A grounded theory study exploring the intersection between pupil-teacher relationships and pupil alienation from the secondary classroom

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Contents

Acknowledgements

Dedications

This thesis is dedicated to:

My husband, best friend and emotional rock, Chris. You have patiently listened to me repeatedly read the same sentences out loud, remained calm when I unrealistically expected you to guess what I was thinking, and maintained an unwavering belief in me to produce this thesis. Your feedback (however brutally honest) has been invaluable, and I am indebted to you for the encouragement and humour you have always provided me.

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Thesis Abstract

This thesis builds on the established body of research in pupil-teacher relationships by examining their intersection with pupil alienation from school. A consensus has been reached in the literature that the quality of interactions between pupils and teachers has wide-reaching implications on classroom behaviour, social interactions, and academic achievement. However, there is limited knowledge in the field of pupil alienation from school and even less research examining how this interacts with pupil-teacher relationships.

The study takes a ground theory research design to address this gap in knowledge by exploring the experiences of pupils and teachers based at a secondary school. During their time at school, pupil participants have become known by senior leaders for repeated reports by staff as displaying challenging behaviour. Subsequently, these pupils have often struggled to form effective relationships with some of their teachers. Qualitative data were collected through semi-structured interviews with both pupils and teachers. Participants' perceptions and experiences were explored, both positive and negative, to develop an understanding of the perspectives of both actors in reciprocal relationships. This was triangulated with data collected using Pianta's Student-Teacher Relationship Scale (2001) to analyse teachers' perceptions of their relationships with pupils.

The methodological framework for this grounded theory diverges from the popular constructivist design and is, instead, influenced by the classic approach. It is developed to be situated in a critical realist philosophy, emphasising the importance of the emancipatory goal of critical realism. Analysis of the data identified that alienated pupils frequently have difficult relationships with their teachers and discovered a subgroup of pupils who experienced more extreme forms of alienation. An implicit pupil-teacher social contract is presented, describing the emergence of observable actions through the causative mechanism inherent to critical realism. The social contract rests upon the concepts of mutual respect and power. When a pupil believes the contract to have been breached, through the perceived violation of one of these concepts, pupil-teacher relationships begin to deteriorate. Critical

incidents were found to be instrumental in some pupils' perceptions of negative relationships. The critical incidents were found to mostly occur in the initial stages of interaction between teachers and pupils, suggesting that this period is significant in the development of negative relationships.

In addition to contributing empirical research to the field of pupil-teacher relationships and examining their association with pupil alienation from school, this study also contributes to grounded theory discourse. The development of a critical realist grounded theory research design is suggested as being suitable for educational research where there is an emancipatory goal. Results from this study are useful to the school where data were collected and may be of wider use in the field of education. It would be particularly relevant for initial teacher training, the development of continued professional development for in-service teachers, and for school and national policymakers.

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List Of Abbreviations

OECD – Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development

DfE – Department for Education

OFSTED – Office for Standards in Education

PGCE – Post-Graduate Certificate in Education

BERA – British Educational Research Association

SPSS – Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

GT – Grounded Theory

CR – Critical Realism

BSP – Basic Social Process

CLCH – Closeness Low, Conflict High group of pupils

STRS – Student-Teacher Relationship Scale

EP – Emergent Property

AEP – Antecedent Emergent Property

PCM – Possible Causative Mechanism

Chapter 1 – Introduction

1.1 – Research Rationale

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (2007) states that the Achilles' heel of the English education system is the poor performance and progression of pupils in international comparative studies. The Conservative-Liberal Democrat Coalition government sought to address this through education reform in 2010. The opening statement of the Department for Education's White Paper stated that the most important goal is to ensure that the UK's education system stands up against international competitors, and this is *"what will define our economic growth and our country's future"* (DfE, 2010 p. 3).

While both documents refer to the need for the UK education system to perform better on an international stage, they offer different perspectives. The OECD (2007) suggests the underlying reason for poor international performance is due to pupil disaffection, whereas any measures to address such problems, or even acknowledge them, are absent from the White Paper (DfE, 2010). This suggests that the government at the time did not see tackling disaffection as an approach to increasing academic performance. This is of concern, especially as it is argued that a culture of punishments still resides in modern education (Swann, 2013), making it difficult to see how their reforms will be effective without a focus on repairing pupil disaffection. Disaffected pupils, or social outsiders (Freire, 1970), are alienated from their school environment, and belong only by nature of their physical presence (Swann, 2013). This ongoing concern about pupil alienation has long been recognised as a problem that needs to be addressed (Trusty and Dooley-Dickey, 1993).

In the years since the white paper (DfE, 2010), the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) has changed its approach to school inspections (Ofsted, 2019). The education inspection framework has introduced a "behaviours and attitudes" (Ofsted, 2019 p. 10) subsection which specifically mentions that relationships between teachers and pupils should reflect a positive culture anchored in respect.

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The language used signals a shift in approach and is based on research carried out by Ofsted and Spielman (2019) who cite positive relationships between teachers and pupils as important for a flexible and personalised approach to behaviour management. This departs from the 'Below the Radar' report (Ofsted, 2014) which was based on a survey commissioned by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector. This report discusses low-level behaviour problems, which have failed to be addressed by senior leadership teams in school. The 26-page report about the challenges of pupil behaviour only makes one reference to relationships, and this refers to teacher-parent relationships rather than those based in classrooms. As pupil-teacher relationships have been widely researched, reaching a consensus that they have a significant impact on an individual's development throughout their education (Davis, 2003; Kohn, 2006; Sointu et al., 2017), the change in direction marked by the latest education inspection framework (Ofsted, 2019) is welcomed. Studies have shown that adolescents are more likely to lose enjoyment and interest at the start of the transition to secondary school (Eccles and Roeser, 2009), with suggestions that effective pupil-teacher relationships can have a protective effect against disengagement (Gorard and See, 2011; Duffy and Elwood, 2013; Maclellan, 2014; Guvenc, 2015). Although research around the association between academic progress and pupils experiencing alienation in schools is limited, the extant literature suggests that pupils who experience alienation-like characteristics such as disaffection and lack of engagement are less likely to make as much academic progress as their non-alienated peers (Lohmann, 2010; Dotterer and Lowe, 2011; Putwain, Nicholson, Edwards, 2016). On the other hand, positive relationships between pupils and teachers have been shown to reduce rates of pupil dropout (Hopkins, 2007; Zabloski and Milacci, 2012; Mullet, 2014; Yildiz and Alpkan, 2015). However, there were studies found which explore how pupils experience these relationships with reference to alienation from, or inclusion to, their learning.

This study seeks to explore the important overlap between the phenomena of alienation and pupil-teacher relationships using a critical realist lens of analysis. Positive relationships between pupils and teachers are associated with the social, emotional and cognitive development of pupils (Hamre and

Pianta, 2001; Barth et al., 2004; Kington, 2012; Darwich, Hymel and Waterhouse, 2012), so this study seeks to contribute to this field. It uses a grounded theory methodology to understand the constructs which lead to effective pupil-teacher relationships and how to reduce alienation in secondary schools.

