

Discourses We Live By

Narratives of Educational
and Social Endeavour

EDITED BY HAZEL R. WRIGHT
AND MARIANNE HØYEN





<https://www.openbookpublishers.com>

© 2020 Hazel R. Wright and Marianne Høyen. Copyright of individual chapters is maintained by the chapters' authors.



This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International license (CC BY 4.0). This license allows you to share, copy, distribute and transmit the text; to adapt the text and to make commercial use of the text providing attribution is made to the authors (but not in any way that suggests that they endorse you or your use of the work). Attribution should include the following information:

Hazel R. Wright and Marianne Høyen (eds), *Discourses We Live By: Narratives of Educational and Social Endeavour*. Cambridge, UK: Open Book Publishers, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0203>

In order to access detailed and updated information on the license, please visit <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0203#copyright>

Further details about CC BY licenses are available at <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

All external links were active at the time of publication unless otherwise stated and have been archived via the Internet Archive Wayback Machine at <https://archive.org/web>

Updated digital material and resources associated with this volume are available at <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0203#resources>

Every effort has been made to identify and contact copyright holders and any omission or error will be corrected if notification is made to the publisher.

ISBN Paperback: 978-1-78374-851-8

ISBN Hardback: 978-1-78374-852-5

ISBN Digital (PDF): 978-1-78374-853-2

ISBN Digital ebook (epub): 978-1-78374-854-9

ISBN Digital ebook (mobi): 978-1-78374-855-6

ISBN XML: 978-1-78374-856-3

DOI: 10.11647/OBP.0203

Cover design by Anna Gatti.

Cover image, and photographs on pages ii, xxii, 22, 114, 206, 284, 378, 460, 544, 620, 634, by Tom Perkins, CC-BY 4.0.

26. Using Journaling and Autoethnography to Create Counter-Narratives of School Exclusion in Britain

Helen Woodley

Helen Woodley describes an insider study of a pupil referral unit (for excluded children) that challenges the orthodoxies that are commonly attributed to such facilities. She seeks to give the pupils a voice, and thereby to modify the views of the public and policymakers. Helen discovered the power of journaling and autoethnography as methods of data collection and interpretation, and demonstrates their value as research tools.

For many years I was a teacher of pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN), working in an alternative educational setting with children excluded from mainstream schooling. Consequently, I was keen, when undertaking doctoral research, to find a way to make their voices heard. I was motivated to do this by my personal and professional frustration that these young children were 'done to' rather than 'done with' in the UK education system when decisions were made about their futures. They were not involved in any part of the exclusion process and often not even aware of the discussions surrounding their lives. They were subject to powers beyond their control and their views and opinions were not sought. As my research progressed it became clear that the process of exclusion, and the discourses around it, rested solely with

adults at a national and local level, and were largely informed by beliefs around power and discipline. My research focus shifted to encompass my own learning journey as both academic, researcher and teacher of SEN learners as I realized the power of the ideas and developments captured in my research journals and through autoethnographic writing, and saw how my narratives could sit alongside the discourses from the pupils themselves.

I worked in a unique type of alternative education setting within the UK education system, as I taught young people who had been permanently excluded from their mainstream school, meaning that they are not allowed to return to the school that they have left. They are often permanently excluded for acts of violence and aggression. Therefore, the children I taught were educated not in settings which they or their parents had selected, but ones that had been chosen for them. This lack of selection and personal choice is unparalleled in any other area of the school system for, in every other circumstance, parental views and often pupil views are taken into account. The establishments that the permanently excluded pupils attend may be known as Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) although this term is increasingly falling into disuse as many, including my own setting, prefer to style themselves in a more positive manner using the PRU title as a means of explaining their function rather than as their own self-description. Many of these PRUs are rebranding themselves as Alternative Provision (AP) or simply choosing a name and then discussing their function either in a strap line or on their school websites. In spite of these attempts at creating a positive self-image, many people continue to refer to such schools as being 'the PRU' due to their familiarity with the term. For the purposes of this chapter I will continue to use the term PRU whilst acknowledging the use of AP as a broader term to include a wider variety of settings.

