focus Group 3.

So I've said, stop this conversation now. On what premise are you having this argument? Do you not see that your logic here is flawed? Because you're making a generalisation… So I would absolutely call him and say, it's rubbish.
Rebecca. Focus Group 1.

Taylor: *….it's because you can just see this complete shutdown. And I just find it so sad that a 14 year old has that kind of notion already…*
Jennifer: *That they've already calcified themselves.*
Taylor: *Ja. And hostile.*
Focus Group 2.

This discourse frames the learners' engagement as apathetic, "*calcified*", "*passive aggressive*", defensive, "*hostile*", and determined to prove their teachers wrong. The learners are positioned as having established the rules of the war-game, they are represented as holding the power to frame the lessons, and we respond by playing the war-game; looking for ways to prove our learners "*wrong*". This manifests in us sharing our defensive reactions; "*sit down, shut up*", "*stop this conversation*", which have now been cast as reasonable and not aggressive.

Lessons become a battle of wills and we sometimes "*don't know what the strategy is*", but at the heart of the discourse, is a belief that our learners do not trust us. The examples of the discourse below illustrate this in reference the frequently described instances of learners using mobile phones to immediately "*fact check*" their teachers:

…Ja, that there's a power shift and they don't just naturally trust me or believe that I'm on their side or I'm there for them or whatever, but…it's the same as you had with that boy who challenges you with the statistics and that; I find that so odd. I can't say anything in class without someone taking out a phone and wanting to check my facts. So we were just talking about…I was using it as an example, I said, say a middle-class South African, like what would that person

earn? And I think I said, so maybe around 30…and I didn't check the stats or anything, I was just guessing. And within two seconds there were a whole bunch of boys going, actually ma'am, according to Standard Bank, whatever, whatever, whatever. And it's just that, it's that constant… undermining. That they will not take anything I say…and so yes it's good that they're checking resources…
Tracy. Focus Group 1.

Tracy: *But the default is not to trust…I don't know if trust is the word…but there is a difference in the way that they perceive themselves in terms of…and maybe it is their whiteness or their privilege or whatever it is that gives them that, but there is that…I don't know…*
Researcher: *That we have to earn this relationship.*
Focus Group 3.

I would argue that it is very difficult, if not impossible to develop meaningful relationships when there is a lack of trust in the classroom. Within this discourse we believe our learners do not trust us as experts and professionals, and we do not trust them as we view them as constantly looking to prove us wrong. Despite the fact that as I suggest in Chapter 2, none of us would want to be accused of pandering to and indulging the needs of the most privileged segment of society: wealthy, white, Christian, men (Thompson, 1999, and Mayo, 2004. In Curry-Stevens, 2010), we must reflect upon how this lack of trust, which flows both ways between us and our learners, negates the learning that could be happening in the classroom. We also need to consider whether or not being in battle-mode is a sustainable, healthy or productive version of self. I am prompted to wonder what fulfilling relationships we might be missing out on if we allow this discourse to supersede others.

The discourse further characterises the learners as entitled bearers of a false victimhood tied to white, male privilege, and this elicits very little empathy from the participants. Steyn (2018) examines this when she notes that one of the more recent defence mechanisms of white people in conversations about redress, is in positioning themselves as victims. Examples of this labelling in the discourse are:

When I asked if they felt there was racism in South Africa, what their thoughts are, a lot of the kids put up their hands, yes, there is racism. And I thought, yay, this is great, let's chat. And of course we know what they thought…it was black people are racist to us white folk, and it's very unfair. And this whole BEE, blah blah blah, is very racist.

Taylor. Focus Group 1.

> *It's funny that was exactly what I brought in for my text* (eggshells)*, was how to deal with this overwhelming sense that they have that they are victimised.*
> Taylor. Focus Group 2.

This discourse of **Lessons as War** within **Identity in Opposition to Whiteness** manifests in a similar way in my Researcher Journal. In the examples below, I refer to Critical Pedagogy within this context of privilege as being reduced to "*plotting*" and "*pontificating*":

> *As it is, the transformation process I am co-ordinating is all consuming. I'm in endless meetings, developing strategies, planning, plotting, and pontificating.*

I reduce the work of social justice teaching to a trail of bureaucracy, but also make references to lessons as warzones:

> *The conversations were confronting and at times adversarial. We were at war to protect our identities.*

Interestingly, I refer to the stakes of this "*war*" as being our very "*identities*". This speaks to my subjectivity as being vulnerable and fragmented in this teaching context, but it also signifies a myopic view of the significance of these lessons; I construct the territory under threat as our subjectivity, and not the transformation project.

As participants, however, we demonstrate that we are aware of these conflicting identity positions (as teacher and as foe). There is a degree of insight into the limitations of this positioning in the examples below:

> *But it's also, if I see these kids as privileged brats, is that not going to affect how effective I am with them? If I see management as the devil…*

> *I think they respect me, but I don't know that they're always comfortable with me. I think there is a sense of discomfort sometimes, and it takes some time for me to make them feel safe. And I think I can make them feel safe by giving them an opportunity to express themselves without sanction and criticism and judgement and things like that. So over time when they realise that they can be*

themselves ultimately. But I think every time I walk into a classroom I feel that there's a barrier.
Jennifer. Focus Group 2.

Of course not. But we are in a privileged environment and it does…we were speaking about that, 'these boys are not as needy'. We were making these sweeping generalisations. We can't pretend that those perceptions don't affect the relationship.
Tracy. Focus Group 2.

The same as when you come in hard with one of those discussions I think if there's trust and there's already an understanding, and there's already an established relationship where they like you, you like them, they know what your intentions are, then I think it's easier to have those conversations, and I just don't feel the opportunity here to have that. There seem to be so many more barriers in place.
Jennifer. Focus Group 1.

But don't you think then your response to them as white privilege and that level of disdain…maybe disdain is not the right word…but that your attitude towards them, don't you think that's impacting in a negative way in terms of that? Because I agree with you, I think that's fundamentally on many levels what we're all doing, is let's change the people who maybe have an impact on greater society. But surely if one is approaching it with a certain gaze that might not necessarily be a good thing?
Taylor. Focus Group 2.

Ironically, though, in an attempt to address the biases and blind-spots of the learners, when operating within this discourse the participants render the learners of colour invisible. This discourse assumes that the learners are white, privileged and resistant to learning about social justice issues.

Furthermore, in its ultimate goals striving for a more equal and just society by unsettling privilege, Pedagogy For The Privileged has as its premise the "*needs of the privileged learner*" which include "*to be treated as worthy of love and support*" and to be "*gently challenged*". (Curry-Stevens, 2010: 64). However, in positioning the learners and their parents as a homogenous type, associating them with uncomplicated and immoral direct access to power, and viewing them all in terms of their deficits and as foes, this discourse does not allow the speaker to see the learners as individuals, but only as the privileged-other. This discourse prevents authentic praxis as we cannot perform meaningful Pedagogy For The Privileged or Critical Pedagogy if we construct our

learners only in terms of their difference to us, and resist seeing them as complex individuals.

4.4.1.2 We are not our School

The school itself is also identified as a symbol of whiteness, in relation to which our identities are constructed as oppositional. In the extract below, Tracy makes a point of setting up our current elite school context as different to another less privileged school in which she taught:

> *If I think of my experience in (other school) and I totally understand what you're talking about, I think the shock of the classes in here, it is the affluence, the scale of affluence and privilege and behaviours that come with that, are without a doubt shocking.*
> Tracy. Focus Group 1.

There is a clear distinction made by the speaker between the "*shock*" of "*here*"- the "white suburban city" (Mbembe and Nutall, 2008:20) of an affluent, historically white school, and another school with less "*affluence*" and therefore by implication, less whiteness. It is also possible that in her comments, Tracy is positioning the other participants as more complicit in this whiteness than her, as we have become a part of the system to which she is still unaccustomed. The question prompted by her statement is whether or not we are still "*shocked*", or if the "*affluence*" has become normalized.

The impact of place upon identity is evident in a discourse which serves to separate the speaker from the defining features of "here". In repeatedly emphasising how "*shocked*" the speaker is by the "*affluence*" of this school, she extricates herself from the identity of the privileged-other, that she assumes might otherwise be imposed upon a teacher at this school. Thus, "*selfhood is performed in relation to these places*" (Kitching, 2011:170), even if in an act of resistance. Baxter's argument that "*competing or resistant discourses*" (Baxter, 2016:38) are possible within institutional hierarchies and systems of selfhood is also relevant, in that the speaker is signalling to the other participants her belonging to an oppositional discourse. This discourse therefore helps to establish a consensus amongst the participants that whilst we are insiders in the school due to being beneficiaries of whiteness, we are also bound to each other by our resistance to versions of a white-self that the institution establishes. Through our

relationships we create discourses which free-up spaces within the school to allow for new, comforting possibilities of being that align with our critically conscious selves.

In the extract above, Tracy also describes the transition to our school context as a "*shock*" in relation to the "*classes*" of learners, and the values and social positions that they represent. Again, the learners are represented not as individuals but as a collective noun of "*class*". As a class, they are associated with wealth in a negative way by associating "*affluence*" with "*shock*". Describing the "*scale of affluence*" and repeating the word "*affluence*" emphasises the financial backgrounds of the learners as their defining characteristic. The repetition of the word "*shock*" suggests horror and disbelief, both of which clearly position the speaker as *not* that.

A further example of the school as a symbol of all that we are not, despite the fact that we teach in it, is evident in Melissa's comment below. She uses the imagery of "*blows my mind*" to reiterate her shock that "*these conversations are going on*", where "*everyone's thinking isn't like this*". She is referring to conversations about social justice issues, and in particular, white privilege.

> *I must say this whole thing, just like, the fact that these conversations are going on like, it blows my mind, because I've never been in an environment where forced transformation has to happen, because it's always just been, this is how it is, it's diverse, and everyone's accepting and…so for me just to be exposed to that, like these are the realities…that everyone's thinking isn't like this. And now all of a sudden we're in the minority.*
> Melissa. Focus Group 1.

Melissa is drawing attention to the fact that the school itself is a site of the production and reproduction of whiteness, and this makes it different to the other schools where she has taught, which she finds surprising: "*all of a sudden*". Whilst locating us as outsiders to this elite institution, it also further positions us as a cohesive alliance, "*we're in the minority*". This language reminds us that we are united by how much our ideas (and therefore our identities) differ to those who represent the school. Again, the shock expressed confers a degree of moral authority and rightness on our shared position of being in opposition to whiteness.

In the extract below, Jennifer rationalises her decision ("*my answer to that*") to work in a teaching context which she repeatedly (like many of the other participants) locates herself in opposition to:

> *My answer to that is very specific. For all the reasons that, the privileged of the world are the ones who get to be the decision-makers and the policy-makers. These people will run our lives in the future. Their parents run our lives. Okay, these are the CEOs of* ***** (large corporation*), or this or that or the next thing. I've always thought to myself that if there was any way possible to thaw these privileged people's hearts and minds, and to get them to see that there's possibly another way of doing things, to have some empathy, to have some insight, some understanding. If they're in positions of tremendous influence, which they will be, that's why they're here, they are going to go on to very influential things a lot of them…wouldn't it be wonderful if there was an opportunity to just reach someone in a position of power who could influence something. Somewhere along the line something could change for the better.*
> Jennifer. Focus Group 2.

In her discussion about the power that the "*privileged of the world*" hold, it is clear that she positions herself outside of this power; she (and we) are not the "*privileged of the world*", and this exclusion is a desirable position. The learners and their parents are represented by this language as a form of proper noun defined by their wealth; the term creates a title or identity, as if they are members of a club or movement. "The Privileged of The World" has ironic or sarcastic echoes of Karl Marx's "*workers of the world*." (1848). In referencing (even if unintentionally) the Communist Manifesto (a text with which I know this participant is very familiar because we have spent a great deal of time talking about Marxism outside of this study), she is highlighting her disapproval of and cynicism about the values and ideologies to which the "*Privileged Of The World*" subscribe.

Furthermore, in this instance, power is understood as financial in relation to powerful corporate positions: "*the CEO of (*large corporation*)*". Rather than being impressed with these hypothetical corporate positions of power, there is a tone of disdain- the colocation of the job title and "*these people will run our lives*" establishes the type of person who would hold this title as undeservedly and disproportionately powerful. Language such as "*these people*", "*them*", "*they*", and "*their*" reinforces the notion that there are "sides"; those who have this power (the privileged learners and their parents), and those who do not (herself and the other participants). In this way, the privileged-

other is concretised. The privileged-other is described in terms of the power that they have to "*get to be decision-makers, policy-makers*", "*run our lives*", become "*the CEO*", and who hold "*position(s) of power*" in society, and not for the betterment of society.

These references to positions of power are distinctly negative, as they emphasise power and control over others, without any degree of responsibility, compassion, or social purpose. The privileged-other to which they refer, is a class of people who are constructed as soullessly acting upon the rest of society. The corollary of this, and by implication, the attributes associated with the speaker herself, are compassion, empathy, insight, and citizenship. The language that captures this clearly is: "*thaw these privileged people's hearts and minds*", "*to have some empathy, to have some insight, some understanding*". This language reinforces the binary between the speaker, and the other, and therefore between the speaker and whiteness. The "*privileged people*" are represented as having frozen hearts which the speaker could potentially "*thaw*'. These frozen hearts are cold, unfeeling, and their frozen minds are unenlightened. The phrase "*and to get them to see that there's possibly another way of doing things*" develops this binary further by making the speaker the one who holds the knowledge of "*another (**better**) way of doing things*". As Davies and Harre (In Baxter, 2016) suggest, subjectivity occurs in how we position the self in relation to the other. This discourse simultaneously positions the participants as alienated from forms of power, whilst at the same time is premised on the belief that as teachers, we have the power to disrupt socialization (Giroux, Shor) and in that way affect real change, in this instance, by changing hearts and minds. This approach to teaching to change hearts and minds is supported by Pedagogy For The Privileged, which argues that the teacher must acknowledge the links between the emotional and intellectual development of privileged learners.

In the following extract, the participants are again positioned as making conscious choices to push against a larger force. The metaphor of the "*conveyor belt*" of whiteness represents it as an inescapable force, moving us all in the direction of white supremacy:

> *So I feel like there's a giant sort of conveyor belt and we're all moving in one direction, and if you stand still you carry on moving. That the only way is to*

> *turn around and actively walk in the other direction. But if you don't, to stand still is to move along. That's how I feel about it.*
> Tracy. Focus Group 3.

The imagery is a valuable as it highlights the principle of Critical Pedagogy; those teachers who do nothing are choosing to support the status quo. (Freire, 2005)

There are distinct similarities and difference in how this discourse manifests in the transcribed conversations of the focus group sessions, and in my **Researcher Journal**. The most evident similarity is in the identifying of the particular school context as a place of privilege and whiteness:

> *This work might be less controversial in more politicised, less privileged context.*

The use of "*this work*" relates to an earlier line which made reference to social justice work and critical pedagogy. It is described as being "*controversial*" (by implication that it would be "less" in another context) which suggests that I believe that in this school environment, social justice work and critical pedagogy are seen as unusual, unnecessarily emotive, and possibly inflammatory.

By identifying the school as not "*politicised*" this discourse at first appears to reflect my criticism of the naïve consciousness of the oppressor class (Freire, 2007). However, the school is constructed as having a stasis of no politics and no controversy. In light of Critical Pedagogy, all school contexts are politicized, and all teaching is political, but the extract above implies that it is possible to have de-politicised spaces. This constructs me as having a naïve consciousness, in my belief that this is possible. Of course, it is only believed possible because it is a white space, and as per Whiteness Theory, whiteness maintains power by rendering itself an invisible and neutral state, as opposed to the highly politically-charged one that it is. (Steyn, 2001).

Extracts like those above, indicate that the speakers, like Curry-Stevens, Giroux, and Freire view schools as powerful sites of socialisation and in particular, as institutions that cloister and reproduce narratives of privilege and power. This discourse aligns closely with Pedagogy For the Privileged, in that it relies upon the speaker having acute awareness of how whiteness and privilege are protected and reproduced by those who

benefit from them; as beneficiaries, we cannot pretend that we do not benefit, but we can position ourselves as alert to these benefits. However, the discourse of **Identity in Opposition to Whiteness** frequently focuses this awareness upon the degree to which the privileged-other in the classroom benefits, thereby deflecting attention from our own privilege. Whilst Pedagogy For The Privileged centres the privilege of the learners as a pedagogical approach, I argue that we cannot do this work with our learners until we have done it ourselves, which perhaps requires more than an academic and intellectual understanding of the issues, and maybe a focused and purposeful interrogation of our own identities.

Alternatively, it could be argued that discourse does address one of the delineations of Critical Pedagogy within the context of privilege- when the school demographic (white, wealthy, male) could be defined as Freire's oppressive or dominant class (1998: 71), the critical educator must identify ways in which to ensure that they can believe that their work remains emancipatory and focused on social justice.