1.2 – Positionality Statement

Researcher positionality, referring to how the researcher is situated within the context of the study and the community or participants being studied (Coghlan and Brydon-Miller, 2014) holds importance for research which employs the use of qualitative data. Researchers are expected to locate themselves within the study, showing an awareness of how their own experiences and values have influenced the research design and analysis (Creswell and Poth, 2018). A frequently shared position is that of researcher 'insiderness' or 'outsiderness' (Moore, 2012), where the researcher acknowledges their position as a member of the community being studied (insider) or a non-member (outsider). Other aspects which are considered important to share are the background, interests, personal history, and philosophical perspective of the researcher which are relevant to orient the research (Holmes, 2020; Creswell and Poth, 2018). A good positionality statement should make invisible decisions made by the researcher visible to the reader (Holmes, 2020; Hampton, Reeping and Ozkan, 2021). To do this effectively, first-person pronouns will be used during this section to ensure clarity.

Firstly, as a researcher undertaking a professional doctorate, I have a wide range of experiences in education. After graduating from university, I completed my PGCE and worked as a teacher until 2016 when I became a PGCE tutor and teacher educator. This experience, particularly my time as an assistant headteacher where I noticed large discrepancies in how different teachers form relationships with pupils, was a driving factor in the decision to embark on a doctorate in education. I have always valued the importance of pupil-teacher relationships and believe I can form positive relationships quickly with pupils and colleagues. Although this has undoubtedly influenced the topic for research, I

maintained an awareness of my position throughout the process and used memos as a method to check that my personal experiences and values did not influence the data analysis.

The second aspect which is important to discuss is my position on the insider-outsider spectrum. As an employee of the University of Worcester teaching on the Secondary Science PGCE, we have many schools within our partnership. The site for data collection was one of these schools, meaning that I frequently have students from my PGCE group on teaching placement at the school. Whilst the good relationship I have built with the school, afforded by my PGCE tutor role, was useful in gaining entrée to conduct the research, it did present some challenges which required careful navigation. Firstly, during the data collection period, I had two trainee teachers on placement at the school and was subsequently expected to complete 'tutor visits' as part of my job. I was aware that my presence on site fulfilling two different roles could cause some confusion to staff and students. I, therefore, chose to dress in less formal attire when conducting research to reinforce that power was held equally between participants and researcher (Solberg, 2014). When visiting the school in my role as a PGCE tutor, I dressed in a suit indicating my presence as a professional and not a research student. Secondly, my role as a university lecturer also meant that I had varying levels of relationship with staff employed at the school. For this reason, I did not collect data from any teachers with whom I already had a pre-existing relationship; teachers who participated in the study were only those I had never had any interaction with before. This helped maintain my position as an outsider researcher.

The final aspect for discussion is that of my personal philosophical perspective. When embarking on the research process, it is important to engage with the philosophical and methodological debate. For me, the methodological debate held relevance in the wider philosophical meaning aligned with education. This was in addition to the ontological and epistemological perspectives which drove my chosen methodology. Ontology, dealing with the nature of being or reality, and epistemology, dealing with the nature of knowledge, were given careful consideration before starting the research (Creswell,

2009; Creswell and Poth, 2018). For the research design to be considered robust, the ontological and epistemological paradigm must suit the research aims and the researcher's personal beliefs about reality (Mills, Bonner and Francis, 2006; Lincoln, Lynham and Guba, 2018). During the taught phase of the doctorate programme, an initial exploration of philosophical perspectives and research designs gave rise to an opportunity to reflect on the advantages and disadvantages of using various research approaches. I faced an inability to fully commit to the philosophical underpinnings of any particular methodology which led to many approaches being dismissed early on. On further reflection, it became apparent this lack of commitment to one approach was due to my personal philosophical framework.

I had always considered myself to be a positivist; my natural sciences background led me to believe that scientific exploration enabled knowledge and reality to be aligned. However, as I immersed myself deeper into the social sciences, I began to question my claims to knowledge while remaining resolute in my positivist ontology. To explore my understanding of the ontological and epistemological paradigms, I reflected on the chemical concept of matter, using diamond as an example. I concluded that a positivist would view a diamond as a giant structure of carbon atoms held together by strong covalent bonds. On the contrary, a phenomenologist would place importance on the experiences of individuals and how they interpret their world. One could see a diamond as a representation of love whilst another could see the diamond as a symbol of wealth. Neither phenomenologist is wrong, but I found I could not escape a feeling that this ontological analysis ignores the true origins of the diamond.

Examining this through an interpretivist lens, Weber (2004) used an extreme analogy to explore interpretivism's emphasis on perception and interpretation. He suggested it is unlikely that an interpretivist would go so far as to argue that the result of jumping out of a third-story window is a perception, not reality. Taking a lead from Weber's (2004) somewhat confrontational analogy, I further explored my understanding of a diamond by asking the question "what if someone suggested a diamond is made from oxygen atoms rather than carbon atoms?". Regardless of what philosophical

worldview one holds, this statement is wrong; specifically, it is ontologically wrong. However, I found

that I was now examining the scientific process through a different lens. Scientific breakthroughs often

change our understanding of the natural world. Knowledge of the atom did not come until many years

after the discovery of diamonds, so the ontological reality of diamonds was not initially known and is

still subject to change if another breakthrough gives us a better understanding of the real world.

The change from a natural science background to a social scientist researcher allowed me to explore

my philosophical worldview and softened my hard positivist outlook. Reflecting on the nature of a

diamond helped me understand how I saw the world. I hold a view that is ontologically positivist, yet

epistemologically interpretivist. This philosophical worldview means I believe there is one true reality

independent of human interaction, but that this reality is coded and therefore limited by human

interpretation and language. In terms of this study, this means that I believe there are structures

existing in reality that are not directly observable but cause directly observable events. The observable

events, recalled by participants and manifested as deliberate misbehaviour and disengagement, are

subject to human interpretation and can thus limit one's understanding of reality. The research design

and accompanying philosophy needed to accommodate such a perspective to allow for the

identification of *real* structures and the mechanisms which can lead to observable phenomena.

1.3 – Research Context

This study adopted a critical realist philosophy, catering for the ontological and epistemological

position held, to underpin a classic grounded theory methodology. The research sought to understand

the intersection between pupil-teacher relationships and the experience of pupil alienation from

secondary school. Mixed data were collected to deepen the understanding of these concepts and to

give the opportunity to compare and integrate qualitative and quantitative data. All data were

collected from a mixed comprehensive secondary school in the West Midlands. Data collected were i)

a teacher questionnaire on perceptions of their relationships with pupils, ii) interviews with teachers,

and iii) interviews with alienated pupils. All pupils who were included in the study were subject to inclusion criteria to ensure that the sample remained theoretically relevant. The next section explains the structure of the thesis and how the iterative process of grounded theory has been presented in a linear format.

1.4 – Structure of the Thesis

Due to the iterative nature of grounded theory methodology, literature was not reviewed, and data were not collected and analysed in a traditional research order (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Glaser, 1978; Holton and Walsh, 2017). Although the rationale and justification for this are discussed in their respective chapters, an outline of the structure and approach to this thesis is presented here.