Dominant Discourses in the Current UK Education System: Power and Discipline

Before taking a deeper look at the discourses within PRU settings, a wider view of the dominant discourses within the UK education system is necessary. The focus of the majority of discourses in the UK education system at both the macro- and micro-levels, are discourses

of power and discipline. Foucault discusses how discipline is a specific type of power and how such disciplines are techniques used for ordering human groups to increase the docility and utility of the people who are subject to being disciplined (Foucault, 1995/1977). When applied to an understanding of the UK education system, one can imagine an environment where questions of power and disciplinary actions are embedded at the very heart of the ethos and philosophy of schools. In this case, the teachers wield power and the pupils are the subjects of their discipline.

Social media is often full of comments and observations on the role of government in judging the effectiveness of schools, the power which the newly created privately run academies have compared to schools run by the local authority, and criticism of the assumed authority which non-teachers may claim they have in dictating how schools should operate. So as much as I can criticize the use of power and discipline towards pupils, it must be framed within a larger discourse about how schools themselves are controlled and maintained. These discussions of power and authority can even be seen within the UK teacher training system where Britzman (1986) discusses how cultural educational myths are taught to trainee teachers leading to a reproduction of such ideas within their classroom practice. This means that each subsequent generation of teachers is brought up within the discourses of power, control and domination held by the preceding generation thereby reproducing, even extending, the narratives held. If one takes the view of PRUs into this stance, then it can be seen how such discourses can continue to influence the viewpoints of schools and teachers and impact upon how they relate to and work with the PRUs in their local authorities.

Another side effect of such discourses at a macro-level is the influence they have upon pupils and teacher relationships including the cultural differences between pupils and teachers (Delpit, 1988). If the macro-level discourses relating to teacher power versus pupil subservience are maintained then this will have a lasting impact on pupils' lives (Uitto & Syrjälä, 2008) and teachers' understanding of their own identities (Sachs, 2001); the relationship of power continues to encourage a hierarchy with learners as the weaker partner. This ultimately leads to a

continuing cycle of discourses of power dividing us, which, as Foucault reminds us, is due to their familiarity (Foucault, 1989/1969).

Within UK Government policy, these familiar discourses of teacher power are firmly established and are found within numerous texts that have been published within recent years. In 2012 the Government produced a guide to support schools in understanding their role in the exclusion process. This document refers to 'exclusion [from school] as a sanction' for behaviours exhibited by pupils (DfE, 2012, p. 4) although no specific guidance is given as to what types of behaviour may be deemed to require such a sanction, which leaves the matter open to interpretation by those holding the power in school. A later 2015 Government advisory document discusses the rights of teachers in using physical force with pupils and refers to the ability of staff to 'control' and 'restrain' pupils when needed (DfE, 2015, p. 4). Yet again there is a lack of guidance surrounding the specific circumstances it discusses, which again leaves those in power within each school to define the terms as they see fit. A final example from 2016 is a Government document on behaviour and discipline within schools, which refers to teachers' 'power' and their legal right to use 'punishment' as a tool when needed (DfE, 2016, p. 7). The free and unqualified use of such terms leaves plenty of scope for school leaders to interpret their meaning as they choose and cements the notion that it is the teachers who hold power and authority.

These macro-discourses at a national level have a substantial effect on the micro discourses within individual school settings, specifically in the language of power that they use to describe the gulf in relationship between adults and children. This use of the language of power and discipline is seen across all age ranges and in all types of settings, and they are often found in the school behaviour policies, which are freely available online but which I, nevertheless, choose to leave anonymous when I highlight the point, by presenting three examples from schools within the North East of England. The first is from an 11–18 comprehensive school, which is maintained by the local authority. The school behaviour policy states that, 'no adult may be treated dismissively or unfairly'. The fact that there is no mention of how the pupils must be treated is a reminder that the power and authority remain with the adults in the setting. A similar school has a policy that states that teachers may enforce a 'disciplinary penalty' on pupils. However, such statements are

not confined to school policies that refer to older pupils, as one 5–11 primary school states that ‘a child can have a maximum total of 18 days seclusion (educated in isolation away from peers) in one academic year’. These are the discourses of power and behaviour management found in mainstream schools, which are subsequently those that are passed onto pupils who are permanently excluded. In the minds of mainstream colleagues, PRUs therefore become the repositories of pupils who have already experienced a lack of power and autonomy and staff working within them who must also exhibit such control and dominion when faced with educating a setting full of excluded pupils; PRUs are often seen by outsiders as places where more power and discipline is used than in mainstream provision.