4.4.1.3 We Are Not Our Bosses

Similarly, the most significant child-node within **Identity in Opposition to Whiteness,** was **Whiteness Entrenched by Those in Power**. In **Whiteness Entrenched by Those in Power**, I examine some of the ways in which the participants make sense of their identities in relation to those in positions of institutional power. This shifts the focus from an identity in relation to the learners, parents, and teachers who represent whiteness, to those in positions of authority within the school, such as Heads of School and Deputy Heads,

Examples of the talk coded to **Whiteness Entrenched by Those in Power** are:

> *If it was the culture of the school to be transformative and inclusive, we would not be having this conversation.*
> Jennifer. Focus Group 1.

> *No, but that's not the first strategy, that's the 57th strategy, that's after having tried the, let's talk about it, let's have open discussions about it, let's have meetings, let me share what I know…*
> Researcher. Focus Group 1.

They've taken a decision about what they want at this institution.
Jennifer. Focus Group 2.

...keeping a paper trail of what's going on. Because one day there will be a reckoning.
Jennifer. Focus Group 2.

Waiting for Godot.
Reseacher. Focus Group 2.

It's a war between us and them.
Jennifer. Focus Group 2.

What is immediately apparent is that discourse creates a clear division between us (the critically conscious teachers) and "them". What begins as commentary on the environment/culture in general as too difficult to shift, soon turns to talk about "them" and "they" as those in positions of power who are stalling the process. The discourse places all the power to create or stall a transformation agenda in the hands of "them" ie those staff in management positions. The discourse of **Whiteness Entrenched by Those in Power** is undercut by a bitterness and frustration in response to what is expressed as a lack of personal agency; "*that's the 57th strategy*", "*they've taken a decision".* Participants feel disempowered to affect change. However, we are united and bolstered by their shared frustration.

This notion of whiteness as structural and as intentionally perpetuated by those in positions of power, is repeated. Amongst the participants there was a very clear sense that those in positions of institutional power have an agenda, a "*strategy*" which was at times viewed with suspicion verging on paranoia- a "*war*"- but at other times seen as comical and haphazard- like an absurdist theatre piece "*Waiting For Godot*". At other times the talk revealed a more practical approach- that "*their*" agenda needs to be met with equal strategizing and plotting. To a lesser degree, there is a fantasy that there will be a "*reckoning*" suggesting that those we see as obstructive, will be punished. This is the ultimate expression of positioning ourselves as **In Opposition to Whiteness**, in that we express a fantasy of the whole system imploding as a form of vindication. However, there is no sense that this system collapse should shake our own privileges.

Talking about those in management not "*allowing*" certain kinds of activism is a pattern which is reinforced by ways of speaking about transformation and social justice work as needing to begin with the use of the "*correct*" naming (ie calling "*racism by its name*").

> *But a lot of the conversation that's been coming back has been about, let's not have a racism policy, let's have an equality policy. Let's not talk about racism, let's just talk about the (*corporate identity*) family.*
> Researcher, Focus Group 2.

> *And it was raised in that very important meeting we're talking about with all these power structures and the board members and all this kind of stuff that, the word transformation is problematic; if we could just find another term for it so it wasn't so uncomfortable for everyone. It's kind of like putting people off to say transformation.*
> Jennifer. Focus Group 2.

Management is positioned as so powerful, and obstructive and unsupportive, that they are preventing this naming. What ideas, policies and processes are named is a critical indicator of power. Who has the power to name? The participants believe they have hegemonic power to name within their own spheres of influence, that they know the **correct** names for things, but that management are incorrectly naming, thereby stalling the social justice agenda. According to us, this is done intentionally, to avoid imbuing us with too much power.

The underlying belief is that those in positions of institutional power are invested in the status quo and have no desire to shift the culture, over which the participants believe, management holds ultimate hegemonic power. They are seen as having "*taken a decision*" to humour us. They are positioned as patronising of our very earnest work; "*they've entertained our little hobby*". This is said with much bitterness, as we struggle to find ways in which to believe that our work is meaningful and impactful, in a context of obstruction.

A further assumption underlying this of **Whiteness Entrenched by Those in Power** is that we can identify and measure the deeply held personal beliefs of individuals in management based upon the observed behaviours and perceived attitudes of those in power, towards us as individuals. Do they answer our emails? Do they give us freedom

to write policies? Do they attend meetings? Do they ask for our input? Do they agree to use the language of transformation as we would prefer it? If not, we reach the conclusion that "they" are intentionally stalling the process. The theme of a failure of trust is a repeated one, and an issue which puts in context our troubled emotional states in **Not Waving but Drowning.**

We also position ourselves as individuals with complex personal motives and histories, but 'management' are spoken of as a amorphous homogenous mass- what one of them says or does, is a reflection of all those in power, and all of those in power represent structural whiteness. They become another example of the privileged-other.

Tied to this is the sense of conspiracy; "*paranoid*", "*litigious*", "*escalation*", "*scrutiny*":

> *Now, after being here for a few months, I probably wouldn't have said that because I would be worried about the reaction and the response from the teachers. Absolutely the eggshell thing, I think we are working under a level of scrutiny like never before with…and I find this environment…I don't know what the word is…litigious, like everybody is so ready to escalate something and emails get fired off, and instead of people just talking, like one hundred emails and all sorts of stuff…*
> Tracy. Focus Group 2.

> *So how do we function as a politicised teacher who is woke and who needs to do the work that we're talking about in this paranoid litigious environment and the scrutiny and the escalation and the eggshells…that's exactly our point, how do we do our best in these conditions?*
> Researcher. Focus Group 1.

When utilising this discourse (**Whiteness Entrenched by Those in Power**) in my Researcher Journal, it is what I construct as a void of positionality of those in power that scares me. In the extracts below I reflect on an issue that arose when a (white) "woke" learner who publicly critiqued and shamed a white teacher for wearing braids, was disciplined. His parents took umbrage at him being reprimanded and launched what I perceived as an attack on my character and the work that I was doing. Their response was however not what concerned me. Rather it was questions that I had about how those in power would react that troubled me; would they support me? Or would I be disciplined?

There is no precedent in dealing with these issues. It will all depend on the personal beliefs of the Head of the school when it lands on his desk.

I'm not sleeping, I'm anxious. And it's because of the unknown. There is no clear issue here. No clear process or policy. And if the school values the boy and his family more than they value me, I'm in trouble.

Unlike the antagonism between 'management' and 'us' in the focus group sessions, in these extracts I fear what I perceive as a potential void of policy, of positionality, and of loyalty. When faced with such perceived antagonism as in the focus group sessions, or uncertainty as within the Researcher Journal, the discourse of **Identity in Opposition to Whiteness** frames our learners, their parents, and those in positions of power, as collective classes of the privileged-other. This enables us to see our fraught interactions with a group of powerful and influential raced other, as hard work in challenging the status quo.

Furthermore, as Freire predicted, for critically conscious white teachers, our awareness of whiteness as a system does not "necessarily lead to solidarity with the oppressed". (Freire, 2005: 49). Instead, we may be prone to focusing our efforts on constructing an identity purely in relation to what kind of white person **we** are, our identity always oriented in relation to whiteness, and not in relation to our connection and similarities with people of colour. This is the kind of personal revolution of which writers such as Tuck and Yang (2012) are critical of, one which rationalises interpersonal changes as opposed to complete revolution of the social order, which results in *"domesticating decolonisation".* (Tuck and Yang, 2012:3).

A discourse of our identities as being in **Opposition to Whiteness**, is predicated on an assumption that this is a choice that we have made; even if we believe that we could not be any other way, we are in fact choosing to see whiteness as a structural and cultural foe, a "*side*", a "*huge force*", which we view with distrust and disdain, and to which we often respond with frustration, indignation, anger, "*shock*", "*shame*", and "*embarrassment*". Furthermore, we believe that our efforts to make our school a safer, more just environment, are not always supported by those in power.

The discourse positions us as those who have the insight, who see a pattern and reality that others do not. We use imagery like "*conveyor belts*", "*blows my mind*", "*thaw those*

privileged hearts and minds", in order to "*get them to see*" the "*realities*" that we see, and "*redress the imbalances*". Taken together, the features of this discourse indicate that Curry-Stevens is right to warn us against the comfort we find in positioning ourselves as the "exceptional white" (2010: 66). I suggest that rather than being reassured by our identity in opposition to whiteness, we should recognise that whilst this positionality positions us as outsiders, it also provides the familiar comfort of an untroubled identity; one in which we do not have to reckon with the discomfort of leaving our hegemonic homes (Giroux, 2009: 2), because we can shrug off our own whiteness and complicity in the safety of knowing we are not one of *those* whites. We therefore need to have the courage to be critical of narratives which provide neat binaries of good whites vs bad whites.

What the other discourses do reveal as the analysis continues, however, is that the participants do indeed grapple with this in our journey to becoming *troubled allies*. (Curry-Stevens, 2010).

4.4.1.4 We are not our Colleagues of Colour

Significantly, when the same lens is applied by the teacher of colour, her comments do not imply the same degree of choice, or resulting belief in agency and empowerment. The white teachers in this study often spoke with power, conviction, and self-belief; the discourse positions white educators' insights as valuable, often right; morally, rationally and factually. In comparison, Melissa does not position herself as any of these things:

> *Ja. So a lot of times I have just let things go because I feel within myself I don't have the power or the authority to even…try to change minds or change perceptions. I'm just like, well, why are we going to listen to the brown woman standing in the class?*
> Melissa. Focus Group 3.

In this extract, Melissa also makes reference to the sense that she has no "*power*", however, she equates this with having no "*authority*". This differs from the use of the discourse when produced by the white teachers, as they make a clear distinction between having less access to economic power, and the moral and intellectual

"*authority*" to which they do have access. She explains that she "*let's things go*" which is language of exhaustion and defeat, as opposed to the responses of the white teachers when operating in opposition to whiteness which is predominantly language of action and resistance. In positioning herself as "*the brown wo*man", Melissa believes that the gaze of the class, one which represents whiteness, reduces her to her "*brownness*", and that in this gaze, she is diminished and discredited. However, she is exercising discursive power with us as she speaks in the focus group session, in her resistance to the alternative label of "black".

It is likely that there were between two and five learners of colour in the class, but all of the participants repeatedly view their classes as homogenous, which again reinforces the notion that the class represents whiteness and privilege, regardless of the demographics.

This is developed in the quotation below, where she refers to her being "*different*", the "*only one who looked like me*". Again, when the white teachers speak in terms of their identities in opposition to whiteness, this difference to the privileged-other is a point of pride and moral surety, whilst for Melissa in this example, it marks her as the other, which is disempowering. She recognises this by feeling "*on the back foot*", and therefore unsettled, unsure, and disadvantaged by who she feels the learners position her as.

> *Can I say for me one of the hardest things coming here was I've never been more aware of the fact that I'm different. I've never felt different when I used to stand in front of kids and I was just like whatever, we're all represented, everything is tra la la la. And then when I got here, A: I was the only woman, like you know, the only female in class, and then B: I was like the only one who looked like me. And then, so like what teacher was saying, it is often a lot easier for me to skirt around issues because being the person who's different, I feel I suppose afraid to a certain extent of going down that road because of the whole eggshell thing and you don't know what's going to come of it, and I suppose to a certain degree I do kind of feel on the back foot. Because I remember having a conversation with one of my family members and they were asking me, what's it like at the new school? And I was like I'm really struggling because I've never had to be in charge of white boys. And I genuinely…*
> Melissa. Focus Group 3.

This discourse puts the positioning power in the eyes of the class, she believes that she is shaped by their gaze, which is a pattern we see less when this discourse is expressed

by the white participants, who spend much of the discourse gazing upon their classes, positioning them. In Melissa's talk, she also positions us as white listeners, as complicit in this marginalisation, even if just for our inability to see her experiences as lenses through which our own whiteness is made clearer. The degree of agency and choice which white participants demonstrate is contrasted with Melissa's.

Furthermore, the response of the white participants to the "*racist viewpoints*" of their classes, is to firstly name them as "*racist*", which Melissa resists. Secondly, the white participants believe themselves to be empowered to take action, they are the subjects, acting upon the class which is the object; "*an opportunity to reach*", "*actively turn around and walk in the other direction*", "*then almost everything we give them should be on another side*". In these examples the participants are "*actively*" "*turning*", "*walking*", "*giving*", "*reaching*", whereas in Melissa's comments, she is the object, being acted upon by the subjects; the class. Positioning ourselves in opposition to whiteness is done on our terms, as we view whiteness and privilege with disdain. As insiders to whiteness, we have inherent power, as we have choices in the degree to which we take up the whiteness of our identity.

> *Melissa:* *I just…I suppose…and I've never really thought of it until I was in that position but I never thought that I had…you know, when we spoke about the idea of white male privilege, it was always this thing that was in the back of my mind because I'd never been directly exposed to it. So coming here, and I genuinely felt like on the back foot now, it was like how do I deal with this? How do I…because I suppose I had sort of built them up in my mind that they're rich and they're privileged and they have all of these things so automatically they must be better than me.*
> *Researcher:* *So you were intimidated by them?*
> *Melissa:* *I was, I was exceptionally intimidated…*
> Focus Group 3.

In the extract above, Melissa positions the learners as powerful, she finds it strange and complicated that she should "*be in charge of white boys*" and she feels her difference acutely. Her identity in relation to whiteness is not one of opposition, but one of disempowerment.

Significantly, this extract highlights the importance of understanding that despite our belief in our individuality, we are shaped by and reproduce discourses which impact us

differently, depending on our race and gender identities. As much as we believe we are resisting the hegemony, we have slipped into the roles which are available to us based upon the institutional hierarchies of identities (Kitching, 2011). This has made the inclusion of Melissa in this study invaluable as it is only through examining her positionality and discourses, that our own whiteness is brought into focus. I believe that that this indicates that in our journey to be effective critical pedagogues, we must examine the intersections of race and gender more effectively. An earnest and thorough investigation of different feminisims, especially African feminisms, would be a crucial step in this process:

> *African feminism is a feminist epistemology and a form of rhetoric that has provided arguments, which validate the experience of women of Africa and of African origin against a mainstream feminist discourse. It is a justice that aims to create a discernible difference between women who were colonised and those who were deemed the colonisers, and a social movement that aims to raise a global consciousness which sympathises with African women's histories, present realities and future expectations.* (Goredema, 2010)

As white women, we need to commit to being alert to the intersections of identity, especially the ways in which our whiteness protects us from structural pressures, and especially when it renders our own privileges invisible.

This further demonstrates the power of Whiteness Studies in insisting we move the lens from the private and personal, to the structural and social; "shifting from the self to the system" (Richard Milner IV, 2007). Despite all of the participants teaching the same classes, in the same school, and despite the suggestion that we share the same identities constructed in opposition to whiteness, this means very different things depending on the race identity of the participant. The whiteness of the white participants does provide an inoculation against any racial othering that the participant of colour expresses. This analysis gives us insight into how whiteness is perpetuated, even if unintentionally, by all beneficiaries of the system, even if it is by us feeling we have agency and individuality, when a person of colour believes they themselves do not.

This is a crucial reminder that white teachers need to temper our righteous indignation with some critical self-examination of why/how we may be centering our own

frustrations and as a result, failing to support colleagues who have our same convictions, but who believe they are erased by a system of whiteness, which does not erase the inherent self-belief of white teachers, no matter our politics. Curry-Stevens' notion of humility (2010) is key here. The participants' positionalities within this discourse are mostly untroubled, and it is only when we examine the implications of teaching **In Opposition to Whiteness** for a person of colour, that we understand how untroubled.

4.4.1.5 We are not the Centre

Another node within **Identity in Opposition to Whiteness** is **Pushing from the Margins.** When utilizing this discourse, we construct ourselves as in the minority by virtue of our shared worldview, and a belief that we therefore have no direct access to the structural power hierarchy. Whilst many of the discourses above are predominantly disempowering, the notion of pushing from the margins was tinged with a romantic sense of "*underground*" struggle:

> *You see, this is what I'm saying about we are coming from a position of total marginalisation, total underground.*
> Jennifer. Focus Group 1.

It is a version of our identities that we all accept because it gives us legitimacy and a different kind of power; not institutional power, but a sort of street-cred. This is further developed when I examine the Researcher Journal within this discourse. The imagery of pushing from the margins aligns us with those who are marginalised within this environment; people of colour who are in the minority and who do not appear to have the option to opt-out of social justice issues. This lends our identities a degree of credibility. Again, it is who we are **not**, rather than who we **are**, that we find our subjectivity; we are **not** the centre, we are **not** the mainstream. We position ourselves as those who can see things that others cannot:

This is further developed in the examination of the discourse **Woke Credentials**. It also connects to the instances when participants strongly disagreed on whether or not we could ever advance through the power hierarchy, and still do the work that we do. For some, in order to be authentic, we would need to remain outside of the centre, but for

others, we could be strategic and use our career advancement to advance the cause. The differences here related to how adversarial the participants were towards management.