The structure of this thesis follows the guidance for writing classic grounded theory for publication (Holton and Walsh, 2017) which states that:

> *The first issue with writing grounded theory for an audience is the fact that no written words can fully describe the iterative GT process, the incessant iterations between data and conceptualization, or the final conceptual leap that illuminate a grounded theory. If one attempts to describe fully in writing, and in truth, the way their GT research was conducted, it is most probable that few people would read or understand it.*

(Holton and Walsh, 2017 p. 135)

Holton and Walsh (2017) suggest that whilst the approach to conducting grounded theory research will not follow the dominant methods, the written output can follow the traditional format. Data gathered for this study were both qualitative and quantitative, bringing additional challenges when presenting the iterations between the two. Holton and Walsh (2017) discuss the benefits of using mixed data to generate a grounded theory and make suggestions to overcome the difficulties associated with presenting research using both types of data. The biggest obstacle to overcome when presenting data used in this study echoed the problem Holton and Walsh faced; "all data (qualitative

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and quantitative) were analyzed as one set" (Holton and Walsh, 2017 p. 191). In the production of the grounded theory presented in this thesis, the quantitative data were analysed after the qualitative data had been coded and analysis was underway. However, the significant proportion of data analysis, where the theory began to emerge, was done in parallel with both types of data informing each other. Holton and Walsh (2017) expand on this approach to suggest that when writing up the findings, they are presented in a way as close as possible to the way the theory unfolded. In this study, initial discoveries from the qualitative data were identified first, shared in chapter five. Following this, quantitative data were analysed (chapter six) before being constantly compared against the qualitative findings (chapter seven) to check for opportunities for categories to be integrated as the theory continued to emerge. Holton and Walsh (2017) suggest that each type of data are presented in separate sections, keeping quantitative and qualitative data analysis techniques separate. For this reason, analysis of the qualitative data is presented in chapter five, followed by findings from the quantitative data presented in chapter six. Chapter seven presents the triangulation and constant comparison between quantitative and qualitative data. By organising the findings in this way, quantitative and qualitative data analysis techniques are kept separate, and the process of theory discovery is kept as close to the real process as possible (Holton and Walsh, 2017).

The organisation of the thesis is detailed below:

Chapter 1 – Introduction: This chapter provides context to the research by examining how the educational philosophy within the United Kingdom has changed its stance on the importance of pupil-teacher relationships. It also provides a structure of the thesis, giving a brief outline of each chapter.

Chapter 2 – Literature Review: This chapter is presented outside its chronological order. The literature review process was started during the final phases of data collection and continued into data analysis, providing theoretical comparisons. It is presented in the traditional place, as suggested by Holton and Walsh (2017), and begins with an overview of the contested nature of the literature review in

grounded theory methodology. It continues to provide details of how and when the literature review was conducted and examines the extant literature surrounding pupil-teacher relationships and pupil alienation from schools. The review considers the concept of alienation and explores the definitions of school alienation that exist before reviewing characteristics of pupil-teacher relationships and how they are associated with pupil behaviours. It concludes by examining the intersection between alienation and pupil-teacher relationships. The chapter also provides the research question and aims for the study.

Chapter 3 – Methodology and Research Design: It was important to spend time to carefully construct the methodology and research design for this study. The methodology used is heavily influenced by classic grounded theory and situated within a critical realist philosophy. No data were collected until the methodology and research design were fully constructed and ethical approval granted. This chapter outlines these philosophical and methodological underpinnings for the study. It details how the philosophy of critical realism was used to frame a classic approach to grounded theory methodology and how care was taken to collect data ethically.

Chapter 4 – Methods of Analysis: The analytical procedures which were used to analyse the data are presented in this chapter. The methods of analysis are based on classic grounded theory and have been adjusted to ensure they fit within a critical realist philosophy. Exposition is given to justify changes made to classic grounded theory by categorising the changes into one of two features. These aspects, "avoiding the epistemic fallacy" and "avoiding induction", are offered as a means to ensure the research remained critically realist. Examples are given throughout the chapter, using data gathered in the study, to give clarity and aid understanding of how the methods of analysis were used to generate the theory.

Chapter 5 – Discovery of Five Possible Causative Mechanisms: This chapter introduces five possible causative mechanisms. These were identified through constant comparison between conceptual categories and emergent properties generated through analysis of the qualitative data. Each possible

causative mechanism is explored in depth, giving quotes from participants throughout to explicate the findings. The possible causative mechanisms are presented alongside a figure summarising the interaction between its constructs. These form the basis of the emerging grounded theory.

Chapter 6 – Findings from Quantitative Data: This chapter deals with the analysis and findings from the quantitative data. This data, gathered from teachers filling in questionnaires about their relationships with pupil participants, gave closeness and conflict scores for each pupil-teacher relationship. The chapter details how analysis of the data led to the discovery of a subgroup of pupils who experienced a more extreme version of alienation.

Chapter 7 – Triangulation of Qualitative and Quantitative Data: This chapter deals with the triangulation of, and constant comparison between, qualitative and quantitative data. Through these processes, one possible causative mechanism identified in chapter five has some changes made to it and a sixth possible causative mechanism is generated. The findings presented in this chapter were generated through an iterative process and involve constant comparison between both sets of data.

Chapter 8 – Discussion: The discussion chapter gives detail on the final round of constant comparison which was used in this study. The six possible causative mechanisms are compared against each other and literature, allowing the core category of contractualism to emerge. This process of integration led to the emergence of two "deeper level possible causative mechanisms" – mutual respect and power, which are situated within literature and used to develop the theory. The established literature, which the findings are positioned within, comes from that which formed the review in chapter two and from new theoretical comparisons, particularly contractualism, ensuring the theory is relevant. As theoretical comparisons draw to a close, the substantive theory is presented before stating how the research aims were addressed.

Chapter 9 – Conclusion: The final chapter evaluates the credibility of the substantive theory using the principles provided by classic grounded theory methodology. The theory is evaluated against how well it 'fits', 'works', is 'relevant' and is 'modifiable' – the four evaluative criteria of classic grounded theory.

The chapter continues by presenting the study's contributions to research, professional practice, and grounded theory discourse. After this, limitations of the study are discussed which lead to suggestions and recommendations for further research. The conclusion, summarising the thesis, is included at the end of this chapter.

Chapter 2 – Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter gives a background to the extant literature surrounding pupil alienation from school and pupil-teacher relationships. It begins with a discussion about the contested nature of literature reviews in grounded theory methodology and gives a rationale for the timing and type of literature review which was conducted and the questions the review sets out to address. The chapter presents the questions explored in the review process and covers the various subjects which have been identified from consulting the literature. These are grouped into two themes; the first is that which relates to pupil alienation from school (section 2.4) and the second examines pupil-teacher relationships (section 2.5). The chapter concludes by examining the intersection of these two areas (section 2.6) and identifies a gap in knowledge that this study aims to address. Finally, the research question and aims which guided the research for this thesis are shared.

2.2 – The Type of Literature Review

The literature review process was informed by Paré et al.'s (2015) typology of literature reviews and was based upon the "narrative" review model (Paré et al, 2015 p. 185). The narrative review seeks to identify what knowledge already exists on a topic but does not attempt to review all the literature systematically or comprehensively (Paré et al., 2015). Instead, this approach reports the findings in a summarised format (Green, Johnson and Adams, 2006), allowing for themes to be elicited as part of the write-up. The need to identify themes and constructs were considered important for making theoretical comparisons (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) as part of the grounded theory research design. The narrative review process has an overarching goal to summarise prior knowledge and requires the scope of the questions for the literature review to be broad (Paré et al., 2015). Additionally, it allows for the inclusion of conceptual and empirical sources, reflective of the classic grounded theory dictum "all is data" (Glaser, 2001 p. 145).