Discourses on PRUs

Whilst these are the macro- and micro-dominant discourses seen within mainstream schools and the assumption of many about the remit of a PRU, it is crucial to understand how different being educated in, and teaching in, a PRU is, and therefore how different a discourse on power and discipline is possible. Currently, being excluded to a PRU is a school’s ultimate sanction and use of power for poor behaviour. The path for the creation of PRUs was laid down in the 1980s allowing the permanent exclusion of pupils from mainstream schools. Currently, there is no uniformity across the UK for how a PRU should function and meet the needs of its pupils. Instead a series of basic principles are laid down:

- The act of permanent exclusion transfers the pupil from the school roll to the care of the local authority.
- Parents have a right of appeal, although their chances of success are slim; they are often confused about the process and trusting of the school’s decision (Children’s Commissioner Report, 2012, pp. 69–73).
- Unless they can get an exclusion overturned, convince the school to offer a move to a different mainstream school or offer home schooling, the only option is the local area PRU which is regulated at a national level by Ofsted (Ogg & Kaill, 2010).

- PRUs have to offer at least 25 hours of education a week (the national standard for pupils to attend school) but each PRU can decide how these hours are achieved.
- Pupils may attend a PRU on a short-term basis to prevent a permanent exclusion; this is around 3 months but may be up to 9 months.

Many teachers within the UK education system will therefore have heard of a PRU but the discourses surrounding them are often negative. At their conception, PRUs (like APs now) were for a wide range of pupils who, for a number of reasons, could not attend their mainstream school. This might be due to illness or school phobia but PRUs also took pupils who had suddenly arrived in the area and had no named school to attend (Teachernet, 2005). However, the main route into a PRU for most young people was, and is, through permanent exclusion from their mainstream school or the risk of it. Government guidance says that, 'The decision to exclude a pupil needs to be robust, fair and defensible' (DfE, 2011) with subsequent advice requiring it to be 'lawful, reasonable and fair' (DfE, 2013/2015). There is no definition of what these terms mean, and they are therefore open to interpretation by individual schools. This means that some young people can be permanently excluded for rather minor acts such as non-compliance to school rules, compared to others who may be excluded for extreme acts of physical assault or carrying a weapon.

PRUs, then, are often only known by mainstream schools to be the place that their unwanted pupils subsequently attend. That many PRUs are small in size adds to the situation that many mainstream staff never have the opportunity to meet with colleagues who work in alternative education settings as their chances of meeting each other are naturally reduced. Adding to this seclusion is the way that many PRUs develop their own cultural expectations of not being public about who they are or what they do and do not necessarily advertise their services or expertise. This therefore adds to the negative discourses surrounding the provisions, for surely educational establishments filled with unwanted and disagreeable young people cannot be positive or purposeful learning environments. PRUs, therefore, are cast in a dark and negative light. Mainstream schools have a role in this as they often

reinforce the negativity of the establishments as a warning to errant pupils before their exclusion is unpreventable.

The mainstream school's responsibility for the excluded pupil ends the moment they start at a PRU. Mainstream schools' legal right to permanently exclude is bound by a responsibility to inform the parents and the governing body of the school correctly and to provide work for the pupil until they start at the PRU. As long as the mainstream school has lawful justification, they are entitled to permanently exclude a pupil and the local authority has a responsibility to provide alternative provision within six days (DfE, 2012).

Discourses in my Former Setting: The Role and Remit of an Individual PRU

As discussed above, each local authority has a PRU or an AP and some have several catering for different ages or needs. How each specific PRU or AP is set up and runs is unique to each individual setting. In my former role, I worked across the entire age range of the provision which caters for children aged five to sixteen. However, when carrying out my doctoral research, I primarily worked with young children aged between five and nine who displayed a range of SEN needs including social, emotional and communication needs. Many were working at an academic level significantly below their peers and had often missed large periods of time away from school due to their behaviour.