Much of the data coded to this discourse within the Researcher Journal locates me as "*counter culture*" as opposed to being defined by not being a *bad white*:

> *I think I enjoy being a bit counter-culture- but in a cowardly way. I don't think I really am ready to risk my job*.

"*Counter culture*" being a position I "*enjoy*" establishes my positionality as a choice, and whilst I continue to claim it is fraught, the language in this discourse imbues this positionality with a kind of romance- that of the rebel with a cause. In the extract below, I use the term "*anti-establishment*" which serves the same function. Both descriptors have connotations of sub-culture, a kind of *coolness* that comes with being associated with a trendy youth movement. In constructing my opposition to whiteness in this way, I reveal a version of identity in which a desire to be seen as *cool*, obscures my positioning as concerned with social justice.

However, the word "*coward*" above resonates with the use of the word "*shame*" in the focus group conversations- it suggests a fear of our proximity to whiteness rendering us complicit. This conflicting positionality in relation to being both a beneficiary of, and critic of whiteness, is developed in sections of the journal where I add to the list of self deprecating synonyms with "*naïve", "narcissistic", "stupid":*

> *Perhaps I am naïve, narcissistic, stupid, for trying to buck the system that keeps me comfortably middle class.*

Furthermore, in my description of being in opposition to whiteness as "*bucking the system*", this language minimises the significance and potential impact of the work. It positions the subject as stubborn and possibly contrary, one "*bucks the system*" because one is difficult, an obstinate rule-breaker. This discourse positions me as rebellious as opposed to a political strategist. It also diminishes the motivations of the subject; there is no great cause or noble purpose when one, like a difficult horse, "*bucks the system*".

What concerns me here, is that as Curry-Stevens (2010) warns, this act of self-deprecation becomes solipsistic, very much a bourgeois inward-looking exercise. Of course, the purpose of a Researcher Journal is to encourage and record the researcher's introspection, but listing synonyms like "*naïve", "narcissistic", "stupid"*, and "*selfish*" for my conflict verges on becoming an exercise in "*settler moves to innocence*" (Malwhinney, 1998, in Tuck and Yang, 2012) and functions to comfort the subject as it locates me as a good white or "*exceptional white*" (Curry-Stevens, 2010: 66).

In the extract below, the use of the word "*colludes*" draws attention to what this discourse establishes as the enemy; "*whiteness and power structures*".

> *I'm afraid of being seen to collude with whiteness and power structures. I think my identity relies on being seen as anti-establishment, but paradoxically, with access to power.*

In this quote, I use the word "*collude*" to indicate how much my own positioning relies upon how those learners whom I perceive as politically conscious, see me. I do not identify them, but "*being seen to collude*" implies an audience watching me and judging my actions.

I speak about being in opposition to whiteness in terms of how I believe this shapes how the learners see me. I use the term "*ally*" frequently, which establishes my positioning as having credibility and purpose, particularly as the word itself is an example of social justice jargon, the use of which Tuck and Yang (2012) critique as an act of *"dressing up in the language of decolonisation"* (2012:3). Most importantly, it suggests that my positionality is potentially endorsed by my learners. Again, this positionality risks verging into a private revolution (Tuck and Yang, 2012) which is about my own subjective credibility, rather than significant and meaningful identification with leaners of colour. On the surface, I grapple with how to be both pushing against the structures of power in terms of whiteness, whilst at the same time needing to believe that gives me automatic credibility with the learners to whom this would matter- in particular, the learners of colour. This appears to be an example of Mallwhinney's "*settler moves to innocence*" (1998, in Tuck and Yang, 2012: 4) in which I attempt to reconcile my "*guilt and complicity*". (Tuck and Yang, 2012: 4)

The corollary of this positioning is, however, a discourse which again places our sense of self and our locus of power in the perceptions of others. In the instance of **the Perceptions of Others as Disempowering**, the talk develops into a kind of mythology about our reputations. There is a sense that who we are, is not something that happens within ourselves, but something that happens out there; that our identities are constructed by others, in the conversations that we believe they are having about us. This discourse revealed the participants' anxieties about this, our fears that it shapes our relationships in the staffroom for the worse and impedes the work we do in the classroom. This discourse means that we believe we have to anticipate this by controlling what we say and to whom. This is exhausting and disempowering, and reinforces the construction of the other as homogenous, unknowable, and potentially dangerous to our identities:

> *So you're saying you're censoring yourself.*
>
> *I feel like they think of me as an outsider. I think every time I walk into a classroom I feel like I've got to really work hard to earn their trust and respect. I think I walk into the classroom and I think that they see a confrontational woman.*

Overall, the identity position of being **in Opposition to Whiteness** suggests that our identities in this context are frequently constructed as a negative- by what we are *not*, as opposed to what we *are*. This is significant in that it is necessarily an oppositional identity; we cannot be the critical educators that we believe we can and must be, unless we are in opposition to a system of whiteness, but also, crucially, that we do not see ourselves as automatically a part of that same system. If we are not *those* kinds of *white people,* then what are we? This discourse leaves a void of identity, as well as serving to obviate our whiteness, because, whilst we may not see ourselves as part of *that* system, whiteness does nevertheless endow us with privileges and powers to which we are accustomed, and cannot see. (Curry-Stevens, 2010).

4.4.2 The Binary of Social Activism

The second parent-node to be examined is **The Binary of Social Activism- Authentically Critically Conscious or Performance?**

In order to understand the nature of these contradictory positionalities, I further dissect this discourse into: Teaching as Political, Critical Literacy as Embedded in the Curriculum, This is Urgent Work, Identity as Performance, Activism Tourism, and Empathy and Compassion. I examine each of these child-nodes as they were all frequently coded.

4.4.2.1 Teaching as a Political Act

Beginning with **Teaching as a Political Act**, I explore the research question: t**o what extent do critically conscious, privileged, English teachers, teaching in an elite schooling context, find themselves having to negotiate the contradictory positions within which they find themselves?** The starting point in addressing this question must be to determine the specific ways in which the participants understand being "critically conscious" English teachers. The most important premise here is the notion that all teaching is a political act. There is of course a lot of crossover between this and the child-node: **Critical Literacy is Imbedded in the Curriculum**, and so I examine them together. The only real distinction is in the emphasis upon English teaching in particular in the latter.

As I had selected participants who claimed to believe that teaching English is a political act, I was not surprised to discover talk which supported this belief; that took it as a given that critical literacy is embedded in the work that English teachers do. Our talk within this discourse demonstrates an awareness of Freire's insistence that teachers approach their work in a flexible way in order to be constantly searching for ways in which to ensure that it is liberatory (Freire, 2007).

In the first extract below, the participant indicates that being a critical pedagogue requires specialised "*transformation training*", as she acknowledges that "*every single interaction*" is political in nature:

> *I think that what is so important, and this is why the transformation training should have started so long ago and needs to be on-going, is that every single engagement brings with it unconscious biases and perceptions and attitudes.*
> Jennifer. Focus Group 2.

In referring to politics as inherent and frequently invisible "*unconscious*", this discourse positions the teacher as an expert, one who has special insights into an undercurrent of "*biases and perceptions and attitudes*".

In the following extract, the teacher constructs critical pedagogy as inextricably bound to her identity as teacher. When she refers to "*these conversations*" she is referring to conversations with staff and learners about identity and power, especially in relation to injustices.

> *Saying these things, having these conversations is easy for me. It's trying to not have them that's difficult for me.*
> Tracy. Focus Group 1.

By describing "*not having these conversations*" as "*difficult*" she is drawing attention to how she understands her role as a critically conscious English teacher; as a constituent part of who she is rather than a descriptor of a job she does. It is like she would be denying a part of who she is if she stopped "*having these conversations*". Having these conversations is "*easy*" as it comes naturally, in other words it fits with her sense of self. In both of these examples, being an English teacher is positioned as necessarily a political identity. In my Researcher Journal, I echo these sentiments when I state:

> *It has become impossible to separate out the personal from the political.*

In the example below, the participant uses the language of critical pedagogy:

> *It is a political act and it's a social act. And so I think, for example, it would be interesting to know, you've mentioned the BEE thing in Business, what would a black teacher teach around affirmative action, BEE, black empowerment, all those kinds of issues? Do we know? Have we asked who compiles the*

> *curriculum content? Who wrote the textbook? I suppose it speaks to the whole notion of decolonising education, the curriculum has to be examined very carefully to see where the biases and prejudices are.*
> Jennifer. Focus Group 2.

Teaching is referred to as a "*political*" and a "*social*" act. The speaker refers to "BEE" (Black Economic Empowerment) and affirmative action in relation to the Business (Business Studies) curriculum. These are political concepts that go beyond subject content. They are socio-economic issues that are at the heart of the transformation of South Africa from an apartheid state to a modern democracy. They are also controversial topics in our classrooms, especially in a predominantly white space in which the discourse often presents white men as the victims of an unfairly biased attempt at redress.

By drawing attention to this content as important, the speaker is indicating a hypothetical intention, were she a Business Studies teacher, to be "*rigorous and committed to the practice of freedom….addressing crucial social issues.*" (Giroux, 2015: 1) even if in doing so, there would be discomfort and perhaps a combative atmosphere in class. Comments like these and the one that follows, also reinforced the participants' belief that education should be a "*pedagogy of disruption*" (Giroux, 2015: 1):

> *I'll be honest, I make no apology in my teaching practice for going to some very difficult and tough places.*
> Jennifer. Focus Group 2.

The references to socio-economic policies of redress above, as well as reference to "*decolonising education*" locate the educational debate within a context of transition, as all of these concepts inherently imply a shifting society. The use of transformative jargon also positions the educators as more than technicians, but as worldly. The speaker in this example clearly sees the wider social and historical context of the classroom as one of flux, (Freire 2007, 2005, Giroux, 2010, Richard Milner IV, 2007) as teaching to the ways in which to enact redress, are priorities. However, this language potentially dresses the speaker in the costume of transformation. (Tuck and Yang, 2012)

In another example of the discourse, the speaker uses language which positions her as a writer- someone who can shape the world around her by the stories that she chooses to tell in her classroom:

> *And this also represents as a teacher my ability to correct things that are happening in the classroom and to rewrite a new future, or rewrite a narrative.*
> Jennifer. Focus Group 2.

She refers to "*rewrite*(ing)" a "*new future*" and a "*narrative*". Like Freire (1983, 2005, 2010), and Shor (1999), this discourse views stories as the medium for change: "*the ability of humans to plan and shape the world for their future needs that separates us from animals*." (Freire, 1998:94.) The use of "*stories*" to refer to teaching appears in other data coded to this discourse. The addition of "*re*" to writing suggest that there is already a different, stronger story out there, which she needs to "*re*"configure in order to shift the status quo. The example of the discourse indicates a belief that the versions of the world that we tell in our classrooms, have a very real impact upon the material "*future*" of our society. The use of the word "*correct*" positions the "*things*" that the teacher can address in the classroom, as currently being "incorrect". Again, this discourse positions teaching as a political act that can either support the status quo in a comfortable way (for white people), or can challenge it (the "*correct*" thing to do).

In another reference to classroom talk as stories, the comment below identifies the "*narratives*" as being either "*white*" and in the majority "*80-90%*", or by implication, "black" and marginalised:

> *I was finding with that, and some of these conversations that we were having, particularly last year about the protests, was considering the demographic, which is 80% white boys, and some of the classes 90%, you would only be hearing one narrative.*
> Researcher. Focus Group 1.

The nature of the political work being done by this teacher, is in finding ways to redress the imbalance of voices. Critical pedagogy here is seen as needing to be about quietening the voices of some learners, those that represent the very dominant status quo, in order to give space to the marginalised to speak. We never discover what the silent minority says, but the implication of the discourse is that it would be more socially aware and informed. This brings to mind Freire who makes it clear that in

"*trying to escape conflict, we preserve the status quo."* (1998:45), in that we appear to believe that doing the work of a critically conscious English teacher, requires us to seek conflict and discomfort. Yet, we cannot ignore the silence of the "other 10%".

Furthermore, the implications of the list of questions that follow the speaker's opening comments in Jennifer's comments above, reveals her concern that these issues are not being dealt with adequately by the Business Studies teachers. She lists concerns about "*who compiles the curriculum content?"* and *"Who wrote the textbook?".* There is a degree of suspicion about the motives of those teachers (who are not "*black*") who are seen as Giroux's *"mere technicians, clerks of the empire, or mere adjuncts of the corporation.*" (2010:6). In another example, a failure to be a critical pedagogue is represented as being a menial task: *there's no such thing as delivering content. This is not…you don't…like a pizza takeaway, you don't deliver content, you interpret.* (Taylor, Focus Group 2*).* (Taylor said that she was paraphrasing Professor Jansen here.) Education without political insight and critical intent is likened to a "*pizza takeaway*", with the connotations that this is an unthinking junk-food kind of teaching. This discourse constructs critical pedagogy as sophisticated, complex, and superior, and the critical pedagogue as therefore more sophisticated, nuanced, and superior.

Overall, the discourse centres the importance of the sophistication of the teacher's knowledge of socio-economic theory and practice. In this way, the discourse constructs the speaker as having the insight and sophistication that the hypothetical Business Studies teacher does not. The discourse positions the naïve consciousness of Freire's "*dominant class*" (1998:71); the pizza-takeaway-teachers, as being problematic and oppressive. Again, being critically literate and motivated by the political nature of teaching, is positioned as necessary and right.

In the extract below, the participant expresses relief at having her approach to teaching legitimized by the IEB (the Independent Examination Board) when external examinations (CAT- Controlled Assessment Task) require understanding of the social justice issues around race and gender. The commentary positions the teacher as well-informed and skilled, and also as taking a morally correct position as her teaching makes them "*good citizens of the country".*

> *And there is a sense of empowerment or vindication when you see the IEB is setting the CAT on gender issues, the CAT on race issues, the transactional writing. That we are preparing them well in terms of being good citizens of the country, but also in terms of what the IEB is looking for in their exam.*
> Jennifer. Focus Group 2.

The use of the word "*vindication*" suggests the great pleasure taken in this victory; in being proven to be correct, especially by the auspicious Independent Examination Board.

In an example of this discourse from the Researcher Journal, I reflect on the curriculum as inherently critical, and the conflicts that arise as a result of positioning myself as an expert in the classroom, but as a problematized white ally outside of academic lessons:

> *But the fact that I am also their English teacher complicates things further. In that context, we discuss literature in terms of politics and critical race theory, I am in a position of more knowledge and authority. I must teach them about Said's orientalism, post-colonial theory etc, and yet when we interact in the 'woking up' space, perhaps I should be on the back foot. I need to be different things to different boys, based on their race. That is so reductionist.*

The "*woking up space*" refers to a conversation group that I facilitate for learners who want to share and discuss social justice issues. Unlike the general school cohort, the majority of boys in this space are boys of colour. In listing "*Said's orientalism, post-colonial theory" and "critical race theory"* I construct myself as a well-informed expert. The addition of "*must*" indicates that this is an inherent part of my work and therefore my identity. The choice of the word "*authority*" denotes the power that comes with this knowledge. The use of this academic jargon is a form of in-talk, which locates me on what I believe to be the correct side of the pedagogical divide, far away from 'pizza-takeaway-teaching'.

In this extract, I grapple with the notion that the differing demographics and contexts of my interactions with learners, shape how much "*authority*" and "*knowledge*" I can have. I suggest that when doing critical work with boys of colour, I should be "*on the back foot*" and in so doing, allow them more power and authority in defining social justice issues. Interestingly, in this extract and in other instances in the data, my own race is erased, and I only view my learners in terms of their race-identities. This is a conflicted positionality, which addresses my research question. A partial answer to the

research question is therefore, that the degree to which we feel conflicted is to a large extent determined by the demographics of the learners we teach. This is examined in each of the nodes.

Critical Pedagogy explicitly requires teachers to produce active, critically conscious citizens, who can contribute to efforts to make our society more equal and just. Based upon instances of this discourse- this appears to be an aim to which the participants connect, despite this work being fraught and producing discomfort. It is a positionality in which we feel intellectually prepared, but as examined later, in which we feel emotional fatigue and strain. This discourse is also connected to the discourse **the Public Intellectual** discussed later, in that there is a degree of intellectual and moral elitism inherent to the positionality of critically conscious English teacher. Overall, this discourse allows me to better understand a question I posed in Chapter 2- how does a teacher operating within the critical pedagogy framework, adapt and operationalize their aims and role when teaching in a privileged context and when they themselves identify as privileged?

4.4.2.2 This is Urgent Work.

Understanding that all of teaching represents a political choice could be "*empowering*", but it can also lead to a conflict of identity in which the participants feel paralysed. This is amplified by discourses which construct this work as not just necessary, but as urgent, hence the node **This is Urgent Work**.