A criticism of the narrative review is that sources are not required to be subjected to rigorous quality appraisal and that explanations of the review process are not needed to be communicated explicitly (Green, Johnson and Adams, 2006; Paré et al., 2015). To address the latter point, the searches, databases, and delimiting criteria used to identify the literature included in this narrative review are included in **Appendix A**. Additionally, it has been suggested that narrative reviews can avoid the pitfalls presented by not fully appraising all sources according to their quality. This, it is proposed, can be done by maintaining an awareness of bias when interpreting literature and constructing arguments (Green, Johnson and Adams, 2006). Although these are identified as limitations of this style of literature review, they also point to a reason why this review was considered to be appropriate for use in a grounded theory methodology. Narrative reviews are frequently used as a means of bringing "practitioners up to date" (Green, Johnson and Adams, 2006 p. 103) with literature in their field without the need to systematically consult the extant knowledge. Taking this approach over a systematic literature review helped limit the extent to which the literature influenced data analysis. Furthermore, a systematic literature review would require some sources to be excluded based on the quality of their evidence due to their strict exclusion criteria. This, again, would not fit with Glaser's "all is data" approach (2001 p. 145) and could have unintentional consequences on the number of theoretical comparisons which were able to be made.

2.3 – The Position of the Literature Review

As the research design for this study was a grounded theory methodology, the literature review was not carried out at the start of the research process, as is common in most research approaches (Creswell and Poth, 2018). Glaser and Strauss (1967) suggest that a researcher using grounded theory should not engage with a full literature review before completing data analysis. Indeed, it is accepted that one of the defining concepts of the inductive process of grounded theory is to approach the research with an open mind, not seeing the data through a pre-determined lens and coloured by earlier ideas (Charmaz, 2006). Charmaz's summary of the "disputed literature review" (Charmaz, 2006

p. 151) explores key historical insights to the various interpretations of how and when to conduct the literature review. The consensus is that delaying the review avoids preconceived ideas clouding the researcher's analysis of the data, but when, and sometimes whether, the literature review should be conducted is still highly contested.

As a research student, there is an expectation that a literature review should be conducted at the start of the research process (McGhee, Marland and Atkinson, 2007; Dunne, 2011). The plethora of literature discussing when a grounded theorist should carry this out has led to a now widely accepted view that the literature should be consulted to assess the viability and originality of the research (Martin, 2006; Urquhart, 2013; Nathaniel, 2006). Payne's (2007) suggestion that grounded theory is an effective methodology for when there is a paucity of knowledge implies that, without conducting some form of literature review, it is difficult to be confident of where the gap in knowledge exists (McGhee, Marland and Atkinson, 2007). On a more practical level, it would be impossible to conduct research as a complete "theoretical virgin" (Dunne, 2011 p.115) as ethical approval and construction of the research questions require knowledge of the field, including the identification of where there is a lack of research (McCann and Clark, 2003; Payne, 2007; Dunne, 2011).

However, classic grounded theory (Glaser, 1992), advancing a solely inductive approach, makes the assumption theory is already residing in data. It is suggested that the theory is waiting to be discovered (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Glaser's view on how a classic grounded theory should approach literature is very clear:

> *Grounded theory's very strong dicta are a) do not do a literature review in the substantive area and related areas where the research is to be done, and b) when the grounded theory is nearly completed during the sorting and writing up, then the literature search in the substantive area can be accomplished and woven into the theory as more data for constant comparison.*

(Glaser, 1998 p. 67)

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This study has used a methodology relying on the classic approach to grounded theory. As Glaser's view continues to be held by classic grounded theorists (Nathaniel, 2006; Holton, 2007) and it was important to maintain a degree of objectivity in the initial phase of data collection, the literature review was delayed until emergent properties (Looker, Vickers and Kington, 2021) were identified. Looker, Vickers and Kington (2021) argue that this allows for the first set of conceptual categories to be discovered without influence from literature, maintaining the classic view that the literature review should not be conducted before data collection. Conducting a literature review at this stage allowed for theoretical comparisons to be made as the conceptual categories are discovered and possible causative mechanisms (Looker, Vickers and Kington, 2021) begin to develop. One of Glaser's (1998) arguments against conducting the literature review prior to collecting data is that often the literature most relevant to the research cannot be predicted prior to data analysis. This could, therefore, render the review meaningless to the findings (Dick, 2007). There was a large volume of unpredictability in this thesis resulting in a much wider range of literature being reviewed as part of the discussion chapter.

That said, a decision, informed by Holton and Walsh (2017), was made to present the literature review in the traditional place within the thesis, prior to the research design and findings. It was felt that this position was more appropriate than attempting to present it in a way representative of the process by interrupting other chapters. However, it is important to note that this literature review was started after most of the data had been collected and it continued alongside the early stages of analysis, providing opportunities for theoretical comparisons to be made.

2.3 – Review Questions

The purpose of a literature review is usually to provide a rationale for the problem of a study and to position it within existing literature (Creswell, 2009; Creswell and Poth, 2018). Typically, it is completed early into the research process (Besen-Cassino and Cassino, 2018) to establish an understanding of current research and is often used to develop or refine research questions (Besen-Cassino and Cassino,

2018). As already explored, the review was not conducted at the start of the research process, so the purpose was not simply to provide a rationale. Whilst the review presented does provide justification for the research (Creswell and Poth, 2018), it also serves as a departure point for theoretical comparisons to be made. Theoretical comparisons are an integral part of the grounded theory process, where the emerging theory is compared against existing literature, providing an opportunity for its inclusion in the final substantive theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Glaser, 1978). As such, this literature review was guided by the following broad questions:

- What research exists on pupil alienation from secondary schools and how is it conceptualised?

- How are pupil-teacher relationships described in existing literature?

- How is the intersection between pupil-teacher relationships and pupil alienation explored in the literature?

This approach allowed for a broad range of literature to be included, providing more data for theoretical comparisons to be made and acted as an opportunity to confirm the rationale for this study.

2.4 – The Concept of Alienation

As a concept, alienation was first described by in 1844 by Karl Marx as a way of being estranged from the reality of labour (1964). Marx described this lack of connectedness as an ongoing cycle of making oneself alien to the products formed from labour, the products of labour, and their associated reality. Although there has been a debate about whether Marx's description of alienation is existentialist (Anjum, 2019), the term was explored at length by the great existentialist philosophers. For example, Sartre suggested that alienation is ontological, stating it is part of the human condition, where individuals can become alienated from their own actions and are made aware of this by the presence of others (Sartre, 2003; Birt, 1986). This concept of being separated from labour or actions led to the rise in the sociological understanding of the term, where an individual can feel estranged from society or a community.

The term alienation was later refined by Seeman (1959; 1975) into an empirical concept (Hascher and Hadjar, 2018), bringing the study of this to prominence in the social sciences. Seeman's work on alienation aimed to unify the concept, which was described using various synonyms in sociological studies (Seeman, 1959). Seeman identified five ways in which the term alienation had been used; powerlessness, meaninglessness, normlessness, isolation, and self-estrangement. These have since been refined into the four accepted categories for school alienation; powerlessness, meaninglessness, normlessness and social estrangement (Mau, 1992; Hascher and Hadjar, 2018).

2.4.1 – Alienation, Disengagement or Disaffection?

Despite his attempt to unify the concept, the variety of synonyms identified by Seeman (1959), was replicated in the literature included in this review. Whilst the majority of this language did use the terms offered by Seeman, 'disengagement' and 'disaffection' were also used to describe similar experiences. This section summarises and integrates these terms with the concept of alienation.