Within my former local authority the excluding schools are required to pass on the following information: the form outlining the reason for exclusion (this is where they tick the 'robust', 'reasonable' and 'fair' boxes), a copy of the letter sent to the parents and a very basic outline of the pupil's academic levels and wider needs. Although they were encouraged to share more, this rarely happened, for the act of exclusion and the demonstration of school power ends the relationship in the eyes of many school leaders. It is also important to note that these discourses of power do not solely apply to the pupils; they extend to their parents, who in many cases do not appeal the school's decision to exclude, although they have a legal right to do so. Instead they seem accepting of decisions and narratives put forth by the school about their child; many apparently believe that the school knows best when dealing with their

child's needs. The discourses held by staff within the PRU regarding exclusions are often one of frustration with the education system, both for allowing some young people to be excluded for reasons which seem unfair as well as for the execution of power by schools over parents.

In the UK, it is Black males who are at greatest risk of exclusion from school and those whose life chances are most affected by their lack of educational experiences (Andrews & Palmer, 2016). The North East where my PRU was located, due to the smaller numbers of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds, offers a counter-discourse to the nationwide picture of the type of pupil who is likely to be permanently excluded. Data held by the regional local authorities show that in 2010/2011 in the North East of England, there were 240 exclusions across KS1-4 and of those 220 were recorded as being White British. Therefore, the vast majority of pupils who were excluded in my local area were of White British origins, an alternative paradigm to that which is generally perceived at a macro-level by those in education.

The specific remit of my former PRU was to re-engage these permanently excluded pupils and support them in moving to a new mainstream school. This again offered a different discourse to that generally held by those at both a macro- and micro-level in education who perceive exclusion to be removing such pupils from mainstream schooling. The discourse from the PRU I worked within was one of social engagement, acceptance, and academic progress, as opposed to the need to use power and discipline to control pupils. Pupils largely stayed at the PRU for two terms. However, more complex cases would stay for a full academic year or longer. We offered a broad curriculum with targeted, personalized interventions for those in need. Although making academic progress was often possible, more important was the social and emotional progress that was made. Any academic progress was the positive by-product of a successful placement. Pupils came from across the local authority and the majority were therefore educated outside of their local community when they came to the PRU. Those who lived over two miles away were eligible for free transport in a taxi resulting in many pupils making long journeys. The provision had space for up to 122 young people who were either excluded or at risk of exclusion. However, there was a degree of flexibility given we were the only PRU provision for excluded pupils in the county. This meant that the PRU's

ideal staff-to-pupil ratio of 1:4 often became 1:7, and classrooms designed for eight pupils were forced to accommodate fourteen or more. As a consequence, there was less time to give pupils individual support and if there was a behavioural incident staff support was further reduced for its duration. When all the pupils have behavioural concerns, a setting is (and was) often understaffed at such moments.

In summary, the discourses present within the specific PRU I worked in related to power but from a very different perspective. Instead of discussions around the use of power by staff, the focus was on finding ways to empower the young people we were responsible for. These pupils, subjects of power and discipline at their previous schools, often have limited experience in how to be part of the equal and reciprocal relationship we encouraged them to develop with staff. Whilst the use of disciplinary measures was still required, the focus was not to create hierarchy or distance. Instead measures were influenced by principles of restorative justice which seeks to create a new paradigm in contrast to that of retribution (Hopkins, 2002).

Development of my Research Methodology: Becoming a Journaler

Initially, my research plans were very pupil-centred with a focus on trying to understand their perspectives and views of permanent exclusion. I sought answers around how an authentic voice could be found and which methods were useful in supporting SEN learners to share or record their voice for others. I was keen to understand what learners could add to the wider discourse around education in a PRU. During this earliest stage of my research and writing, I found it advantageous to have a notebook readily accessible, as many thoughts and events occurred that I wanted to record. During the research process my notepad developed into a journal, which ultimately led to a change of research direction to include a focus on teacher voice and my own learning experiences, shared through autoethnography.