In the example of this discourse which follows, the participant captures the intensity of feeling associated with how urgent the work is. Her choice of diction is emotive and positions the consequences of critical pedagogy well done, as significant:

> *I find that is the biggest responsibility, being a white teacher in a privileged white school with our baggage, our history and white guilt. I feel that it would be an utter…it would be treason to just let it go as if it didn't exist. To me that's treason. I have an absolute duty to do my level best to engage on these critical issues for the betterment of all of us….but what I'm saying is that what informs a lot of what I'm doing, or at least what I'm thinking about, or what I'm intending to do, is a sense of a duty, of responsibility, of moral obligation, of just wanting to be so much a part of a society that can be reconstructed. Rather than just…it would be so easy to just ignore it.*

Jennifer. Focus Group 3.

Freire and Critical Pedagogy theorists insist upon a recognition of the critical pedagogue that liberation will only be gained by a "*quest"* for it*, through "the recognition of the necessity to fight for it*" (2005: 45). The words "quest" and "fight" indicate that this work is important and that we are engaged in an 'epic' journey or even 'battle'. This imagery was developed prior within the node **Lessons as War**, but I refer to it here as it locates the work as intense and urgent. Similarly, in an example of this discourse from the Researcher Journal, I describe critical pedagogy as a "*lone crusade*"

In the extract above, Jennifer refers to the status quo of whiteness as "*baggage*" "*history*" and "*white guilt*". The negative connotations and weight of responsibility are conferred by diction such as this. The ultimate goal of education is described as "*duty*", "*responsibility*", "*moral obligation*" to "*reconstruct society*". The speaker has created a binary between the negative weight of whiteness, and the liberatory possibilities of critical pedagogy. With stakes this high, this work is certainly urgent.
The language positions the work as a battle for our souls and for the future of society, perhaps hyperbolically, but it reveals an earnest commitment to consciously address an unjust status quo. The use of the word "*treason"* constructs the opting-out of this work by a white educator "*ignoring it*", as an act of violence against the state and its citizens. This further creates a sense of urgency. This supports the mandate of Pedagogy of the Privileged in that the work done by white educators with white learners is necessary and good in order for them all to "*unlearn privilege and dominance*" (Curry-Stevens, 2010: 62).

In an example of the discourse from my Researcher Journal, I detail an incident in which the complexities of critical pedagogy were brought to bear on another teacher and her well-being. In the extract below, a theoretical conversation that I had with the learners about cultural appropriation, was used to launch a personal attack on a white female teacher who had chosen to braid her hair. The urgency here is in correcting the real negative impact that these conversations had on her, and my fear that my efforts at critical pedagogy had caused harm:

> *Unfortunately this morning things took an even uglier turn. The silence on 'Woking up' was broken first thing this morning by a white matric boy posting*

> *the teacher's name and a link back to my comments about cultural appropriation; taking them out of context and ignoring my cautioning. In the meantime, the teacher told me, her first lesson had degenerated into a personal attack on her and her hair by a handful of boys in the class who attempted to explain to her why her braided hair was 'humiliating to black women', 'culturally appropriation' and actually 'racist'. She was extremely shaken when she found me after the lesson.*

This is an interesting extract, because the harm being done by the personal and inflammatory nature of the learners' attacks resulted in me centering the needs of a white woman. The learners had taken critical debates about the politics of hair and had imposed them in an uncritical way upon a real person in their environment. I describe the incident as "*ugly*" which suggests that is was vulgar and unpleasant. I choose to identify the instigator as a "*white boy*" which provides me with some comfort as I would experience it as a less comfortable positionality were I to take up opposition to a learner of colour in an incident centred around cultural appropriation.

This dilemma ties in with concerns identified in other examples from my Researcher Journal above; that my authority and sense of correctness often feels contingent upon the race of the learner with whom I am interacting. This instability is perhaps a manifestation of Giroux's homelessness (2009); being a critical pedagogue requires that we cannot settle comfortably into a hegemonic home, we have to be "border-crossers" (Giroux, 2009: 1). In this extract I refuse to settle comfortably into the hegemonic home of uncritical pizza-takeaway-teaching, and so I engage in discussions critical of whiteness through an examination of cultural appropriation. However, neither can I settle into the home of critical pedagogue, as the theoretical debate I initiated is having very real, negative, and unjust consequences upon the life of a colleague. At the same time, I cannot settle into the comfortable home of being an ally of "woke" learners, because when they are white, and they are treating people around them in a way that impedes others' dignity, I feel I must speak out. The implication of this is that I would find it difficult to know how to resolve the conflict of speaking out against the learner, had he been a learner of colour. Within this one incident, I am forced to constantly move across borders, and the result is discomfort as I have no hegemonic home. Therefore, the nature of being a critical pedagogue, in a context of privilege, is in accepting a constant sense of dislocation; "*living in the contradictions, complexities and ambiguities"* (Curry-Stevens, 2010, p 70).

This homelessness is further developed when we grapple with how authentic or inauthentic our critical praxis may be, or may be perceived by others, within the discourses **Identity as Performance**, and **Activism Tourism**, within **the Binary of Social Activism.**

4.4.2.3 Identity as Performance & Activism Tourism.

In continuing to establish **the extent to which we find ourselves in contradictory identity positions**, as per the research question, I examine the discourses, **Identity as Performative**, and **Activism Tourism**.

In the discourses **Identity as Performative**, and **Activism Tourism** patterns emerged which construct the participants' subjectification as externalized. When using this discourse we believe that others' assessments of our motives shape our own sense of self: "*…Ja, is this what activism looks like?" (Tracy. Focus Group 1)* "*And I mean, you know, there's this slackitivism…".(*Jennifer. Focus Group 2). The disparaging "slacktivism" echoes the critiques of Whiteness Studies and Pedagogy For The Privileged in that the social justice work we do may really just be 'Activism Tourism', something we can dip in and out of, an identity we can visit or 'perform', without needing to give up anything. (Kitching, 2011, Curry-Stevens, 2010). When operating within the discourse, we appear to be agreeing with Curry-Stevens when she states: *"I cannot be trusted to assess whether this is a reinscription of dominance, or political savvy."* (2010:65).

This is a self-critical discourse, but one within which participants search for ways to believe that we are 'good whites' or "exceptional whites" (Curry-Stevens, 2010: 66). This construction of the "good white" is examined in detail above under the node **Identity in Opposition To Whiteness**. In the example below, I reflect on how low I believe the bar is set for white teachers to be seen as socially conscious:

> *So it got me thinking about, how much hard work do I actually have to do? Or am I lucky that I can just opt out when it's too difficult. And, you know, this looked like too much hard work, I can still come across as really informed about*

> *history, I can still say I have a signed copy of Long Walk to Freedom, but when it came to the real hard work of reading it, I had that option to just opt out.*
>
> *…and I was going to bring that in to also show the kind of…how easy it is, as a white person, to just do these little things, and then get so much credit, and actually I did nothing.*

There is a power in our introspection, in that we attempt to take back control of whether or not we are seen as authentic. This introspection is a necessary part of the teacher wishing to deliver Pedagogy for the Privileged. (Curry-Stevens, 2010, Kitching, 2011). However, there is also a locating of power 'out there' in the hands of a faceless, nameless entity which can and will judge their work and by extension, their integrity and very identities, as authentic or not. If we believe that those who judge us are the communities who most need redress, then these doubts are a necessary function of Pedagogy of The Privileged, in that we must believe we are accountable to these communities of our work is going to be anything more than a "*liberal dalliance*" (McWhinney, 2005. In Curry-Stevens, 2010: 62). So, whilst on the one hand this externalizing of power may seem like an act of defeat, it may also be an example of the ways in which we attempt to express our desire to be judged and found to be authentic, by the communities who are marginalised.

In an example of this discourse in the Researcher Journal, I describe this credibility as "*precarious*":

> *I feel like things are so precarious, and trust is so hard earned, that one wrong move, and I'd be seen as just another white person.*

Being seen as "*just another white person*" is constructed as being the worst possible outcome, which suggests that my identity is very much bound-up in the "*trust*" that has been "*hard-earned*". Significantly, even within the rest of the journal entry, I do not make mention of exactly whom would be judging me, assessing my "*one wrong move*", and finding me lacking. It is the same amorphous "they" that haunts the other instances of this discourse throughout the data.

Within this discourse, therefore, our subjectivity is in flux- who we believe we are happens in the moments between our attempts to position ourselves, and the moments

in which we are being positioned by others. (Andreouli, 2010). As explained by Hall, identity is *"the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past."* (1994, in Steyn, 2001: 23). The narrative of the past that is significant here, is the past of apartheid, in which we believe, most white people were "*just another white person*"; someone who upheld or even overtly fought to maintain a violently racist status quo. Being reduced to being seen as "just another white person, is therefore anathema to us. We demonstrate agency in the acknowledging of this conflict, and in choosing particular stories to tell about ourselves, that demonstrate this insight. (Davies and Harre in Baxter, 2016)

In the following extract the participant admits that she doubted if she could be *"that person"* in this elite schooling context. She implies that "*that person*" is seen as being authentically invested in challenging whiteness, when she shares how relieved she is that a learner had expressed his approval of her in an SMS to another participant:

> *….you sent me an SMS that helped…do you remember when I first arrived and I was teaching Americanah, and I think it was...(leaner name) one of the boys sent you a message, whatever, that helped, because I was having a bit of a wobble. And you sent a message saying this is what this boy forwarded me and he said we had an awesome conversation about race and everything, and I was thinking, okay, I can still be that person.*
> Tracy. Focus Group 1.

The teacher expresses a slippage of subjectivity, which she describes as *"having a bit of a wobble".* In the context of the rest of the conversation, she was commenting on her move from a less privileged school to the current, affluent school. The "wobble" references her doubt about what 'kind of person' she is, if she now teaches in such a privileged context. Another participant reinforces this concern when she identifies how easy it would be to abandon critical pedagogy in this teaching context:

> *I'm a white teacher in an all-white class, I wouldn't have to do anything.*
> Tracy. Focus Group 3.

The notion of "doing anything" in order to be a certain kind of person, is understood to be an example of "performative acts" (Butler, 1990: 33. In Baxter 2016: 40). Within this discourse, the participants attempt to identify what acts to perform that will position them as the critical pedagogues they wish to believe they are. The participant above

refers to this performative identity as a "*social justice uniform*" that she has to consciously choose to "wear" to work, as she works in a school which operates so successfully to reproduce whiteness.

This discourse further emphasises how much the participants' identities are bound up in where and whom they teach. As suggested by Dixon and Durrheim (2000), Nutall (2008), and Kitching (2011), the specific context in which this research takes place establishes "hierarchized identities" (Kitching, 2011: 170). As participants, we believe that our sense of self is contingent upon our teaching context, and each version of self exists on a hierarchy of moral to immoral. To some degree, we are having to do more emotional and psychological work in this "white suburban city" (Mbembe and Nutall (2008: 20), in order to feel like we are who we believe we are.

In the following example, the participant reflects upon an instance in which she felt the performance element of her identity was reflected back to her as a "*PR exercise*" and an "*empty gesture*". This caused her to question why she had initiated a protest, and what this meant about who she was:

> *Why were boys protesting…why take the photograph? And some of them felt…I had to kind of challenge myself on this…some of them felt that it was just a PR exercise. That it was an empty gesture. That, who were we going to reach with this? Is it not more about how we see ourselves instead of actually trying to make a difference? If it is activism, does it mean to cost? Is it meaningful?*
> Tracy. Focus Group 3.

The conclusion she appears to be heading towards is that perhaps "*activism*" needs to "*cost to be meaningful*". The use of the word "*martyr"* in the extract below, as in other instances it occurs in the data, is ironic and self-deprecating, but the discourse reveals that the participants believe that there is power in being seen as authentic, and that having to pay a price or suffer, allows one to feel that others see them as authentic:

> *So it's our destiny then to be martyrs. I mean, is that what we're saying? In this environment, like we're going to be fighting the man.*
> Researcher. Focus Group 2.

There is a repeated notion that in order for the work to be real, it must cost us something. The assumption appears to be that if it is easy, then it isn't worthwhile, it is activism

tourism. We express fears that as activism tourists or "slacktivists", we may be opting-out, an option that our whiteness affords us.

4.4.2.4 Empathy and Compassion.

In examining discourses around our **Empathy and Compassion** it becomes clear that we believe we are conflicted about our relationships with our learners, because of who our learners are; mostly white, privileged and all male. (I kept this discourse in mind when I looked at the child-node **Lessons as War**, within **Identity in Opposition to Whiteness**).

Whilst we grapple with how we define our teacher-learner relationships, we are also grappling with the extent to which we feel empathy or compassion for our learners as individuals. This is a significant node in that it addresses the premise of Pedagogy for the Privileged- that we need to be able to simultaneously challenge and subvert the privilege of our learners, whilst recognising and profoundly caring for their humanity (Curry-Stevens, 2010). This, the discourse reveals, is easier said than done.

In seeking to define the nature of the relationships we have with our learners, there is a debate about how we should refer to them:

Jennifer: *I don't see them as my kids.*
Taylor: *I do.*
Jennifer: *I don't love them as my kids.*
Tracy: *I call them my kids, if I'm talking to (partner's name), I'll say, my kids…when talking about them.*
Rebecca: *But not because I'm a mother. I mean, I wouldn't think of that as motherly.*
Jennifer: *It's just a relationship.*
Taylor: *It's care.*
Focus Group 4.

To begin with, the very nature of teacher-learner relationships is concentrated on the use of two words "*my kids*". For Taylor, this is an uncomplicated term of endearment, but for others it suggests an intimacy and sense of ownership that they resist. The discourse problematizes the implication that "*my kids*" implied that we should be

"motherly". Interestingly, Rebecca is the only one in this exchange who actually is a mother, and she takes steps to disassociate her use of "*my kids*" from this positioning.

I do not believe that this is a dilemma of positioning that male teachers would be having- being seen as maternal, or the fear of being reduced to our 'maternal instincts' is perhaps a conflict that women teachers grapple with. The comfort or discomfort with seeing our learners as our children is tied to a version of ourselves with which we are comfortable. Those who accept their positioning as a 'mother' or even 'carer', responded to the maternal connotations positively, those who resist a subjectivity revolving around their gender and the stereotypes associated with being a woman, strongly resisted this kind of naming:

> *You were saying that you feel your power because…I don't know, they're like your children, you love them and perhaps because you're older so you have that relationship and that gives you some distance and power. Is that sort of what you meant?.....So the thing is that I…maybe I'm resisting ever locating my power in a gender role, like a maternal role, or in a… anything whatsoever that could be linked back to my gender…if I've ever tried to gain in power, it has been an intellectual power that I tried…*
> Jennifer. Focus Group 4.

This discourse reveals the extent to which gender identities play a role in how we understand ourselves, especially in the context of monastic education. This is not the focus of my study, but it is a strongly contested and intensely felt issue of contention, and one which warrants serious examination in future research, especially in terms of the intersectionality of race and gender.

The emphasis on this "intellectual power" is examined in **the Public Intellectual** to come.

In contrast to the consensus that this relationship must have a degree of "*care*", in other moments of talk we find representations of teacher-learner relationships as too fraught to produce a context of "care". For Tracy, this centres around how different her current learners are to her previous, underprivileged learners at another school, with whom she says she felt immediate rapport and empathy. She characterises her relationships with her learners as having "*distance*" and she acknowledges that this distance is the consequence of her assessment of the learners as privileged:

> *And I think I might have had a little epiphany while you were speaking... in that the distance might be coming from me because I guess when you care so much about a group of boys who are disadvantaged…like I watch that and my heart breaks for them, that just walking out their door is a challenge, or whatever, my heart breaks for that, and I think I'm sounding a little bit like Baba in Kite Runner, but I think because I feel guilty for the disadvantaged, I'm resentful of the privileged.*
> Tracy. Focus Group 1.

Again, this puts into focus the paradox of Pedagogy For The Privileged in that whilst we must continuously recognise and value the humanity of everyone in the classroom in a pedagogy of love (Allan and Rossatto, 2009, bell hooks, 1994, Curry-Stevens, 2010), we continue to fear that we may be centering the needs of the most hegemonically and materially powerful demographic in society; white men. In this regard, Whiteness Studies de-centres the emotional needs of the privileged in a way that Pedagogy For The Privileged overtly resists, and for some teachers, this is a more important praxis; "*The singular coherent white and male, heterosexual, and elite narrative no longer survives with comfort and security within any of our fields."* (Weis, Powell Pruitt, Burns, 2004: viii) However, I would argue that the cost of this is heavy if paid in our own lack of true connection with our learners.

Another important analysis of this extract is the absence of the participant's acknowledgement that she is also white, and therefore, privileged. This silence is clearer when we compare contributions by Melissa, a teacher of colour, coded to this discourse. Her comments reveal an acute awareness of the difference between her identity and that of her learners, limiting the degree of empathy she believes she can experience for them.

> *Because I've never felt out of place in the environment before, and it's always been easy for me to talk about situations like this because there's a level of empathy. Whereas now I struggle because I don't…I can't empathise with their situation, so I don't…I often don't know how to tackle things without it being…sounding like I have a chip on my shoulder or like you…without the boys feeling like I'm trying to victimise them. Because they do have this thing about, ja, you know, people of colour are racist towards us…so this is tricky to navigate.*
> Melissa. Focus Group 1.