Swann (2013) uses the term 'disaffected' to describe the phenomenon. Using Freire's (1970 p.55) description of societal 'outsiders', Swann (2013 p.240) identified that disaffected pupils "belong to school and wider society, for they belong by virtue of being there". This depiction of disaffected pupils has some resonance with the concept of alienation. The description of belonging, by virtue of being physically present, implies pupils are continuing to attend school but they are demonstrating a lack of engagement with their education. This can be classified as alienation, as Brown, Higgins and Paulsen (2003) describe alienation as a student being estranged from the learning process; in other words, alienated pupils can be physically present, but disengaged from learning. Literature on alienation has recognised it as a widespread problem in schools, mostly in adolescence (Trusty and Dooley-Dickey, 1993), with students having feelings of alienation evoked when confronted with a multitude of educational obstacles (Newmann, 1981). By describing disaffected students as belonging by virtue of their presence, Swann (2013) suggests there is a degree of overlap between the terms of 'disaffection'

and 'alienation'. Belonging, even at the level of physical presence, suggests a sense of community, however, it is possible that a pupil feels disempowered to take control of their learning and thus experiencing alienation – a sense of detachment from the community. They feel like they do not belong.

Furthermore, Preston et al. (2017) use Schultz's definition of alienation (2011) which uses the term engagement to describe it, implying that disengagement must have occurred for alienation to be observed. Preston et al. (2017) do not make a case for differences between alienation and disengagement. In their review of research to develop a framework for the establishment of effective high schools, they consider eight elements of high school improvement and use the terms 'disengagement' and 'alienation' interchangeably.

Archambault et al. (2009) examined how pupil engagement at secondary school is linked with early dropout rates. Their large-scale study (n=11,827) collected survey data related to school engagement from pupils aged 12-16 and compared it with dropout rates, finding that a multidimensional framework of engagement can be used as a predictor for pupils not completing school (Archambault et al., 2009). Although pupil alienation is referred to during the article, the primary focus is on the multidimensional nature of engagement and disengagement. Archambault et al. (2009) make a clear distinction between the terminology used by stressing that engagement and alienation are not to be understood as antonyms. They, instead, suggest that a decrease in school interest and motivation, observed as disengagement, are precursors to pupil alienation. That is to say that a lack of engagement is antecedent to alienation, not synonymous with it.

The overlap between the use and understanding of these terms demonstrates the lack of consistency used to describe the phenomenon in the literature. The following sections explore the features and manifestations of alienations before establishing an agreed definition for the term.

2.4.2 – School Alienation

Seeman's (1959; 1975) descriptions of alienation are still used today and have been applied to various research areas. This is not surprising, as although Seeman's lens is sociologically oriented, his definitions are psychological in nature (Hascher and Hadjar, 2018), focusing on how individuals interact and interpret their situation. Indeed, this resonates with Eccles and Roeser's review of research where they explored the impact schools have on pupil development during adolescence (2009). They identified that pupils' initial disengagement with school is psychological, followed by observable, behavioural actions.

School alienation, as a stressor in adolescent life, has been examined in attempts to help understand the significant challenges it presents to schools (Morinaj and Hascher, 2018). The body of literature on school alienation has attempted to streamline the broad definitions offered by Seeman (1959), but a consensus has yet to be achieved. For example, Hascher and Hadjar (2018), in their examination of the extant literature to arrive at a definition for school alienation, highlight that the majority of the research can also be sorted by the purpose of the study; that is, those that focus on i) the various forms of alienation from schools, ii) the symptoms and indicators, and iii) concepts which specify pupil alienation as an empirical construct. A recurring theme throughout much of the literature was the interconnectedness between relationships and pupil alienation from school. Whilst some research approached this directly and others had it featured as a part of an analysis or context, it is prevalent throughout the literature and, as such, will be a common theme throughout the review.

2.4.3 – Powerlessness as a Predominant Feature of School Alienation

When conducting literature searches (see **Appendix A)**, the terms 'meaninglessness' and 'normlessness' returned far fewer results than 'powerlessness'. 'Meaninglessness' returned one relevant result which was not returned when 'powerlessness' was searched for (Chhuon and Wallace, 2014), however, their article used the term belonging, without direct reference to the literature on alienation. 'Normlessness' did not return any results which were not included in the first literature

search or in the literature search for 'powerlessness'. This suggests that although meaninglessness and normlessness are important factors for examining school alienation, as descriptors of alienation they are not discussed as distinct from powerlessness. Conversely, in the 19 relevant returns from the search for 'powerlessness', ten did not include any reference to meaninglessness and eight did not include any reference to normlessness. Thus, from the literature found for this review, powerlessness seems to be the predominant feature of alienation at school.

In their examination of alienation at the wider, sociological level, Anderson et al. (2016) identified a significant lack of similarity in the definitions used in social science studies that explore powerlessness. In an attempt to add clarity to the definition of powerlessness, Anderson et al. (2016) explored how the term also subsumed the concepts of 'grit' and 'hope'. This has, arguably, muddied the waters further by introducing new language to a concept already struggling for an agreed definition. However, in contrast to the lack of a sociological definition of alienation (Anderson et al., 2016), powerlessness as a description of school alienation does appear to have reached consensus. In fact, many of the articles included in this literature review that use powerlessness as a term, often do so without an explicit definition applied, suggesting its meaning is well understood. Those articles which do attempt to define it tend to phrase their definition in terms of pupils' inability to exert change or their own agency (Brown and Rodriguez, 2009; Taines, 2012; Lewis et al., 2015; Anderson et al., 2016; Kumari and Kumar, 2017). Seeman originally defined powerlessness as ''the expectancy or probability held by the individual that his own behavior [sic] cannot determine the occurrence of the outcomes, or reinforcements, he seeks'' (1959 p. 784). As the definitions used in the educational literature resonate with Seeman's original definition, this definition of powerlessness was adopted for this study.

2.4.4 – Manifestations of Pupil Alienation in School

Brown and Rodriguez (2009), when comparing the experiences of two young males alienated from school, stressed the importance of the conceptual context where alienation is experienced. Their argument that individual and institutional concepts cannot be separated, but are instead intrinsically

linked, sets the scene for studies to focus on the interrelated nature between social actors and their institutions, or a person's agency and the structures where they can (or cannot) exert their agency. This inability for a pupil to exert their own agency leaves them feeling powerless (Seeman, 1959), raising the importance of Brown and Rodriguez' (2009) proposition that "the relationships between individuals' perceptions and actions and school-based factors need to be interrogated rather than negated" (p.222). Although their research was driven by a focus on pupils who 'drop-out' of school, Brown and Rodriguez found that alienation was a precursor to pupils leaving education without the minimum expected achievement. Furthermore, they identified that powerlessness, academic isolation and social isolation were emergent themes. Interestingly, the terminology seems to have emerged from the data without conducting a literature review to identify that powerlessness and social isolation are well-documented descriptors of alienation.

As one might expect, alienation has been shown to manifest itself when pupils transition between schools (Schultz and Rubel, 2011), particularly resulting in feelings of distrust, lack of self-worth and non-belonging. The participants in Schultz and Rubel's phenomenological study (2011) attribute feelings of social isolation to school transitions and describe a sense of not fitting in, suggesting they are additionally experiencing a sense of normlessness. Furthermore, it was found that peer relationships among those who experienced feelings of alienation were instrumental in securing a sense of anti-establishment and thus strengthening school alienation. Although these feelings are reported through a phenomenological lens and are, therefore, not immediately generalisable, they are consistent with other research. For example, peer relationships have been found to be of particular importance to adolescent children, where they express a strong desire to be liked by peers. This has been found in the extensive literature review by Rubin, Bukowski and Parker (1998) and through quantitative studies carried out by Safipour et al. (2011) and Morinaj et al. (2017). This suggests the desire to fit in with a friendship group can sometimes come at the cost of engaging with school life.