In the later stages of my research, I began to hear the plurality of identities and voices recorded in my journals, those of myself as teacher, an academic and my own personal thoughts. Ultimately, I realized that autoethnographic accounts allow an insider perspective to be heard,

specifically that of a teacher learning, not only about her pupils, but about herself as a professional, as she attempts to counter the macro- and micro- discourses she has heard. It is this combination of teacher's voice and the use of autoethnography that I suggest can offer an alternative way of sharing 'new' discourses around permanent exclusion and the PRU system to challenge those that are already established. Who better to share the discourses of working within a PRU than those employed there?

Journaling as a Method of Recording Teacher Voice and Developing a New Discourse

First Research Journal — Personal Development

So, I turn my focus to the use of journaling as a method of developing personal knowledge and forming new discourses. During the earliest stages of my research, my notebook was simply a lined school textbook belonging to a past pupil with the used pages torn out. This early recording was functional and contained to-do lists, *aide memoires* and scribbled notes. They did not contain any reflection or scaffolding of ideas, lacking what Engin suggests that a teacher's diary should contain (Engin, 2011). However, reading Moon's (1999) book, which details the benefits a learning journal can bring to personal development within higher education, encouraged me to change my approach. I started my first research journal with this line: 'Current pupils I have and my thoughts...' (14.9.12 Research Journal 1).

My journal became a place where I discussed thoughts with myself, including emerging concerns about insider/outside research, especially the problem of sharing my 'voice' whilst maintaining my professional identity:

What struck me was that field journals played a massive role in her (Lanas, 2011) research. She recorded so much detail. Sometimes beautifully so [...] The researcher was not part of the community and therefore chose to show her emotions with the kids. I am not in that place and I need to act with them as I always have done. Professionalism? Yet dialogue is a two-way street. (16.9.12 Research Journal 1)

However, these moments were rare, and my journal largely focused on my pupils and the insights that I was having about their worlds and

voices. As time progressed, I began to ask myself what my motivation for using a journal was. I had started to recognize that my focus had shifted at times to being about my own learning. This was something that I felt uncomfortable with initially:

I don't think I have found my own voice yet. True, I have only been keeping one since September, but I am yet to find me in it. Maybe I am too conscious of how other people write and what I should write like. It's funny that I am struggling with my own identity in this when I am so interested in the pupils' identity. (4.1.13 Research Journal 1)

Towards the end of that first journal, my writing took a further change in direction, becoming more personal with an increased focus on my own identity and hardly any mention of the pupils at all:

Candlemas. Thinking back to my time in Chad's Chapel. That world all seems so long ago now yet I am still so fundamentally the same as I was. (2.2.13 Research Journal 1)

At this stage I had not even heard of the term autoethnography and my journals had certainly not been written with the intention of ever sharing them. Yet what they had allowed was a continuation of my own learning both in terms of my knowledge about the pupils and of my own identity. It was this development of my professional voice as a teacher offering a new discourse on working with excluded pupils which became the focus of my second research journal.

Second Research Journal — Development of Teacher Voice

As discussed earlier, the dominant discourses in education in the UK are largely about power and control. However, through my journaling I began to see that there could be a different approach to the power relationship between staff and pupils. My own reflections highlighted that, within my classroom, my use of 'power' was very different to the national cultural climate I was working within and the dominant discourses found in education. I explored my own understanding of my relationship with my pupils, considering whether it was possible to have friendly and loving relationships with pupils. I wondered if the act of working in a PRU had affected my moral compass as a teacher, leading me to view it as a vocation rather than a profession (Buijs, 2005).

I became aware that I was building a counter-discourse to that more commonly accepted:

Reading about vocation in education. One article by Schwarz (Schwarz, 1999) quotes Huebner (Huebner, 1996) saying that vocation in teaching allows teachers to talk about feelings and themselves — I like! [...] So, after all of that reading, what do I make of teaching as a vocation? I think I am more convinced that it is, yet aware that the way we are judged is a professional one with a set of standards, etc. (3.3.13 Research Journal 2)