Melissa uses the word "*struggle'* to characterise her connection or lack thereof. This implies that she feels she has to actively make an effort to connect, and this is a consequence of her feeling "*out of place*". She experiences the whiteness of the school as denying her individuality, and to a degree, forcing her to deny the individuality of her learners. Whiteness operates by racing only the 'other' (Steyn, 2001), and whilst the white participants believe they are alert to this, they frequently only succeed in recognising the race (and race-privilege) of their learners as problematic. The paradox of this positioning in which we externalise our own race-privilege is manifest in our "*resentment*" or distaste for the learners.

Furthermore, at times we actively look for ways to make sense of the disconnect, or look for alternative ways to create the connections.

> *I found that those are the two avenues that I can connect with kids; either completely intellectually, like I just love engaging intellectually, completely cerebrally. And then those other kids that are so broken and have had such horrors in their lives and I feel I can empathise and we can go to those dark places and I'm a very safe place for them to go there. Those are my two avenues of power. As for the rest, I reject maternalism and that kind of stuff, and I reject any other way of connecting with them, because I don't ever want to be a stereotype of anything. And I don't know if that's a problem or a solution.*
> Jennifer. Focus Group 4.

As in the extract above, relationships with learners are sometimes seen characterised by a struggle for power; "*Those are my two avenues of power*". This was examined in the node **Lessons as War**. The resistance towards our learners that we reveal in this discourse, is rooted in rejection or even disgust of the amount of power we believe our leaners wield in society. As they are mostly privileged white males, we see all the many unearned advantages we believe they have, and it is this injustice that we believe they are rejecting, when we speak about rejecting our learners.

However, there are moments, as examined above, when the rejection of privilege does result in a rejection of a person. Allen and Rossatto (2009) ground this in theory as they also identify the possibility that privileged learners are seen as representatives of the oppressor group. As in this research, they posit that teachers locate the responsibility for this disconnect with their learners, firmly in their learners' privilege. In this way, a degree of discomfort can be avoided by rationalising this disconnect.

The emotional consequences of this are examined in more detail in the node **Not Waving but Drowning,** which follows.

However, this was not a totally consistent discourse, and there are instances when we vehemently resisted the implications of this emotional disconnect and resist a construction in which our learners **are** their privilege:

> *I don't think it's my job as an educator to decide which kid is more in need of my input. The child will decide, by whatever, my impact in his life. And some it may be very small because he does have a picturesque, perfect, lovely little privileged life, but others beyond those walls are severely screwed up, right?*
> Taylor. Focus Group 1.

> *I suppose when you are in a more privileged position, it's almost like people can trivialise things that you go through because it's not as obvious. And I think perhaps to a certain extent I have been a little guilty of that, you know, come on, what do you know in your little cushy world, what do you know about real problems? That's not the case. Because a lot of them do, they have real…*
> Melissa. Focus Group 1.

> *No, no, no, but now this is the distinction I want to make. I may have said an individual was a brat, but for me I don't conflate privilege and brats. For me those are two separate things, and so talking about privilege is about, as we know, is about power, is about the ease with which you move through society, it is not…and this is the problem the boys have, is that they conflate privilege with some kind of judgment of the quality of their character. And so I don't. So when I'm talking about the fact that these boys are privileged, I'm bearing in mind that they're coming from a very particular angle with a certain perspective, probably with very limited alternative input, but I'm not making any judgement on the quality of their character or how much kindness they deserve from me.*
> Researcher. Focus Group 1.

Empathy and compassion are also constructed as contingent upon voice. As educators we must reflect upon who is allowed to speak and who is silenced. Again, this is an issue of power, as the teacher is typically the individual who decides who speaks, and about what. In the extract below the participant acknowledges that in seeking to empower marginalized voices, we have to silence others.

> *So if you kept it a completely democratic classroom, you would be just reinforcing and feeding into what they were hearing at home. So then I was kind of caught, well, now I have to be completely undemocratic and say, well,*

> *actually we've heard enough of that voice and that narrative, now let's you be quiet, and that's like a difficult balance, as you say, because then people feel...*
> Taylor. Focus Group 2.

In conclusion, this discourse crystallises an important answer to my research question. If, in seeking to navigate conflicting identity positions, we allow the possibility of a rich and authentic relationship with our learners, no matter their demographic, to became collateral damage, then we will be unable to meaningful perform Pedagogy For The Privileged, which, like Critical Pedagogy, centres an empathetic relationship between teacher and learner. In this regard, Whiteness Studies provides an invaluable theoretical paradigm, but a less useful praxis. In other words, there needs to be an acknowledgement that the status quo is flawed and unjust, even oppressive, but we should not punish the learner for this by withholding or resisting positive mutual regard. As participants, we are troubled by and alert to this issue, as the following extracts demonstrate:

> *Hopefully over time all the boys feel that they've got a voice and I recognise their humanity, and a lot of my teaching is about pointing out when we do dehumanising and all of that. But I think just surface...when walking into the class, I think there are boys in the class who immediately feel I'm approachable, and that they have access to something that they might not in somebody else's class.*
> Jennifer. Focus Group 2.

> *So I'm saying, if this is perhaps…am I acknowledging, this is your area of need that needs to find a voice, but what is your area of need where you sit silently in my class, or you make too much noise in my class, or whatever? So how do I apply that awareness, the increased awareness of who I am and how I relate to my boys, specifically to the individuals, all of them.*
> Rebecca. Focus Group 4.

> *The first thing I do when I get home is send her photos of the really special, beautiful thank-you letters that I have received from learners through the years. I do not have an antagonistic relationship with them. When I think about the work with the learners, I feel optimistic and motivated by the sincere relationships we have in the classroom*.
> Researcher Journal.

4.4.3 Not Waving but Drowning

The complexities of positioning outlined above need to be understood in relation to the intense feelings of isolation, erasure, frustration and vulnerability that the participants spoke of all through the study. Instances of these troubled emotions were coded to **Not Waving but Drowning**.

In **Not Waving but Drowning**, the negative emotional states which frame our positionality were (in order of frequency of child-nodes); Vulnerability and Defensiveness, Righteous Anger, Emotional Exhaustion, Learned Helplessness, Feeling Shame for Being a Coward or Sell-out, Fear of a Loss of Control, and Hurt at Another's Rejection of our own Values. The node, Avoiding Discomfort, was present to a lesser degree, which suggests that the participants do not believe that they avoid conflict as a coping mechanism.

As established prior, being a critically conscious English teacher is seen as a fraught and complex identity; one which the participants view as defining feature of who they are and how others see them. Kitching (2009) provides the invaluable concept of emotional labour- the discomfort and distress caused by the work done in seeking to resolve a clash between who participants see themselves as, and who they believe others see them as. The nature of this emotional labour shapes our identity.

The discourses in **Not Waving but Drowning** position the participants as disempowered, particularly in terms of the "risks" they may face in doing this work. They identify the nature of these risks as how others see them, as well as the risks in getting this work wrong and the possible "fallout", "pushback", or "backlash":

> *...provides me with a lot of fear, excitement, anticipation, pressure I think as well, because we're asked to handle certain things that we're not fully trained about, and ja…like we're not fully in the know. And I think I do my best but I wonder if sometimes I miss the mark or come out with something that's not appropriate, or whatever, in trying to navigate that. So for me it's quite a daunting thing.*
> Taylor. Focus Group 1.

At what risk to our identity…I mean, we're seeing the backlash with the grade 11s that if you want to address these issues of power and you want to name feminism by its name, that there's an incredible pushback and a backlash.
Jennifer. Focus Group 2.

And I've been that person before at other schools, I've been that person here, that you get the backlash. I can tell you the difference here is I'm nervous about what the parents are going to say.
Tracy. Focus Group 2.

It's hard work and it's stressful and it does come at a cost to your anxiety levels, to your relationships sometimes with the boys, to relationships with other staff, that we do get into…
Researcher. Focus Group 1.

Again, there is a positioning of the participants in relation to a threat, a collective of 'them', be they the "*Grade 11s*", "*the parents*", or "*other staff*". These groups represent whiteness, and its drive to reproduce itself. This discourse also allows us to acknowledge the weight of responsibility of critical pedagogy, done right, but also if we make mistakes. The lessons are described as bleeding into the world beyond the classroom "*they take all that with them*", which is of course the ultimate aim of Critical Pedagogy; to change society beyond the walls of the classroom. However, this is constructed as a further risk:

I fear I may have opened a Pandora's box.
Researcher Journal.

At this point in the conversation my heart dropped…. Oh god, what had I started?! I frantically re-ran the group conversation I had had about hair to recall if I had said anything inflammatory or inciting others to call her out.
Researcher Journal.

I'm saying is that you have an enormous sense of responsibility that your lesson doesn't end when the kids walk out. They take all of that with them, outside, into conversations with other kids and with their parents and with the community at large. So you as the adult in the classroom, has to accept full responsibility for all the stuff that gets put out there.
Jennifer. Focus Group 1.

So this kind of teaching is so much about what's happening intellectually and emotionally. It's like pretty full on, you know. I think that's why English teachers

are so uniquely placed, but also find it so fraught and stressful because all of these kinds of lessons have got such a toll intellectually and emotionally…
Researcher. Focus Group 1.

So it would be great if there was some kind of training as to how do we go about this in like a healthy or an inclusive way.
Melissa. Focus Group 1.

What is clear is that when operating within this discourse, the participants feel lost and alone in the work that we do. We fear the loss of control of the content once it goes into "*the community at large*". In response to this, we explicitly ask for more support and training in order to regain our agency within our own classrooms. This loss of agency is frequently described using imagery of drowning: "*I feel a little bit like I'm drowning a bit."* (Researcher Journal).

I'm not sure why, but I never believed that these debates could move into such a personal sphere. Perhaps I am out of my depth here.
Researcher Journal.

Compounding the belief in a loss of agency, is the shame that some participants feel in relation to us believing we have "*sold out*" by choosing to teach in such a privileged environment. The discourse reveals a construction of a teacher-identity as needing purpose, and that that purpose is related to how much the learners do or don't have in terms of privilege. This was key in understanding how the participants made sense of the work they were doing- that their identity did in fact shift in relation to the context in which they were teaching and the demographic of the learners in their classrooms. This clearly intersects with the nodes examined above:

Tracy: *I'm struggling with the fact that I need to change the way I see myself. You were saying you were worried that people would look at that and think that you're sort of inauthentic. People absolutely see me as being inauthentic, and so do I.*
Researcher: *…So are you saying that you're a sell-out? To go to a private affluent school?*
Tracy: *Yes.*
Focus Group 3.

The participants' use of this discourse suggests that, whilst we feel burdened with the emotional toll of this work, this would be bearable if we felt that our work had purpose;

if we believed that we were making significant improvements in the lives of those around us, or that we were shifting the culture of the school for the better.

However, much of the talk reveals that we do not feel that we have (or are allowed) this opportunity to improve things, and this makes the anxieties, pressures, risks and threats seem untenable. Without a sense of agency, our surety in our identities slips, our place and purpose becomes unclear, and being unhomed in this way may ultimately force us to look for a change in environment. The discourse is therefore a lament; as participants we feel we have no clear sense of self, because the environment contradicts a version of ourselves from which we get meaning and purpose.

This becomes a form of anomie, a state of "*hopelessness*";

> *I feel like they think of me as an outsider. I think every time I walk into a classroom I feel like I've got to really work hard to earn their trust and respect.*
> Jennifer. Focus Group 2.

> *This is an exhausting and confusing space to be in.*
> Researcher Journal.

I would therefore argue, that seeing oneself as oppositional (**In Opposition to Whiteness**), whilst it seems a negative identity, is actually a functional way of regaining a sense of self and a sense of agency. Whilst it reduces others to the villains, it allows us to believe that we are heroes. If we know who/what we are fighting, we can go to work every day with a sense of purpose. We can reframe the hopelessness and exhaustion. In seeking to address my research question, therefore, part of the answer to the question **how do we negotiate contradicting positions**, must be prefaced by an understanding of the emotional labour and difficulties that shape and necessitate the strategies that we use.

Together with this self-doubt and hopelessness, is righteous anger. I understand this to be anger rooted in a strong sense that we are facing an injustice or form of inequality. We are angry that our expertise is overlooked:

> *…I mean, come on, are they not capable of…what am I dealing with…with idiots? I mean, now, come on!*
> Jennifer. Focus Group 2.

And indignant! Why should I have to roll over and erase myself?!
Researcher Journal.

or angry about the inequalities and injustices that we see represented by the privileged learners in our classes:

...who will never get that, and this boy is going to get it. And I mean, there's only so many places at university. I do, I feel resentful, I want to go, that's not fair!
Tracy. Focus Group 3.

I mean, you were saying there was a lesson with your grade 9s, where you were shaking, you were so cross…I think it was you?
Researcher. Focus Group 4.

This journal is beginning with fire and flames; anger, fear and frustration.
Researcher Journal.

This is also where intersections of gender were revealed:

You see, I think it's a standing joke that we are the feminazis, right? I'm getting sick and tired of it…
Jennifer. Focus group 2.

Together with the anger, I recognise a defensiveness about our relationships in the classroom. The discourse moves from one in which learners are antagonistic and frustrating, to one in which we find it important to position ourselves as having good relationships with our learners:

So like when we talk about seeing them as privileged brats, I take great offence to that, I've never ever looked at a class and thought, oh, they're a bunch of privileged brats, and I've never spoken about them in that way.
Researcher. Focus Group 2.

I really have to point this out, I just want to say, I invite anyone to come into a class and do an observation. If the perception is adversarial, shitting on, whatever, angry, fighting, whatever, that is not what happens in my classroom.
Jennifer. Focus Group 2.

So there is no adversarial conversations in my classroom and I could quite confidently say, you can ask any of the boys in my class, even the ones I've had the most heated debates about white privilege… and I might be completely ignorant and naïve here but I have good relationships with my boys and the

feedback that I get from them is thank you for challenging me on this, we have these conversations…
Researcher. Focus Group 2.

I have to say…and I don't know if any of you would like to come and sit in my English lesson but I do not stand there and shit them out for an hour daily…
Jennifer. Focus Group 2.

This discourse directly contradicts the discourse **Lessons as War**, and so it is clear that we believe our relationships with our learners can be two, very different things at the same time.

This study makes it clear that without the support of our peers, and without a conscious effort to develop our skills in managing these conversations in the classroom, critically conscious teachers will either suffer from burnout, or, perhaps more tragically, disconnect from the social justice agenda. As a function of our white privilege, this is a survival-strategy that is available to us, and it is not available to teachers of colour. When seen in the context of **Lesson as War**, and the difficulties in seeing our classroom relationships as built upon mutual respect and trust, the choice to opt-out, starts to become a reality.

The hegemony here is that it is a **possibility** to disconnect- that the participants, as white teachers, are opting-in, and so we can choose to opt-out. This is examined in more detail under the discourse, **The Binary of Social Activism- Authentically Critically Conscious or Performance.** However, what is clear here is that if teachers do opt-out, regardless of a legitimate Whiteness Studies critique of this as a demonstration of white privilege, there will be fewer and fewer white teachers, in privileged contexts, doing this crucial work. We see comments indicating this below:

I was going to say, that kind of discussion dissuades me from going there. Because it makes me so despondent and you think what is the point? Like…I mean, is it possible to change those minds? Because that's essentially what I would want to do.
Kim. Focus Group 3.

This kind of reaction can make you so despondent and it does dissuade you from wanting to go to all the places that you know you should be going, as a citizen, as an educator, for the benefit of some of the texts to be more original, nuanced.

And very often I find myself taking the cowardly easy route and just either prescribing text that are not confrontational or uncomfortable at all, so that it's just easier to teach without the drama and the consequences. And so I find myself maybe prescribing texts that I shouldn't be prescribing, or just skirting around issues in a very superficial way so that there's no confrontation and I don't have to be uncomfortable and they don't have position to challenge me. And I don't have to feel this constant uphill battle of trying to connect or change minds or whatever.
Jennifer. Focus Group 3.

And so I stopped teaching it [*Master Harold and the Boys*, by Athol Fugard] *for about three years* [until a year prior to the focus group]*, I just refused to go there. Because emotionally I would feel just so down and disheartened and like this like loss of hope that would depress me for a while, so I stopped teaching it…*
Tracy. Focus Group 3.

Because it's been…I mean, it's soul destroying. It's so frustrating. And because I'm personally…I can only speak for myself here, but because I'm so personally invested in it, there is no way for me to respond to resistance with anything other than emotion.
Researcher. Focus Group 2.

But my frustration is, it feels ineffective. Like I don't feel like we're getting anywhere. No, we're not getting anywhere.
Tracy. Focus Group 2.