Strong, positive pupil-teacher relationships have been identified through both qualitative and quantitative studies as crucial to preventing school alienation (Taylor 2001; Schultz and Rubel, 2011; Studsrød and Bru, 2011; 2012). Alienated pupils have described a feeling of powerlessness when exploring negative relationships with their teachers but do tend to have at least one positive relationship with a teacher (Schultz and Rubel, 2011). These positive relationships are characterised by teachers who express concern for pupils' wellbeing in contrast to negative relationships which enhanced feeling of school alienation (Schultz and Rubel, 2011). It has previously been shown that strong early, interpersonal relationships between teachers and pupils play an important role in the social development of all pupils in a school (Hamre and Pianta, 2001). Although this study does not discuss alienation explicitly, it does refer to positive attachments, indicating that a sense of belonging, or being-with, helps pupils to develop socially. This supports the idea that relationships between pupils and teachers play an important role in feelings of alienation.

Two further themes identified by Schultz and Rubel (2011) suggest that school alienation can also be attributed to a failure to progress academically and an unstable home life. The description of the failure to progress academically, although similar to the theme of academic isolation (Brown and Rodriguez, 2009) differs by their conceptualisations. Academic isolation describes the circumstances when pupils are denied equal access to an appropriate curriculum and is often put in place by the school to manage pupils' challenging behaviour (Brown and Rodriguez, 2009). A failure to progress academically is described as a result of other school alienation processes (Schultz and Rubel, 2011), suggesting it is an indicator rather than a description of alienation. The second theme, an unstable home life, is described as causing some problems at school (Schultz and Rubel, 2011). This, however, was paired with a feeling of school as a sanctuary from home. This contradiction, where pupils misbehave at school whilst simultaneously referring to it as a sanctuary from an unstable home environment imply this is also an indicator rather than a descriptor of alienation. It appears that for those pupils whose unstable home life is causing problems at school, there might be an association

between the dynamics at home and school alienation. However, it is important to note that not all pupils experiencing alienation from school will have an unstable home life.

Meaninglessness, expressed as a lack of purpose, relevance or usefulness (Bridgeland, 2006; Schultz, 2011) was found to be linked to powerlessness and social factors in school alienation of physical education lessons (Spencer-Cavaliere and Rintoul, 2012). This has also been reflected in studies which have looked at alienation across the school. Chhuon and Wallace (2014) found that pupils described their work as pointless when their teachers demonstrated little concern for the subject or pupils as individuals. Their description of the "just teach" (p. 390) approach strengthens the position that favourable pupil-teacher relationships are positively correlated with feelings of inclusion. Chhuon and Wallace (2014) depict pupils as wanting to have engaging relationships with their teachers, describing the effect of having teachers who show care towards pupils as positively influencing school children's academic inclusion whilst those who do not show care have the opposite effect. In their paper, Brown and Rodriguez (2009) observed that when teacher instruction was meaningless, indicators of alienation became more obvious. Again, this is linked to quality of pupil-teacher relationships, with pupils describing these interactions using terminology which reflects a lack of teacher care towards their pupils.

A similar pattern was found by Amitay and Rahav (2018) whose grounded theory study identified that teachers showing care to pupils helped to create meaningful learning. They reported that pupils, who had experienced alienating encounters with teachers in the past, were able to talk about positive relationships they subsequently formed. They propose that by achieving this level of professional attachment, the teachers have been able to counteract the feelings of alienation experienced by the pupils. This suggests that for attachment to occur, meaningful relationships must be present, supporting Seeman's description of meaninglessness as a construct of alienation (1959; 1975). Preston et al. (2017), further add to the discourse, offering that feelings of powerlessness are relevant when

conceptualising alienation and attachment. They suggest that attachment, engagement and commitment are in direct opposition to alienation, defining attachment as the degree individuals feel part of their school community, including a sense of belonging.

2.4.5 – Approaching a Definition of Alienation in School

Seeman's attempts to add clarity to the term alienation resulted in the variety of categorisations identified earlier. In the years since these definitions were first suggested, educational researchers have carried out studies examining pupil alienation from schools using a variety of different definitions. Hascher and Hadjar's comprehensive review of the extant literature on school alienation (2018) characterise Seeman's approach to the conceptualisations of alienation as very broad. With much of the literature on alienation citing Seeman, it is understandable why subsequent attempts to define alienation lack homogeneity. It appears that, as a psychological construct, alienation either cannot easily be defined, or it is such a broad concept that it requires multiple, specific definitions.

Attempts to apply alienation to schools have ranged from using the term by relating it to atypical behaviour (Schultz, 2011), equating it with estrangement (Wang, 2010), defining it in terms of intellectual alienation (Brown and Rodriguez, 2009) and discussing alienation with reference to marginalisation due to race (Berryman and Eley, 2019). In addition to those sources which use the terms disengagement (Archambault et al., 2009; Preston et al., 2017), and disaffection (Swann, 2013), school alienation has also been described in terms of the relationship an individual has with the culture of the school (Davis, 2003).

For such a relationship to be classified as alienated, the individual must exhibit characteristics such as indifference or hostility which cause or lead to suffering (Hascher and Hadjar, 2018). Although attempts to provide clarity on the term have, in fact, done the opposite, there is a degree of congruence running throughout all the studies included in this review; each definition or different use of the term fits into one of Seeman's (1959; 1975) definitions. The themes of powerlessness,

meaninglessness, normlessness and estrangement run strongly throughout the studies, whether explicitly or implicitly. Of the attempts to define alienation, Hascher and Hadjar's (2018) attempt is the most comprehensive. Their systematic analysis of extant literature considers the multiple ideas which are accepted as being part of the concept; alienation is a set of negative values, is relative, is multidimensional and consists of cognitive and affective components (Hascher and Hadjar, 2018). They use these ideas to formulate the following definition of school alienation:

> *a specific set of negative attitudes towards social and academic domains of schooling comprising cognitive and affective elements. While the cognitive dimension relates to student appraisals of the school environment, the affective dimension relates to their feelings. These negative attitudes develop and change over time in terms of a state and can solidify into a disposition.*

> Hascher and Hadjar (2018, p. 179)

This definition, encompassing powerlessness, meaninglessness, normlessness and social estrangement (Seeman, 1959; 1975; Mau, 1992) captures the constructs and experiences identified in the literature. It also refers to a set of negative attitudes, which has also been a recurring theme in the literature review. For these reasons, this definition of school alienation has been adopted for use in this thesis.

2.5 – Pupil-Teacher Relationships

The way a pupil experiences school, and particularly their relationships with teachers, has been shown to have a profound effect on their engagement at school (Ang, 2005; Murray and Greenberg, 2001), academic development (Martin and Collie, 2019) and psychological well-being (Hall-Lande et al., 2007). All four of these empirical studies used a large sample size, ranging from 227 (Ang, 2005) to 4,746 (Hall-Lande et al., 2007) participants, and their findings were consistent with previously emerging themes. Ang's study, although the smallest and located within Singapore only, used

confirmatory factor analysis to determine the validity of a student-teacher relationship inventory and found convergent, discriminant and predictive validity (2005). This was consistent with previous findings, including Murry and Greenberg's findings from American pupils (2001), indicating pupil-teacher relationships are associated with pupil engagement at school. Furthermore, studies have shown that whilst positive relationships between teachers and pupils can be beneficial for pupils' happiness (Hall-Lande et al., 2007), an absence of positive relationships can lead to maladjustment, early school withdrawal and school alienation (Fenzel, 2000; Hascher, 2003; Morinaj and Hascher, 2018). The findings from these studies are based upon data from participants across multiple countries (the U.S.A., The Netherlands, Czech Republic, Switzerland, Germany and Australia) suggesting these phenomena are observable across the globe.