Through this learning, I began to feel a sense of frustration that my professional voice, at odds with the dominant discourse of power I encountered on a daily basis, was unheard within the micro-setting of my local area and the macro-setting of the wider educational context within the UK. An example of this frustration was when the local area education department applied new restrictions on the physical support that we could give pupils. For us, physical interventions were not a means of exercising power or controlling behaviour: our rationale was to protect the young person, their peers, and staff from injury. However, the education department in the local area established new rules across all schools. Schools must try a wider range of more punitive measures before physical intervention could be used. Whilst I appreciated that within the mainstream schools this had some value, I believed that this was at odds with the type of setting that I worked in and I was angry that there had been no scope to share my thoughts:

So my frustration is this. Change management. How this was decided and translated to us was by word of mouth. No discussion. No evaluation. No understanding of the job we do. They want to cut exclusion rates and MIR rates [major incident reports — the use of physical intervention] but the effect on the rest of the pupils' learning is dramatic. (2.5.13 Research Journal 2)

My journals had allowed me to weave my own thoughts with my research and reading on wider issues. They were a tangible record of my own adult learning and my developing voice as a teacher speaking against the dominant discourses of education. Yet they remained private and book bound. This was to change through the use of autoethnography when I realized that I could share my own learning at an academic level by sharing my own narratives in my thesis.

The Use of Autoethnography as a Means of Sharing Teacher Voice and Alternative Discourses

I was actually six months into my research when, having realized that my journals and emerging writing had become really focused on my own learning, I stumbled across autoethnography as a legitimate methodology. It was a chance reading of a text by Moriarty with the title 'Leaving the blood in' (Moriarty, 2013) that made me realize that, without knowing it, I was writing autoethnographically. Moriarty's title summed up all that I felt about my own writing so far. However, I also realized that I had taken on a new battle with a new set of dominant discourses: traditional academia. Moriarty sums this up succinctly:

I suppose he helped me to believe that I could do it on my own terms but that I had to be realistic about what those terms were in relation to a dominant and oppressive discourse that had thrived for hundreds of years. Let me make it clear: I did not knock down any walls when I completed my thesis but I tried to take part in helping those already at work building the tunnel through, the bridge over and the road around the concrete mass that is conventional academic research. (Moriarty, 2013, p. 75)

Whilst I found some validity in the criticisms of the method as discussed by Delamont (Delamont, 2009), I found a greater wealth of material about the use of autoethnography to share adult experiences of their own learning in an open and accessible way. Although the evocative nature of some of this writing, such as that by Ellis (Ellis, 2004), was not something that I felt professionally comfortable with, I encountered writing by a range of people involved within education. One author who became important for my own research was Clough (Clough, 2002), who wrote about his own experiences as a teacher using fictionalized narratives to protect his professional identity and the identities of the pupils he wrote about. This went beyond simply anonymizing his writing. He created entire scenes and situations that had not necessarily happened in the manner in which he presented them yet contained the 'truth' of the events that had occurred.

Combining both autoethnography and fictionalization in this way enabled me to discuss my learning experiences in my thesis, share my voice as a teacher and show an alternative educational discourse about

working in a PRU whilst maintaining the professionalism required of me in my role as a teacher. Specifically relating to discourses of power and discipline, I was able to share my own stories and those of my pupils and show how these relationships can be positive, balanced and shape each other (Clandinin et al., 2006). The voices of insiders, such as practitioner researchers like me, are able to provide an honest and reliable understanding of the impact of educational discourses in PRU settings as well as offering an alternative perspective. There is a wealth of experience and knowledge hidden in classrooms all over the United Kingdom, yet it is largely unseen. However, insider research can achieve an understanding that an outsider might not as successfully achieve (Brannick & Coghlan, 2007) and this is especially true regarding the sharing of discourses from specific settings which may be counter to those at a macro-level.

The Use of Journaling in Education Settings

As previously discussed, my use of a journal grew out of keeping a notebook and was then further influenced by reading academic research (Moon, 1999). I continued to use it beyond the end of my research as I became aware that it was a tool with wider uses. Keeping a journal was not a natural act and was a discipline I needed to learn. As a child, I had repeatedly tried to be an active writer and keep a journal, influenced by prolific writers such as Jane Austen. I was never successful and grew into an adult who assumed that I had nothing worthy of being written about.