Rebecca: *You know, I do feel helpless? Because to be honest, I've never been in a situation where I've had to have those conversations. I haven't. I have led the most sheltered and protected life you can possibly imagine. All my life. It doesn't mean to say that there haven't been issues that I've dealt with, we all have human issues. But I sometimes feel helpless in the face of being who I am and so desperately wanting to understand…. But no, it's not exciting. It's horrible.*
Researcher: *So you do feel a weight of the burden of that?*
Rebecca: *Hugely. And I do and I feel the helplessness.*
Focus Group 4.

There are just those days you can't go. I've also experienced the hurt or the frustration or the disappointment. And if you can't go to a difficult place on a day and you're not ready for it, you're not in the right frame of mind to be rational, to be strong, to frame it properly, to keep control, I don't think that you should go there. Because I think the damage would be very difficult to undo if you couldn't handle it properly.
Jennifer. Focus Group 4.

But if you get caught in that moment of being frustrated with the injustice we're going to be paralyzed. Do you know what I mean?
But then we're paralyzed anyway!
Tracy. Focus Group 2.

But when I think about where we are with some of the other adults in the school, I feel wrung-out. I want to throw in the towel.
Researcher Journal.

4.4.4 The Public Intellectual

In contrast to the versions of identity constructed as negatives or voids, **the Public Intellectual** is a positive identity that the participants share. It is characterised by the idea that our subject knowledge, tertiary qualifications, knowledge of current affairs, and knowledge about social justice issues is recognised and valued by others; and is therefore a subjectivity that we embrace. It is an identity driven by in-group discourses, which, like the other discourses that separate us from the other, is contingent upon how different we are, but in this instance, in a way which is not problematic or fraught. Therefore, as discourse and subject positions are always relational (Baxter, 2016), this discourse provides insight into how we address the negative-identity of other discourses, with the construction of a positive corollary

Ownership of the Transformation Narrative is the most frequently coded child-node of **the Public Intellectual,** followed by **Having the Language Equals Power**, and **the Secret Handshake of Woke Credentials**

To begin with, much of this discourse operates as in-group activity. The participants utilise their shared understandings of social justice issues and their experience in critical pedagogy praxis, to separate themselves from other types of teachers:

And I feel that I'm informed enough about these issues to be able to go there with conviction. That I could hold my ground, I could justify my position and I could prove it with evidence. So I make no apology for that.
Jennifer. Focus Group 1.

There is a clear hierarchy, there is a clear authority. And while everyone has an opportunity to be free, in that there is no tyranny, I never subscribe to the

philosophy that everyone's opinion is of equal value. It isn't. And that's the premise I'm working from.
Jennifer. Focus Group 1.

However, unlike their difference leading to a negative emotional response, this discourse frames their exclusivity as a positive. Their relationships with each other are supportive, the shorthand that 'having the language' allows, not only empowers them as experts, but creates a bond of common purpose.

The in-group activity makes **the Public Intellectual** an aspirational discourse, one which reinforces a positive self-image, and significantly, one which the participants believe is reinforced (or created) by others in their teaching environment. In the example of the discourse below, participants speak of having confidence, of feeling secure, of feeling in control and empowered, due to their knowledge, and to the fact that the language of transformation has become part of the school's discourse.

Researcher: *This is the whole department.*
Yes, exactly, and I think that that is something very empowering and…
It's fascinating.
Because none of us are sort of alone trying desperately to get someone to see the light. We're not fighting that, we are completely on the same page. It's very unusual. It is unusual. Because I promise you…
We don't have to convince each other.

However, the whiteness of the participants is erased as source of power in this discourse because we insist that that it is not **who** we are, but **what** we know, that gives us access to power. And it is not just any kind of knowledge, it is knowledge that is current, in touch with social justice politics, and so to some extent, has credibility or cool 'street-cred'. This leads me to a note of caution; Whiteness Studies insists that no white person, no matter their intentions or indeed intellect, is immune to unconsciously subscribing to white supremacy (Curry-Stevens, 2010). In this instance, ignoring the role that our whiteness plays in lending us a confidence in our authority is a way of maintaining the status quo by rendering whiteness an invisible centre. I recall Curry-Stevens insistence that white educators and researchers are not to be trusted in assessing our own whiteness or lack thereof, and that as a result we temper our confidence with humility.

In the example of the discourse below, there is a humorous representation of the teacher as a prophet. Jennifer refers to her learners as her "*flock*", which would make her Jesus. The group laughs when Taylor says "*let's unpack that*" as they are aware of the irony of the statement, but nonetheless, the imagery does denote a power of insight and wisdom for the teacher. Perhaps this discourse does encourage a sort of cult of personality; when using it we construct ourselves as unique and special, due to the unique and special information that we have. Being a Public Intellectual is not a burden, unlike in other discourses, it a source of power. Whilst on the surface the participants indicate that this power is not about who they are but what they know, the in-group work done by a shared language and woke credentials, means that those who hold the power in this context have an elusive 'x factor'.

Jennifer: *I see them as my flock, maybe. (laughter)*
Tracy: *That's interesting.*
Taylor: *Let's unpack that. (laughter)*
Jennifer: *They can be my flock.*
Focus Group 4.

This is tied to talk which establishes **Woke Credentials** as well as talk which locates the **Ownership of the Transformation Narrative** in the positionality of **the Public Intellectual**. There is a sense that we have earned the right to see ourselves as experts in these issues. We view these 'earned credentials' as due to our histories of being outspoken, our involvement in politics online, our reputations as social activists, or our personal decisions such as where and with whom we live. Through our talk, we construct a version of ourselves as part of a broader social justice movement. This succeeds in positioning us as having authentic purpose, as well as cementing our in-group relationships. It also positions us as 'not that kind of white person', a positioning which has been established as fundamental to our identities.

...all my posters (in her classroom) *I suppose would be screaming my politics, and I've got a poster that says Black Lives Matter.*
Tracy. Focus Group 4.

...So the boys did identify...we hadn't yet gotten to the point of identity politics ...but they did itemize things like, intelligent, well-prepared, well-informed, organised...they had all these positive characteristics about someone who was

> *professional, informed, always well-prepared, and content knowledge, and all this kind of thing.*
> Jennifer. Focus Group 4.

The positive payoff of putting our politics 'out there' is such that we accept the negatives of the prior discourses that come with having such a politicised, public identity. Despite this, we push against any notion that we are suffering as intellectual martyrs.

> *I'm going to say something that is going to be incredibly unpopular. So we're talking about how difficult this is; this is not difficult, this is easy, this is a cop out after our…you name it…so for me the conversation, we're sitting in the richest mile in whatever…this is…if I'm a martyr by what? Coming in and getting my little sandwiches at break and having a parent send me an email, if that's martyrdom for I don't know what cause, then that's not much to ask.*
> Tracy Focus. Group 4.

> *I totally take your point. We're certainly not on the front run of any great struggle, we're not in solitary confinement or anything like that.*
> Jennifer. Focus Group 4.

This discourse is not called The Intellectual, it is The **Public** Intellectual. The use of the word public indicates that this discourse is contingent upon the participants' belief that others recognise and value their academic authority. Whilst at times this may be alienating or intimidating, the participants reflect upon this, whilst accepting this a positive reinforcement of an identity they enjoy.

> *Like the two, and then I'd say like oh my word they're just so smart and they just like know everything about everything, and I genuinely always felt like inadequate and whatever, so I just feel like perhaps other people like share those sentiments, and I'm not saying that that reflects badly on you guys, I think they also need to do some introspection and be like, maybe you also need to check yourself.*
> Melissa. Focus Group 1.

A fundamental assumption within this discourse is that the classroom, whilst being safe, should also at times be uncomfortable. The participants reflect upon the role that discomfort plays in their pedagogy. They conclude that it is necessary and beneficial. In terms of power, discomfort unsettles the power balance. It becomes unclear where the conversation will go, and a teacher is to some extent relinquishing control of the

lesson. However, it could be argued that a pedagogy of discomfort is a way to entrench the power of the teacher, if they do not go to places where they themselves feel discomfort. The learners are therefore unsettled, and as the only one with an overview, the teacher holds more power.

However, as argued in Chapter 2, this approach may produce a tension with notions of a democratic classroom. The speaker goes on to suggest the following:

> *Should there not be a body that is appointed to just scope the curriculum and see if they can find any problematics (sic), or does that then lead to a whole new…I don't know…a whole new tyranny.*
> Jennifer. Focus Group 1.

And in related comments:

> *You see, that's exactly the issue that I was grappling with, which is that, if we're saying that teaching is a political act, and we're also saying that we want to make sure that we're all teaching the same focus, then we're taking a political position and we're saying, this is the correct content, this is the correct delivery. And even though I very, very firmly do believe that it is, that's still a very particular narrow political position to take.*
> Researcher. Focus group 1.

> *So it's so hard to find a balance between going in hard and saying, this is the story, or kind of trying to manipulate that sort of outcome. And then what does that say about us as educators, that we're trying to sort of manipulate and coerce a particular view of the world?*
> Researcher. Focus Group 1.

This discourse appears to shed light on possible reasons why the participants struggle to make peace with their particular teaching context; for them, teaching is inextricably bound with social justice work. They cannot conceive of ways to teach that do not involve them tackling issues of identity such as race.

What does, however, need to be examined, is the role that being white in an institution that values and normalises whiteness, affords the participants the privilege of believing their knowledge and expertise is not just valued, but correct. There are assumptions cutting through this discourse, about what constitutes truth and who gets to decide on what knowledge is valuable or true. Power is framed as the power to know the truth, a pattern that is replicated in prior discourses.

Unlike in prior discourses, **the Public Intellectual** places the power to judge us and therefore shape our positioning, not in the resistant white learners in the class, or in 'management', but in the opinions and attitudes of the learners of colour, and the critically conscious learners. Power within this discourse, comes from being seen as a public intellectual, as relevant, informed and politically conscious, by these learners. In the extract below, they are referred to as the "woke boys".

> *Researcher:* *So that question of legitimacy is so important, and I wonder the extent to which any of us kind of grapple with that? Do you feel like you need to prove, particularly to the black boys…*
> *Tracy:* *Ja, the liberal credentials (laughs).*
> Focus Group 4.

> *But it's an interesting example that you brought up, because it must have been around the same time that our matrics were having the same conversation. But where you had a lot of woke boys in your class, I had one of them in my class. One and only in my matric class, and he raised the same issue about racism. And he was in a class of predominantly white, and I could see that he was on the verge of being annihilated. So it was my job, first of all to understand what he was talking about, and fully, fully understood the issue about whether or not black people can be racist, etc., etc. So I was able to handle any backlash, frame it, scaffold it, and allow him the opportunity to explain to the rest of the class what he was getting at, and what he meant. And that he had some support in the adult who was guiding the whole process. So that everyone got heard and understood. But ultimately what I think at the time was a very legitimate opinion, prevailed……But I wonder, if I had not been fully appraised of the complexity of this particular discussion, what would have become of this class discussion and that boy? What would have become of that situation? He would have been outnumbered completely. If I didn't know what I was talking about, if I wasn't fully informed, and I was quite ignorant on the matter…I wonder what would have happened?*
> Jennifer. Focus Group 3.

This discourse creates a different kind of mythology of the "woke teacher" as being a hero. This is partly by virtue of the fact that the demographics in some classes are very unrepresentative, but it also allows us to shape our purpose. If this teacher "*hadn't been there*" or "*hadn't known what she had*", then, she argues, this boy would have been silenced. This is the kind of purpose that all of the participants have indicated that they long for. However, it does reduce the black learner to a victim, it assumes that he would have been "*annihilated*", an assumption which is potentially another form of silencing.

Upon reflection, it would seem that we spend a great deal of time reflecting on, navigating, even fixating upon our complex relationships with the white learners that we teach- but this means that we are not committing the same amount of intellectual and emotional energy trying to understand the learners of colour. We assume we know a great deal about the white learners, because we believe we know a great deal about how whiteness operates, from the inside. But, our assumptions about where the learners of colour are coming from, risk being stereotyped.

CHAPTER 5: SECOND DATA ANALYSIS

5.1 Introduction

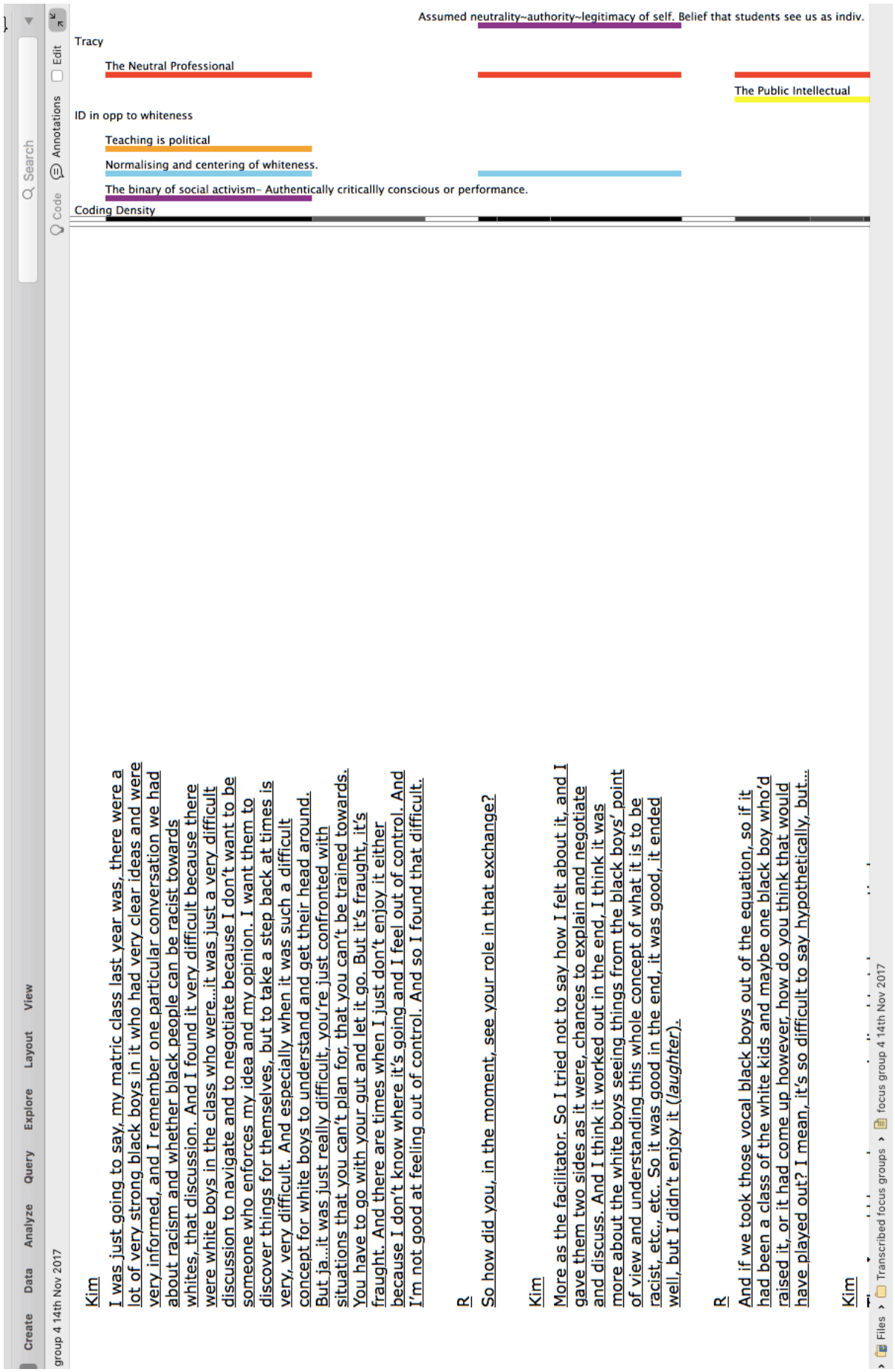
In using NVivo I am able to organise the data into nodes, in order to examine the patterns and characterises of the discourses individually (Bazeley & Jackson, 2013). This was the analysis that constituted the Data Analysis Part 1.

However, NVivo also allows me to revert to viewing the data in its original form, in its original context within transcribed conversations. This view of the discourses enables me to examine a section of talk as a mosaic of meaning, much as Denzin and Lincoln (2000) envision this kind of research as piecing "*together a body of perspectives that, together, help readers understand a complex problem that cannot be explained by one of the perspectives alone.*" (p4).

The split screen view in NVivo provides a visual representation of 'coding density'. This indicates which sections of talk are the most coded, especially to multiple nodes. In Figure 8, one can see an example of how this appears within NVivo. On the right of the transcribed conversation is a stripe graded from white (no coding), to light grey (minimal coding), to dark grey or even black when the coding is very dense.

Furthermore, this view includes information about which specific nodes are coded to the specific sections of data. This information is represented in 'coding stripes' to the right of the 'coding density'. Each node is represented as a different colour coding stripe and is labelled with the name of the node (ie the discourse).