Pupil-teacher relationships are understood to have a substantial impact on the development of a child throughout their education (Davis, 2003; Kohl, 2006; Sointu et al., 2017). According to Pianta (1999), the structure of the classroom is social and emotional, providing context for why relationships between pupils and teachers are so important. Furthermore, positive pupil-teacher relationships have been recognised to contribute to the social, emotional and cognitive development of children (Hamre and Pianta, 2001; Murray and Greenberg, 2000; Barth et al., 2004; Kington, 2012; Darwich, Hymel and Waterhouse, 2012). The dynamics between pupils and teachers have been shown to have wide-reaching implications. For example, it has been shown that relationships between teachers and pupils can have implications on behaviours that extend when compulsory schooling is completed (Wentzel, 2003; Bacchini, Esposito, and Affuso, 2009; Cassidy, 2009).

2.5.1 – Positive Pupil-Teacher Relationships

Glasser, as a proponent for using positive pupil-teacher relationships as a foundation for effective teaching, argues against an interventionist approach (1990, 1992), where there is a belief that 'naughty' children display bad behaviour. Glasser, instead, advances an interactionalist approach,

emphasizing positive relationships between pupils and teachers, suggesting that negative relationships can result in bad behaviour from pupils (1992). Positive pupil-teacher relationships can be characterised by mutual respect and pupil participation in the classroom (Glasser, 1992; Payne, 2005). There has been a well-established link between teachers showing personal interest in their pupils and fostering mutual respect (Moos, 1979). These positive relationships have been characterised through a description that when emotional 'deposits' are made to the students, emotional 'withdrawals' are avoided (Covey, 1989), developing mutual respect.

Mutual respect is accepted in the literature as an important characteristic of a positive pupil-teacher relationship (Pianta, 1999; Hughes, Gleason, and Zhang, 2005; Pianta and Stuhlman, 2004; Hadjukova et al., 2014). Additionally, positive relationships, as an aspect of a wider supportive school ethos, have been associated with a strengthening of pupils' positive mental health (Glover et al., 2000; Stuhlman and Pianta, 2002). They have also been shown to have beneficial impacts on pupils' self-esteem (Agirdag et al., 2012), academic achievement (Payne, 2005; Ryan and Patrick, 2001) and behaviour (Wentzel, 2002; Meehan, Hughes and Cavell, 2003; Hadjukova, Hornby and Cushman, 2014), demonstrating the importance of these positive relationships. Cornelius-White's (2007) meta-analysis confirms these findings. He found that when education practices focused on the development of positive pupil-teacher relationships, by placing importance on learner-centred education, there can be a wealth of positive outcomes. These include increased attainment and a reduction in negative behaviour and pupil absenteeism.

2.5.2 – Pupil-Teacher Relationships and Effective Teaching

If an effective education can be summarised as one that improves student achievement (Coe et al., 2014), then effective teachers can be understood to be those who contribute to improving student achievement. The measure of this effectiveness within schools tends to rely upon the standardised tests at the end of a stage of learning (Coe et al., 2014), but this does not provide an understanding of

the interactions between teachers and pupils within the classroom which ultimately leads to academic achievement. The characteristics of teachers which contribute to effective teaching have been difficult to categorise, as they are subject to interpretation and perspective changes (Coe et al., 2014; Brown et al., 2014). One of the characteristics which has been identified as constituting a 'good teacher' (Marzano, Pickering and Pollock, 2001) is the effectiveness in forming quality pupil-teacher relationships. Rogers (1979) suggested that for good learning to take place teachers need to develop their relationships with pupils by demonstrating genuineness, caring, and understanding. Similarly, Stronge (2002) advances that effective teachers know their pupils' needs, personalities, and likes and dislikes, suggesting that when a teacher knows these aspects of their pupils, they can build good relationships with them which ultimately leads to academic success. This is, again, supported by Good and Brophy (2008) and Larrivee (2005) who conclude that effective teachers must build positive pupil-teacher relationships by taking time to understand the personalities and needs of their pupils. Another characteristic that can be observed to have an impact on pupil-teacher relationships is that of humour. Humour has been shown to act as an effective mechanism to establish a good rapport with pupils (Arnon and Reichel, 2007; Kington et al., 2012; Hargreaves, Elhawary and Mahgoub, 2018). Although humour has been described as a characteristic that gives teachers positive pupil evaluations (Aleamoni, 1999), it has been cited alongside making lessons fun as important for developing relationships (Fauth et al., 2018), particularly with boys (Hargreaves, Elhawary and Mahgoub, 2018). In their work on popular teachers, Fauth et al. (2018) found that characteristics of teachers who pupils identify as popular include self-confidence in the classroom, fostering feelings of respect and warmth, and recognising students. These characteristics fit with the interactionalist approach advanced by Glasser (1990, 1992) who argues against teachers adopting coercive techniques, suggesting that if teachers meet pupils' basic needs such as belonging, security and fun, meaningful learning can take place (Charles and Senter, 2005).

2.5.3 – Pupil-Teacher Relationships and Behaviour

Restorative justice, most academics agree, is an approach to conflict resolution with a focus on repairing harm done after wrongdoing (Carson and Bussler, 2013). A review into restorative justice in UK secondary schools (Hopkins, 2007) identified that application of the philosophy to behaviour management, although still fledgling, had become widespread in schools. Hopkins suggested that the meaning of the term 'restorative' was subject to interpretation and that such interpretation was often determined by the individual's personal philosophy. Despite this subjectivity, the widespread practice of restorative justice in UK schools in 2007 (Hopkins) represented a shift in the way they handled conflict resolution through the management of relationships between pupils and teachers. This, Hopkins argues (2007), is an educational reflection of the social paradigm shift identified by Zehr (1990). Zehr argued that there had been a shift in the way people think about crime and punishment; that a restorative approach, where crime is viewed as a violation of people rather than of the law, should be exercised. This shift in attitude has been reflected in approaches to behaviour management in schools and is arguably a response to the obedience-orientated approach to discipline in the 1960s and 1970s (Scarlett et al., 2009). Senior leadership teams in school are increasingly expected to take a restorative rather than a punitive approach to conflict resolution, often referred to as 'behaviour for learning' (Maulana, Helms-Lorenz and Van de grift, 2017). It has been argued that because effective pupil-teacher relationships form a central component of any restorative approach, it has been difficult for some teachers to adopt (Hopkins, 2007). Those who struggle to form positive relationships with pupils, might struggle to enact a restorative approach to behaviour management. Furthermore, pupils who have been expelled from school, cite negative pupil-teacher relationships as a strong component in their recollections of actions which led to the removal from school (Pomeroy, 1999; Hadjukova et al., 2014). The importance of relationships between pupils and teachers is now accepted as consensus in the literature. The quality of these relationships have repeatedly been shown to mediate behavioural engagement (Roorda et al., 2011; Engels et al., 2016) and academic motivation (Obsuth

et al., 2017; Raufelder et al., 2016), suggesting the assertion that solving behaviour problems can be done through developing positive relationships (Driscoll and Pianta, 2010) is worth exploring.