After I started to use a journal for my thesis, I began to understand that I had a misconception about what, and who, a journal was for. My doctoral journals were not written to be shared with anyone else but for me alone. I grew to understand that my journal was a 'paper mirror' rather than a document I needed to construct to appease an unknown audience (Hubbs & Brand, 2005). This awareness meant that my writing became free. I was able to write about and discuss challenging subjects. My journal became a safe 'space' where I could write my way through demanding situations — and there were many in a setting that was undergoing cultural change. This space was important: there were often issues that I did not want to discuss with colleagues who,

like me, were struggling to protect their own emotional and mental wellbeing.

In the UK, the teaching profession has been subjected to many changes at a macro-level which have impacted upon the micro-level working lives of staff. In 2015, 10% of teachers left the profession (Worth et al., 2015). Many of them cited the negative impact of teaching on their wellbeing and the lack of support for this at a school level (Simon & Johnson, 2015). Journaling enabled me to identify and address issues that were affecting my wellbeing at an early stage. This self-reflection, using my journal as a mirror, meant that I was able to work through some of my concerns, often finding my inner voice an aid in problem-solving (Boden et al., 2006). Keeping a journal enabled me to make sense of my professional life as a teacher and align this to my personal beliefs; to find a degree of security in knowing who I was and being able to maintain this self-belief. In turn, this meant that I was able to understand that the negative experiences I was having at work were not a personal attack but were instead the product of the changing climate within education.

Conclusions

In this chapter I have highlighted the current dominant discourses within the UK education system relating to power and discipline which are punitive in nature and balanced in the favour of the adults in schools. I have shown how these dominant discourses have influenced schools at an individual level through having a direct effect on their behaviour policies and school ethos. I have then shown how a journal, and the space it creates to express voice through autoethnography, can be used as a tool to enable a different discourse; one that counters that which is accepted as the established norm. Staff working in education during periods of cultural change (or personal stress) could effectively use journals to foster a sense of wellbeing.

To maintain the continued development of teacher voices through the use of autoethnography and fictionalized narratives to counter the dominant discourses, is crucial in shaping the education system at a micro- and subsequently macro-level. Current discourses of power and discipline have created a narrative whereby pupils who are permanently

excluded and are educated in a PRU are viewed negatively and are seen as both perpetrators of discord and a challenge to the authority and power of adults in schools. Such pupils are seen as requiring disciplinary measures to readdress the power balance. The current discourses also lead to a belief that all adults in education share this hierarchical viewpoint and this allows the discourses to be continually perpetuated.

Current movements within the UK education system which began as grassroots initiatives (such as The Chartered College of Teaching and WomenEd), are beginning to bridge the gap between the discourses from within individual classrooms and those held at both local authority and national levels. However, it is also important to develop the use of teacher voice at an individual level to enable professionals to share their own narratives of experience, some of which may offer a counter-discourse to that which is generally accepted. There is still a lot to be done to strengthen links between the micro-level of individual school development and ethos and macro-level Government policy. It would be beneficial if future research were to map the influence that such personal learning at the micro-level of individual school development and ethos can have at the macro-level of Government policy.

References

- Andrews, K. & Palmer, L.A. (2016). *Blackness in Britain*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Boden, C.J., Cook, D., Lasker-Scott, T., Moore, S. & Shelton, D. (2006). Five perspectives on reflective journaling. *Adult Learning*, 17 (1–4): 11–15. <https://doi.org/10.1177/104515950601700105>
- Brannick, T. & Coghlan, D. (2007). In defence of being ‘native’: The case for insider academic research. *Organizational Research Methods*, 10: 59–74. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1094428106289253>
- Britzman, D. (1986). Cultural myths in the making of a teacher: Biography and social structure in teacher education. *Harvard Educational Review*, 56: 442–57.
- Buijs, J. (2005). Teaching: Profession or vocation. *Journal of Catholic Education*, 8 (3): 326–45. <http://dx.doi.org/10.15365/joce.0803042013>
- Children’s Commissioner Report. (2012). *They never give up on you: School Exclusions Enquiry*. <https://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/They-never-give-up-on-you-final-report.pdf>