Figure 8: Section of talk coded in Nvivo, showing Coding Stripes



5.2 Negotiating the Perceptions of Others- The Feminists and the Cupcakes.

In examining the data with the assistance of NVivo, it became apparent that in particular sections of the talk there were hotly contested versions of the truth. In these sections of conversation, participants were intensely disagreeing about their own positionality within the school. Upon examination of these sections of talk, I found that they corresponded with instances when the data was coded to multiple, contradictory discourses within the same section of talk. Using 'coding density' and 'coding stripes', I select one section of talk in which different discourses appear to be conflicting as the participants speak. This allows me to address my research question as I analyse these selections in order to explore how these discourses manifest when they are employed in relation to contradictory ones, and how the participants negotiate the conflicting identify positions in which they are positioned.

The section of talk that I selected based upon these criteria appears in (table) below. The screen within NVivo continues to scroll more to the right than the screenshot would allow, which means that some of the coding stripes could not be captured. I therefore transfer the conversation to a table in which I plot the selected data together with all of the discourses which are coded to it, and the corresponding discussion. Following this table, I provide a discussion of an extract from my Researcher Journal (table) which addresses this part of the focus group conversation.

Finally, I link the discussions above to my theoretical framework.

The context of the selection of data is that participants were talking about their own reputations within the school as either helping or hindering their critical pedagogy. The selection begins with Tracy referring to an "atmosphere" she believes is created by an antagonism that she perceives between some of the participants and their white learners and colleagues. (This discourse is examined in detail within **Identity in Opposition to Whiteness**, in Analysis Part One).

The conversation quickly moves to one in which the success or failure of our working relationships centres around gender and the participants reputations as “feminists”. Whilst the narrow focus of this study is on race identity and positioning, the broader lens is in examining teacher positioning in relation to being critical pedagogues. In the conversation below, and in the talk that continues after these selected data, the participants link the their positioning within paradigms of gender, to their effectiveness in transformation work both within their classrooms and in the school environment in general.

The Title of this analysis is **Negotiating the perceptions of others- The Feminist and the cupcakes.** The reference to managing the perceptions of others focuses the analysis in relation to the context described above. In this study I refer to the discourse in which we feel we have no agency or power over how others perceive us, as **the Perceptions of Others as Disempowering**.

The “feminist” and the “cupcakes” refer to imagery used by myself as a participant in this conversation, in attempting to capture what I felt was the absurdity that we could role-play a version of ourselves that was non-threatening to the status quo (“serving cupcakes”), and yet due to the hegemony, we would still be positioned as feminists. I believe this metaphor captures the heart of the analysis below, as in it, we grapple with who controls our positionality; ourselves, or those around us.

In the table below (Table 15) I provide the extract of data in the left-hand column, then the discourses which were coded to this section of data, and in the right-hand column, the relevant analyses. These analyses and observations are drawn together in a reflection at the end of the chapter.

Table 15: Extract from Focus Group No. 2. 25th Sept 2017

Data	Nodes/Discourses	Analysis
Tracy: But it happens quite a lot, and it's creating an atmosphere, and if I'm feeling it, why aren't they feeling it? Why aren't their parents feeling it? They are. And if we're getting reports back from (*name of another teacher removed*), "oh these feminists", then there is that perception.	*The Perceptions of Others as Disempowering. *Identity in Opposition to Whiteness *The Neutral Professional *Marginalised by Gender.	Tracy begins by describing the antagonism between participants, and white learners and colleagues in passive voice: "it's happens quite a lot and it's creating an atmosphere". In doing so, she situates the cause for the antagonism as an outside force; there is no clear subject causing the "atmosphere". She could quite easily have said "we/you are creating an atmosphere". This aligns with **Identity in Opposition to Whiteness**, as it positions us in relation to a system or force over which we have no control. It also allows her to soften the tone of the accusations which follow, as she has not directly implicated the other participants. However, the addition of "and if I'm feeling it" separates her from the other participants and clearly establishes her as an outsider with an objective and rational perspective, hence the inclusion of the discourse, t**he Neutral Professional.** By suggesting that she "is feeling" the "atmosphere", she positions herself as a neutral outside observer, not an active participant in "the atmosphere". When operating within this discourse, participants remove systems of power and privilege from their analyses of self. The Neutral Professional constructs a version of the teacher as being able to put her politics aside and engage in a 'neutral' way. As the conversation continues, it is this discourse which will clash the most with others. The use of pronouns is interesting as it shifts through the rest of the conversation depending on which participants are employing which discourse. Later on, Tracy uses the

		inclusive pronouns "us" and "we" to place herself within the group. Tracy's questions which follow have an accusatory tone, and she concludes that the boys and their parents are indeed feeling the atmosphere. Here the discourse shifts to t**he Perceptions of Others as Disempowering.** The list of the boys, their parents and "reports" that colleagues view us as "oh those feminists" is positioned as evidence that "a (negative) perception" exists, which is limiting our impact. Importantly, the "atmosphere" has now shifted to a question of whether or not we are "feminists". That label clearly locates the nature of and possibly the cause for the "atmosphere", within our gender. It also averts attention from the ways in which the perceptions of others in relation to feminism, is the issue. In this way, the conversation pivots at this point, away from race, but towards a complex and intensely fought contestation over our identities as women, and in particular, as "feminists". Tracy is guiding the conversation to a conclusion that there IS objectively an atmosphere, that the boys, their parents, herself, and other teachers can feel it, and that the other participants are implicated in this in a way that she is not.
Jennifer: But I want to know **who's**…like **who** is saying this? Because …	*Marginalised by Gender. *Identity in Opposition to Whiteness	In Jennifer's response, she addresses the "reports" in Tracy's statement above. She wants to know "who" the reports are referring to, in order to make sense of them. Taken together, her and Tracy's initial comments reinforce the sense of paranoia which is defining feature of **Identity in Opposition to Whiteness**, as well as **Marginalized by Gender**. In both, we are subject to the gaze and scrutiny of a system of

		whiteness and maleness, both of which in this case appear to position us as problematic.
Tracy: Maybe if the other members of staff don't get to see us in our classrooms, and only get to hear the way we talk about our lessons and the boys in the staffroom, and maybe because we feel comfortable with each other so we'll whinge about this and whatever it is, we have created a false perception, so that staff members can walk around and think that we've called ourselves feminazis, do we not have any responsibility for that? And if that's getting in the way of us being successful do we not need to find a different strategy?	*The Perceptions of Others as Disempowering *Identity in Opposition to Whiteness *Identity as Performative *The Binary of Social Activism *The Neutral Professional	Tracy takes back control of the narrative here, as Jennifer's hesitation indicated by the ellipsis, allows. Tracy shifts her use of pronouns to include herself in the group with "we" and "our" etc. Despite this, she also firmly centres the power to control these negative perceptions, in the choices that we make about what we talk about and how we talk about it. In utilizing t**he Perceptions of Others as Disempowering**, in this way, she shifts the burden (or power) to position ourselves onto our own shoulders. This should be an empowering exercise in agency, as if we wish to shift perceptions of ourselves, we just need to change our conversations. However, her use of the negative words "whinge" and "feminazis" to characterise the ways in which we choose to position ourselves reveals the extent to which even she has positioned us in a negative way. Interestingly she refers to our choices as creating a "false perception", which is an oxymoron as perceptions by their nature are subjective and unstable. This connects with the use of the discourse **Identity as Performative**, in that it suggests there may be a core, stable, true self, which can only be revealed and understood in relation to performances which may or may not correspond with it. The reference to us needing to "take responsibility for that" and finding "a different strategy" is understood within the discourse of a **Neutral Professional** as it allows for the teacher to see herself as objective, and the act of critical pedagogy as strategic and rational, as opposed to driven by passion. This conflicts with notions of authenticity within t**he Binary of Social Activism**, within which we construct an identity of being authentically driven by a deeply personal

		commitment to social justice agenda, and therefore unable to be strategic if it requires us to be in any way inconsistent.
Jennifer: Ja, well I guess we're just going to have to…	*Not Waving but Drowning	In a pattern unusual for Jennifer in relation to the rest of the data, she is again hesitant. Her tone is one of exasperation and frustration. The discourses of emotional intensity within **Not Waving but Drowning** start to become more and more significant. In this line she hints at a form of surrender.
R: Perform. Perform our identities.	*The Binary of Social Activism *Identity as performance	In an attempt to crystalise the conclusion to which I think she is leaning; I operate from within the discourse t**he Binary of Social Activism**. In suggesting that the only possible outcome of this dilemma is in abandoning any attempt at authenticity, and to resort to performance, something superficial and dishonest, as well as cynical, rather than simply 'being'. This suggests that our behaviours identified by Tracy as being problematic to the rest of the school community, are not performance. In this way, it becomes clear why to some of us, this challenge to "be strategic" and "take responsibility" for others seeing us in a negative way, is untenable. We see it as a choice between being **Authentically Critically Conscious**, or disseminating and performing **Activism Tourism**. This is why Tracy's discourse of t**he Neutral Professional** is incompatible with the discourse t**he Binary of Social Activism**. In the discourse she employs, Tracy constructs the choices available to us as being either rational, strategic and objective, or irrational, subjectively-driven, and emotional. A notion of authenticity does not factor into this discourse. What is constructed as 'right' is to achieve the end; fulfilling our work as critical pedagogues in guiding more people to be critical pedagogues and critical learners. However, within t**he Binary of Social Activism**, the choice is constructed as one between that of being authentic, by which

		we understand we allow our subjective emotional and intellectual notions of self to drive our actions, or we opt to be calculating and mechanical, and thereby become one of the privileged-others. Like **Identity in Opposition to Whiteness**, within this discourse we need to be far away from the privileged-other, in order to believe we are a comfortable version of self. In asking us to empathise with and adjust our talk in relation to the privileged-other, one to whom we consistently construct ourselves as anathema, we would be betraying not just our sense of what critical pedagogy looks like, but our own sense of self.
Jennifer: Sorry, maybe I should just remove myself from the staffroom and not have conversations with my colleagues, for god's sake. Can they not detect irony and humour and sarcasm? Can they not see the nuances…? …I mean, come on, are they not capable of…what am I dealing with…with idiots? I mean, now, come on!	*Identity in Opposition to Whiteness *Not Waving but Drowning *The perceptions Of Others as Disempowering *Intelligence is Power *Marginalised by Gender	The conflicting discourses described above result in a rupture of positioning. Despite Tracy's use of inclusive personal pronouns, the discourses used position Jennifer as problematic. In my addition, I provide a binary: be authentic or perform. For Jennifer in this moment, this means that she shifts more fully into **Not Waving but Drowning.** The repeated ellipsis indicates gaps as she tries to find the words to express her frustration anger. The exclamation points indicate the intensity of these emotions In seeking to find a coherent positionality within two conflicting discourses, she moves even further away from **The Neutral Professiona**l, to become more entrenched within **Identity in Opposition to Whiteness** and t**he Perceptions of Others as Disempowering.** Here there is a clear enemy; "them" and "they". They are constructed as lacking nuance, and in the extreme, being "idiots". The power to position us is placed in "their" inferior gaze. It is the gap between the perception that their gaze is so powerful, and the

		construction of "them" as intellectually inferior, that may be the cause of the frustration. The notion of whiteness and maleness as superseding all other other possibilities for being makes the participants at times very bitter, and all white men are reduced to being representatives of an unjust hierarchy of power. The discourse **the Public Intellectual** is also present in that here the participant locates her power in her more sophisticated understanding of the world.
Tracy: I'm just saying there's a perception of us and that perception is getting in the way.	*The Neutral Professional *The Perceptions of Others as Disempowering	In comparison to Jennifer's intensity of emotion, Tracy remains controlled. This is possibly because she is not allowing herself to be positioned as problematic, nor is her subjectivity under threat as she is comfortable within t**he Neutral Professional**. In her use of the discourse t**he Perceptions of Others as Disempowering**, she makes it clear that the perceptions others have of us are stalling our work as critical pedagogues, this is something Jennifer agrees with. However, for Tracy, this is something we have the power to change.
R: And I'm saying, I don't think that that perception is about us. I think…like they talk about identity politics, that article I sent you that says, why must we talk about identity politics, why must we talk about our race, it encourages racism, and encourages people to be divided in terms of their identity. And the answer to this was somebody who's	*Identity in Opposition to Whiteness *The Perceptions of Others as Disempowering. *Secret Handshake of Woke Credentials	My insistence that the perception "is not about us" places me also firmly within **Identity in Opposition to Whiteness.** If it is not "about us", it must be due to a system of meaning (whiteness, maleness) over which we have no control, and within which "they" construct dissidents as problematic. In referencing the article about "identity politics" and "Black Lives Matter", I use the discourse t**he Secret Handshake Of Woke Credentials**, as this jargon gives my argument a degree of credibility, and functions as in-group speak, a shorthand to locate us as all on the same side. Importantly, in equating the work we do with Black Lives Matter, I am giving it a gravitas and locating us as part of a mass social movement. I position us as part of a struggle. This frames our

leading a Black Lives Matter movement is, we're not operating identity politics, they are. And that's exactly the same thing. Is that I could put on a little pinafore and serve cupcakes every day and say one little thing that's about feminism and it would be like, boom, there she goes with the feminism again.	*The Binary of Social Activism *Marginalized by Gender	work as white teachers, in an affluent white school, as significant, and it obscures our own privileges. The intersection of gender and race in this part of the conversation means that our own gender identities and struggles are prioritised, over the race struggles of others. The absurd and hyperbolic image of myself in a "pinafore" serving "cupcakes everyday" represents a discourse of binaries: I can either be viewed by others as a gender stereotype, or as my authentic self. It operates within t**he Perceptions of Others as Disempowering,** and constructs the "others" as reductionist, reactionary, and irrational, much as Jennifer does in her prior comments. In this selection of talk, for me, as for Jennifer, even if we resort to performing a caricature of femininity that supports the status quo, our critical agenda would pit the privileged-other against us. This discourse clearly identifies our gender as being central to the kinds of reputations that we have, and therefore something over which we have no control.
Tracy: Yes, and I agree with you. So if we're saying that that is the environment that we're in, and that these are the people that we are, how can we be true to ourselves and if your identity is, make a difference, then find another way. If your identity is, outspoken feminist, go ahead. But do you hear what	*The Neutral Professional *Identity is performative	In contrast, Tracy again asserts that our reputations are a result of choices that we have made: "then find another way". The "identity" of "outspoken feminist" is represented as a choice, and the cause of a perceived failed transformational agenda. As a **Neutral Professional**, however, Tracy experiences no cognitive dissonance, as within this discourse, she can be both a feminist, and also, not problematic: the difference being in choosing to not be "outspoken". For those of us operating within **the Binary of Social Activism** within this selection of data, this is not a possibility. If we believe in a social justice principle, and do not perform that identity by being "outspoken", then we become **Activism Tourists**, and the authenticity of our beliefs is in question.

I'm saying? What are we trying to achieve?		

Following this analysis of the Focus Group talk, I provide the corresponding Researcher Journal entry that I made immediately afterwards, as well as the reflections that I made on a later date (Table 16). Examining these two data sources which are focused on the same conversation, provides a rounded engagement, one in which I hope to keep myself under scrutiny as much as I do the other participants, as I explore the ways in which we all negotiate conflicting positionalities.

Table 16: Extract from Researcher Journal: reflections on this focus group conversation.

Journal entry 25th Sept 2017	Later reflections	Discourses and discussion
This was a fraught meeting and I leave feeling the adrenalin of fight or flight pumping through my veins. This is good content for my study, but was a frustrating conversation. I leave feeling defensive, frustrated, betrayed. Angry. I realise I have a sense of ownership of the process that has been ignored or threatened. I'm reminded of how personal this work is - how tied up in my own identity it is. Criticising my approach is a criticism of me and I feel like I want credit for the struggle. I realise that my approaches and relationships with the learners is a completely different mosaic of interactions in comparison to how this work is manifested in conversations with staff. I'm fatigued, deflated, defeated.	Revisiting this a week later, was it as adversarial as I felt at the time? There seems to be a lot of mishearing/reframing each other's responses. Also a lot of judgement. I also notice how much positioning happens in relation to gender and in relation to those in power. There is a lot of us and them, and having allies point this out	What is immediately striking is the frequent reference to the intensity of my emotional response to this conversation. I employ discourses from **Not Waving but Drowning** which make it clear that this conversation unsettled me and that the residual impression I have immediately following it, is that it left me feeling deeply uncomfortable in terms of how I believed I was positioned. The extract in (table) may not capture the full texture of my contributions to the conversation elsewhere during that focus group session, which was very similar to Jennifer's contributions. I do make the distinction between my "mosaic of interactions" with learners, which includes my belief in my many positive relationships, with the less positive

And indignant! Why should I have to roll over and erase myself?! How do I choose what is more important; "The Cause" or my identity? And is it possible to separate myself out of the transformation work? I'm angry with Tracy for breezing in and assassinating my character. I feel like I need a debrief. When I think about the work with the learners, I feel optimistic and motivated by the sincere relationships we have in the classroom. But when I think about where we are with some of the other adults in the school, I feel wrung-out. I want to throw in the towel.	and not buy into it feels like a betrayal. I also notice that Tracy's main criticism (that one needs to be strategic and 'manage' our own positioning) is something that she is very much grappling with herself- feeling like she is a sell-out by coming to this elite school. This will be an important discourse to address.	"conversations with staff". Here, **Identity in Opposition to Whiteness** shifts to being a descriptor of the adult relationships. In posing the question "how do I choose what is more important; "The Cause" or my identity?" I am operating within t**he Binaries of Social Activism,** as I imply that I would need to be strategic in order to effect change, but in doing so, would lose my authenticity. This paradox speaks to the heart of doing Pedagogy for The Privileged, in that it requires a lot of reflection and balancing of the ultimate goals, and too much centering of white, privileged needs. My own fragility is apparent when my sense of self is threatened by Tracy suggesting we try another approach. I describe it as a "character assassination", which is exactly what it felt like; my sense of self was very much premised on me doing critical pedagogy well. When this is questioned, the fracture of my positioning is experienced as a death of a version of myself. In response, I employ the discourse **Ownership of the Transformation Narrative.** In asserting that I have "ownership of the process", I am taking back some control of the narrative, because it lends me more credibility (a kind of struggle-credential), which I use to assure myself that Tracy, who was new to the school at the time, does not have. It is a way to establish her as an outsider, in order to

		diminish the threat that her criticisms are to my sense of self. In my reflections on this later, I place Tracy back within the fold, as I position her comments as defensive as she was "grappling" with the same issues as us. This neutralises the threat of her comments in a different way, it makes them a symptom of her discomfort. My final comments in the original entry support my observations in Analysis Part One in which I caution about the option that white teachers have to opt-out of work that gets too fraught. However, much of the discomfort in this entry is around gender positioning, a positionality which, when operating within the discourses described above, I cannot opt out of.

An analysis of my own use of the different discourses within my Researcher Journal is subsumed in the content which follows. However, it is important to indicate that as it stands alone, this longer extract from the Researcher Journal functions to *"capture the drama of representation, legitimation, and praxis [as] a part of an ongoing dialogue between self and world* (Jones, 2005:766. In Pennington & Brock, 2011: 5). As an example of feminist research, this reflexive element aims to "*put the researcher back into the research"* (Gitlin, Siegel and Boru 1993: 205. In McKinney, 2003: 79).

In the extracts above we tell each other and ourselves stories about how we believe we live our lives, and in so doing, construct versions of ourselves (Baxter, 2016). We are either embattled lone struggle heroes within **Identity in Opposition to Whiteness**, authentic and troubled within **the Binary of Social Activism,** objective and effective **Neutral Professionals,** or disempowered and reduced to our gender in **Marginalized**

by Gender. These stories of self are particularly evident when these constructed versions of self come under attack by different systems of meaning.

According to Baxter (2016), we use our stories of personhood as coping mechanisms in order to deal with discursive practises which continuously position us *"in contradictory ways that disrupt the sense of sustaining a coherent identity"* (Davies and Harre in Baxter, 2016: 42). Therefore, in seeking to navigate these conflicting identity positions, we attempt to resolve a fracture of self through "*develop(ing) storylines involving events, characters and moral dilemmas"* (Baxter, 2016: 42). These glimpses of personhood reveal the complexities of positioning and contested versions of truth for critical pedagogues who are white and who teach in privileged contexts.

It becomes clear in the data above, that intersections of gender play a very important role in these stories of self that we tell, and importantly, in the stories of self that we believe others are telling of us. All of the discourses examined are framed by the fact that we are women, and this is thrown into sharp focus by the fact that we only teach boys. This analysis of the ordinary, every day experiences of women, is key to any feminist research, as we seek to examine the ordinary that is saturated with the political (Perumal, 2007).

The references to our reputations as "outspoken feminists" or even "feminazis" take on a flavour of mythology. Within **the Perceptions of Others as Disempowering**, our gender identities are constructed as having evolved into characters in stories who have taken on a life of their own, who are passed on in an oral tradition, and over whom we have no control. In reference to "cupcakes" and "pinafores" as good women, and "feminazis" as bad women, we suggest the stories reduce us to versions of the female self as binary: good or bad. This is disempowering and exhausting, because it locates all of our positioning potential in the gaze of the privileged-other, and requires a lot of guesswork about what others think of us. In neither of those binaries of being, can we be empowered as female teachers.

When we discuss evidence of the privileged-other that 'proves' our suspicions about how they view us (eg "*getting back reports from* (name of teacher removed) '*oh these feminists*") this removes the cognitive dissonance and some of us are reassured to know

that our beliefs about how others see us are confirmed. We can then be united in anger and indignation. In this way, the analysis allows me access to the ways in which our senses of self are products of the social; in particular, discourses which construct versions of identity based on whom has access to what kinds of power. (Davies, 1994, Lather, 1992, Weedon, 1997). In this extract, some of us believe we are alienated from institutional power, but we regain some hegemonic power within the group of participants. When this consensus is threatened, by participants challenging our experiences of being disempowered by our gender, we are angered and hurt.

The discourses which frequently clash are **the Binary of Social Activism**, and **the Neutral Professional.** As indicated in the discussion, they clash because in them, we conceive of ourselves in relation to the social justice agenda, in entirely different ways. The participants acknowledge that perception is reality, but we disagree about whether or not we are powerless to change perceptions of us that are negative.

The **Neutral Professional** is a version of self for which Poststructuralism does not allow. In understanding the entire social world as political and imbued with power by nature, the paradigm does not allow for a version of reality in which a teacher can produce an objective assessment of reality. There can be no truly neutral professional, only an illusionary discourse of one. This somewhat contrasts a Critical Pedagogy perspective, which, whilst acknowledging that all of education is political, positions the critical pedagogue as an authority, and as having the 'correct' insights. However, what I believe Freire does argue in relation to **the Neutral Professional**, is that in this positionality we may, in "*trying to escape conflict… preserve the status quo."* (Freire, 1998:45)

Furthermore, the crux of the conflict is in the degree to which being 'authentic' is a measure of self. Allen and Rossatto state that: *"if educators honestly and passionately express their radical love for humanity and their intolerance for oppression then oppressor students are more likely to move beyond their knee-jerk reactions..."* (2009:178). However, what the contested positionalities in the discussion above suggest, is that this may be an idealistic plan of action. The conflicts between **the Neutral Professional** and **the Binary of Social Activism** prompt us to question if being authentically critically conscious is enough, and whether or not we should be

satisfied with this kind of organic, gentle change? Tuck and Yang (2012) certainly call for more radical change. They are not interested in the internal worlds, the "*bourgeois journey*" (Curry-Stevens, 2010) of the privileged.

Tracy's final words frame the conflicting discourses and resulting positionalities, aptly. In asking "*what are we trying to achieve*", she prompts me to reflect on what the different discourses construct as the ultimate aims of our work as critical pedagogues. Is it in producing measurable, objective and observable change to the status quo, no matter the means, or is to remain true to our cause, in a deeply felt, personal way, no matter the outcome?

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

6.1 Introduction

This research began with a commitment to more fully understanding what it means to me to be an English teacher who is a critical pedagogue, even if the answers were at times uncomfortable. I hoped to both understand and unsettle the 'whitey on the moon', in order to better provoke change to the status quo.

In this research I aimed to establish the extent to which critically conscious and privileged white English teachers, teaching mostly privileged, white learners, in an elite South African schooling context, found ourselves navigating multiple and contradictory positionalities. I also hoped to problematize any notion of the "*exceptional white"* (Curry-Stevens, 2010: 66) located in the uncomplicated and comfortable positionality of a 'whitey on the moon': pioneer, hero, and expert.

I can therefore crystalize my research question as: what does it mean to privileged teachers to teach the privileged?

Through a rigorous analysis of discourses, I unpack what these conflicting positionalities are for these particular teachers, at a particular historical moment. This is achieved by examining the varied ways in which myself and the other participants are positioned, the multiple ways in which we position each other, and the ways in which we support or resist these positionalities. Throughout this analysis I remain cognisant of my own enmeshed role in this research, and how this potentially contributes to both the weaknesses and strengths of this study.

I consolidate my findings in relation to these aims into three main categories which summarise the insights that I can apply to my own work, and which may be of some use to other teachers who identify with the context or positionality.

6.2 We Operate in Binaries When Making Sense of Who we are

The most striking pattern that cuts through the analyses is that we appear to make sense of who we are, in terms of who we are not. As critical pedagogues, we value and aspire to be critical. In the discourses we use, we establish that this is something that sets us apart. These discourses serve to distinguish us from a constructed privileged-other, which ultimately affords us a tenuous comfort of being whites who are exceptions to the rule of whiteness.

In doing so, we may fleetingly repair a sense of self that has been ruptured as we teach in a context of privilege. The analysis suggests that this rupture appears to be rooted in a number of discursive binaries. As binaries are reductionist and deterministic by definition, we find that in whatever iteration of binary we are placed (or place ourselves), we are trapped between two impossible and self-limiting options.

Within the one binary, we construct ourselves as authentically critically conscious and as invested in social justice with mind, body and soul. The binary of this is that we are activism tourists and that our commitment is a performance; this would be an untenable position. However, as teachers who have chosen to teach in a context of privilege and comfort, there is a slippage of self: we cannot be who believe we are in this context. Furthermore, we are trapped between the binaries of being a neutral professional, one who must be strategic and rational in order to achieve an end, and a version of self in which our persona of public intellectual means we must always ‘speak truth to power’ and therefore have to exist outside of power structures.

In attempting to address these contradictory positions, the most commonly used strategy is that of locating ourselves **In Opposition to Whiteness**. In my assessment,

this is often a functional strategy in that it acts as a counterpoint to what would be a debilitating sense of self-doubt. Within this positionality we can 'do the work'. However, it does function very powerfully to obscure our own whiteness, which ultimately, makes any critical pedagogy unsustainable, because we are maintaining the status quo.

In essence, we need to be alert to which discourses are paralyzing, and which are potentially liberatory. The key finding for me is that for this work to be meaningful, we must be accountable to all members of our community, but specifically those who do not benefit from the unearned privileges that white South Africans enjoy. White, critically conscious teachers must be proactive in finding ways to achieve this. As Curry-Stevens (2010) insists, we must be accountable to those who stand to lose the most by our failure to take this opportunity for social justice and use it to make real change.

6.3 Pedagogy for the Privileged Teacher

At the heart of our negotiation of contradictory identity positions, are our relationships with our learners. In conceiving of our work as Pedagogy for the Privileged, we have the opportunity to reframe these relationships. I argue that within the context of teaching for social justice, we must conceive of Pedagogy for the Privileged not as a technique that we, as the experts, do to the learners. Rather, we must see ourselves; white, privileged teachers, as students of the pedagogy too. This humility is necessary because, no matter how well-informed and well-intentioned we are, our assessments of our own whiteness can never be fully trusted. (Curry-Stevens, 2010). In this way, it can truly become a pedagogy of disruption (Shor, 1999) a meaningful intervention, rather than fashionable technique.

In formulating a practical approach, however, we may still find ourselves caught between the ideal of a democratic classroom which is perceived as safe and which affords every voice the opportunity to be heard, and the reality that as a consequence of white supremacy, some voices are overrepresented. After all, we do not live in an

ideal, equal society. Conversely, whilst our positionality as a Public Intellectual is a powerful and important one, we must be mindful of the risk that in a classroom that is a warzone, we may resort to weaponising our knowledge in order to win at all costs.

Perhaps an essential first step in maintaining a healthy teaching and learning environment may be in us having the confidence in our expertise to change the rules of engagement, from combative, to collaborative, a *"dynamic model of social justice with dissenting but respectful voices."* Griffiths (2003: 247). The shift requires us to make the distinction between the white child in our care, and the violent system of whiteness from which he benefits. Existing in a fraught tangle of positionalities may mean that this is easier said than done for teachers like myself, who would never want to be accused of pandering to the needs of a beneficiary of whiteness. This study, therefore, points to the importance of specialized training, and platforms such as these conversation sessions, in which we can untangle some of the complexities together.

These observations, however, exist in tension with the acknowledgement that throughout all of this, we must continue to interrogate and challenge our own whiteness. We must acknowledge that in fixating on our relationships with our white learners, we may be erasing our learners of colour, or reducing them to stereotypes. Furthermore, as the analysis explored, our colleagues of colour do not experience white spaces in the same ways as we do. In an effort to be accountable to our colleagues we must broaden our lenses of analysis to include intersectional critiques of power such as African Feminism. During Focus Group No. 4, Rebecca explains her artefact; a pile of spectacles which represents all of the different lenses between which she has to keep shifting. African Feminism is an essential addition to this collection for all of us.

In settling on a way in which to address the research question, I concur with Griffiths (2014): that one way in which to see our contradictory positionalities as possibilities for political action, is to consider social justice not as a final end-goal, but rather as a verb. Teaching social justice could be a zero-sum game, in which we aim to win, but it should be *"an attempt to act in ways which make the world a good place to live and in which good lives are lived."* (Griffiths, 2014: 233) Whilst this may seem a romantic quest, Griffiths grounds this goal by reminding us that:

> *...such attempts are always made in the knowledge that all actions and understanding are founded on imperfect, provisional judgements made in specific contexts….In these circumstances the comforts of certainty are not available.* (Griffiths, 2014: 233)

In this way, 'Pedagogy for the Privileged Teacher' encourages us to fulfil Freire's vision of the critical pedagogue:

> *Their learning in their teaching is observed to the extent that, humble and open, teachers find themselves continually ready to rethink what has been thought and to revise their positions*. (Freire, 2005: 17)

6.4 Women at Sea

As referenced in 6.3, it is necessary to conceive of the white teachers at the heart of this feminist research as problematized, but it is equally necessary to see all the participants as committed educators who express our truly felt desire to contribute to a transformational project.

We spend a great deal of time moving between the different emotional discourses within Not Waving but Drowning. As a consequence, we frequently find ourselves disempowered due to the emotional labour or begin to refer to the work in terms of it being optional. Significantly, this emotional labour was often framed in terms of our experiences as women on a monastic school campus, and the unique challenges and pain associated with this. The role of gender in teacher identity in a context such as this is an important and legitimate focus for future research. It is therefore essential that white teachers in white spaces are given adequate training and institutional support so that they do not resort to the privilege of opting-out. Unsurprisingly, teachers of colour in white spaces appear to experience even more profound challenges to their sense of agency and worth, which is also fundamental focus for future research. Teachers and the Executive members of the school, should, therefore, not underestimate the emotional toll that this work takes.

I am struck by the need for a balance between rigorous critique and the degree of trust that needs to accompany it. I believe that we all made ourselves vulnerable in this research, and experienced the pain of fractured identities, yet we kept returning to the

conversations and to each other. We also kept shifting in terms of the discourses we employed. No one discourse was left stable or uncontested. Three years later, we continue to challenge each other, to critique our own and each other's versions of truth, and we keep coming back to the conversations. To me, this suggests a degree of trust in each other. This reinforces the value of Freire's pedagogy for love (Allen and Rossatto, 2009), in that if we expect real change to happen in the classroom, we must afford each other, as colleagues, the same degree of trust and vulnerability. The community of enquiry at the heart of this research is an invaluable resource, one which should be nurtured and perhaps established more formally.

In reflecting upon how we could make sense of the work that we do in relation to all of the paradoxes above, I found Griffith's suggestion that we balance all of the serious intensity, with a joy in our work, to be an appealing addition. Whilst we often speak of our positionality within the school as being 'naughty school children', 'called to the principal's office' in terms of our frustrations and fears, we might at times take pleasure in the occasional "enjoyable acts of subversion and transgression" (Griffiths, 2014: 247).

> *Naughtiness, playfulness, mischievousness, is so often necessary when working for social justice.* (Griffiths, 2014: 247)

Finally, Schoorman (2014) argues that research of this nature must ultimately function as a "*service to the community*" (2014: 223). I humbly suggest that this process has gone some way in addressing the needs of a community of teachers who grapple with conflicting positionalities, and who may have in this dissertation, a thorough analysis of a moment of those positionalities. I hope that the discussions within this study will continue to unsettle and problematize our positionalities, so that we can continue the work of the Critical Pedagogue; work which we have bound-up with our very senses of self, and to which we are all are deeply committed.

My conclusion is that in any attempt to understand our positionalities, in an ultimate quest to better unsettle whiteness from within, we must continue to demonstrate that we are willing to be uncomfortable, to disagree and to feed on "*difference in ideas and interpretations, rather than requiring consensus.*" (Insana et al 2014: 451). The practice of introspection and allowing ourselves to be scrutinised and challenged, within a community in which we feel empowered and seen, is essential in the quest to bring the whitey down to earth.

> **"What I propose is very simple: it is nothing more than to think what we are doing".** Hannah Arendt (1958: 5)

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