- Clandinin, D.J., Huber, J., Huber, M., Murphy, M.S., Orr, A.M., Pearce, M. & Steeves, P. (2006). *Composing diverse identities: Narrative inquiries into the interwoven lives of children and teachers*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Clough, P. (2002). *Narratives and fictions in educational research*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.
- Delamont, S. (2009). The only honest thing: Autoethnography, reflexivity and small crises in fieldwork. *Ethnography and Education*, 4: 51–63. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17457820802703507>
- Delpit, L. (1988). The silenced dialogue: Power and pedagogy in educating other people's children. *Harvard Educational Review*, 58: 280–99.
- DfE (2012). *Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units*. London: DfE. No longer available but referred to in 2017 update, pp. 3–4: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/641418/20170831_Exclusion_Stat_guidance_Web_version.pdf. 2012 regulations: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2012/1033/made>
- DfE (2013/2015). *Use of reasonable force*. London: DfE. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/444051/Use_of_reasonable_force_advice_Reviewed_July_2015.pdf
- DfE (2016). *Behaviour and discipline in schools — a guide for headteachers and school staff*. London: DfE. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/488034/Behaviour_and_Discipline_in_Schools_-_A_guide_for_headteachers_and_School_Staff.pdf
- Ellis, C. (2004). *The ethnographic I: A methodological novel about autoethnography*. Walnut Creek, CA: Altamira Press.
- Engin, M. (2011). Research diary: A tool for scaffolding. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 10. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/160940691101000308>
- Foucault, M. (1989/1969). *Archaeology of knowledge*. London: Routledge.
- Foucault, M. (1995/1977). *Discipline and punish: The birth of the prison* (2nd English edn). New York: Vintage Books.
- Hopkins, B. (2002). Restorative justice in schools. *Support for Learning*, 17: 144–49. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9604.00254>
- Hubbs, D.L. & Brand, C.F. (2005). The paper mirror: Understanding reflective journaling. *The Journal of Experiential Education*, 28(1): 60–71. <https://doi.org/10.1177/105382590502800107>
- Huebner, D. (1996). Educational foundations for dialogue. *Religious Education*. 91: 582–88.

- Lanas, M. (2011). How can non-verbalized emotions in the field be addressed in research? *International Journal of Research & Method in Education*, 34: 131–45. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1743727X.2011.578822>
- Moon, J.A. (1999). *Learning journals: A handbook for academics, students and professional development*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Moriarty, J. (2013). Leaving the blood in: Experiences with an autoethnographic doctoral thesis. In: Short, N.P., Turner, L. & Grant, A. (eds), *Contemporary British Autoethnography*. Rotterdam: Sense.
- Ogg, T. & Kaill, E. (2010). *A new secret garden? Alternative provision, exclusion and children's rights*. London: Civitas. <http://www.civitas.org.uk/pdf/NewSecretGarden.pdf>
- Sachs, J. (2001). Teacher professional identity: Competing discourses, competing outcomes. *Journal of Education Policy*, 16: 149–61. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02680930116819>
- Schwarz, G.E. (1999). Teaching as vocation: Enabling ethical practice. *The Educational Forum*, 63: 23–29. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131729808984383>
- Simon, N.S. & Johnson, S.M. (2015). Teacher turnover in high poverty schools: What we know and can do. *Teachers College Record*, 117(3): 1–36. <https://www.tcrecord.org> ID Number: 17810
- Teachernet (2005). *Guidance for local authorities and schools: Pupil referral units and alternative provision (LEA/0024–2005)*. No longer available but referred to in OFSTED (2007) Pupil referral units, 070019, footnote 2. <https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/6542/1/Pupil%20referral%20units%20establishing%20successful%20practice%20in%20pupil%20referral%20units%20and%20local%20authorities%20PDF%20format%29.doc.pdf>
- Uitto, M. & Syrjälä, L. (2008). Body, caring and power in teacher-pupil relationships: Encounters in former pupils' memories. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research*, 52: 355–371. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00313830802184517>
- UNESCO (1994). *The Salamanca statement and framework for action on special needs education*. Salamanca, Spain: UNESCO & Ministry of Education. http://www.unesco.org/education/pdf/SALAMA_E.PDF
- Worth, J., Bamford, S. & Durbin, B. (2015). *Should I stay or should I go? NFER analysis of teachers joining and leaving the profession*. Slough, UK: National Foundation for Educational Research.