The argument supporting why good pupil-teacher relationships seems to have a positive effect on behaviour management is suggested to be due to the change in power dynamics which this requires (Macleod, MacAllister and Pirrie, 2012). Glasser's (1990; 1992) interactionalist argument for positive pupil-teacher relationships, requires the teacher to avoid coercive techniques to manage behaviour, thus requiring a redistribution of the power differential (Scarlett et al., 2009). The interactionalist approach assumes teachers and pupils share a responsibility for resolving conflicts (Tauber, 2007) thus empowering the pupil. This contrasts with the authoritarian approach, where the power differential is heavily skewed towards the teacher, restricting student learning through a management style relying heavily on fear (Split et al., 2012; Affouneh and Hargreaves, 2015). The coercive techniques of behaviour management which might be present in the authoritarian approach can damage pupils' feelings of responsibility for their work, and lead to an increase of hostile responses from pupils (Glasser, 1990; Lewis et al., 2008). For the interactionalist, pupils will engage with their teachers because they like and respect them; communication is encouraged to be approached from the perspective where pupils and teachers talk "with each other" (Glasser, 1990; Tauber, 2007, p. 175), fostering mutual respect. Engaging with pupils, on a personal level, has been found to help teachers develop relationships which can find a mutually beneficial power balance, which translates to fewer behaviour problems (Flores and Day, 2006).

2.6 – Pupil-Teacher Relationships and Alienation

Although research on alienation within education is developing an established body of work, there remains a limited volume of literature exploring its intersection with pupil-teacher relationships. (Morinaj et al., 2017). Much of the work on alienation has focused on either the alienation of educators (Pugh and Zhao, 2003; Brooks et al., 2008; Martinez et al., 2016) or pupils from the practice

of education, often in specific areas of education such as physical education (Carlson, 1995; Burkhalter and Wendt, 2001; Spencer-Cavaliere and Rintoul, 2012). Studies focusing on the role pupil-teacher relationships play in the alienation of students from education are sparse. However, it does seem to be clear that effective pupil-teacher relationships have a protective effect against school alienation, whereas pupil-pupil relationships do not (Mahmoudi et al., 2018). Separate research has considered relationships between pupils and teachers, but none of these areas focus on how pupil-teacher relationships impact pupil inclusivity within the classroom. Furthermore, no literature found in the review suggests a theory underpinning how pupil-teacher relationships intersect with school alienation.

2.6.1 – The Intersection of the Phenomena

The current research seems to be grouped into two broad disciplines. The first looks at teacher and pupil behaviours in school environments (Mann, 2005; Hopkins, 2007; Mullet, 2014; Yildiz and Alpkan, 2015) with Mullet (2014) and Hopkins (2007) focusing on restorative practice. The second, and more commonly researched discipline, is concerned with pupil engagement and motivation within the classroom (Harris, 2008; Auman, 2011; Faircloth and Miller, 2011; Gorard and See, 2011; Duffy and Elwood, 2013; Maclellan, 2014; Guvenc, 2015). Findings from this literature review appear to suggest a link between relationships and engagement. As examined earlier, although there is not an agreement as to whether alienation and disengagement can be used synonymously, there is a consensus that the two terms are closely related. Teachers, through positive relationships, have been found to enhance students' academic motivation (Guvenc, 2015) and develop pupils' self-confidence (Maclellan, 2014). It is thought this is due to an increase in pupil motivation associated with the positive pupil-teacher relationship (Duffy and Elwood, 2013). Duffy and Elwood (2013) found that when pupils were disengaged from school, they still felt that education was important, suggesting a feeling of powerlessness might be held by those students. However, engagement has also been found to be linked to many factors apart from pupil-teacher relationships. Pupil engagement can be

associated with framing learning around important issues (Faircloth and Miller, 2011) and the development of collaborative learning projects (Auman, 2011). These associations are not immediately comparable to alienation, further supporting the earlier statement that disengagement and alienation are not synonymous. In fact, a definition of the term engagement has been shown to problematic as teachers understand it in a variety of ways (Harris, 2008).

There are some standalone pieces of research which have come closer to the substantive area of study, but the focus of these is often narrow with a specific emphasis on groups of pupils. For example, Zabloski and Milacci (2012) conducted a case study on 'gifted drop-outs'. While providing a useful insight into the influence relationships (between pupils and teachers) have on the drop-out of gifted pupils from school environments, it has limited application outside the phenomena of gifted students. Research into the influence positive pupil-teacher relationships have on preventing pupil dropout from school (Gallagher, 2002; Davis and Dupper, 2004) report extreme alienation and disengagement from the academic institution. However, these again focus on pupils who have been labelled with a specific educational need. The substantive area of interest and an under-researched area of alienation is concerned with those pupils who are not labelled with a special need and who do not get as far as dropping out or being excluded from school. Research into pupils who can be described as 'going under the radar' of the school's focus is scarce. The scope of this thesis is to investigate pupils who are alienated from their learning and who do not receive any personalised intervention.

Phelan, Cao and Davidson's (1992) research in the U.S.A. gathered data from pupils who are alienated but did not include the "most alienated/troubled and extreme at-risk students" (p. 21). They found these pupils perform better when they have a good relationship with teachers. This phenomenon has been demonstrated in reverse many times, where poor pupil-teacher relationships can lead to reduced outcomes (Pianta and Stuhlman, 2004; Baker, 2006; O'Connor and McCartney, 2007). However, these studies, whilst looking at the substantive area of research, have prioritised the voices

of teachers over pupils. The collected data and subsequently derived evidence relating to pupils' behaviours in the studies comes mainly from questionnaires completed by teachers. Spilt and Koomen's study, (2009) which had similar findings, also includes interview-led data in addition to quantitative data, but it was heavily focused on the voices of teachers. One of the aims of this thesis is to give voice to alienated participants. As a result, relationships are referred to as pupil-teacher relationships; this does not seek to devalue the role of the teacher, but to strengthen the importance of the pupil in the dynamic.

2.6.2 – The Gap in Knowledge

This review has identified a wealth of literature conceptualising the term 'alienation' and examining pupil-teacher relationships. It has also demonstrated that there is an emerging body of research in the field of pupil alienation from school. However, this has yet to be examined to the same breadth and depth of pupil-teacher relationships. The literature consulted in this review shows an established consensus on the association between pupil-teacher relationships and a variety of social and academic outcomes for pupils, including school engagement. Despite this, there is scarcity in literature that examines the intersection between pupil-teacher relationships and school engagement through the lens of pupil alienation from school. This review has shown the importance of school alienation as a concept, explored the manifestations of alienation at school and identified research that is beginning to show how pupil-teacher relationships are an important factor in limiting pupil alienation. This field is, however, under-researched and an agreement of how relationships interact with pupil alienation has yet to be reached due to a paucity in research exploring this. This gap in knowledge confirms the focus of this study as an important area for exploration, leading to the refinement of the research question and aims, detailed in the following section.

2.7 – Research Question and Aims

As explained at the start of this chapter, the literature review was delayed, as suggested by Glaser and Strauss (1967), until most of the data had been collected and analysis had started. As a brief literature review had been done during the taught phase of the degree, the research question and aims were therefore already decided upon before conducting the literature review. This gave confidence that the research question was addressing a gap in the knowledge and was subsequently only slightly reframed as a result of reviewing the literature.

One research question guided the study:

- What *real*[1] mechanism(s) exist which lead to pupils experiencing alienation from school?

This question was supported by four research aims:

1. To explore the intersection between pupil-teacher relationships and pupil alienation from schools;
2. To understand pupil and teacher perceptions of the mechanisms and barriers for forming positive pupil-teacher relationships;
3. To give voice to pupils' perceptions of their experiences of alienation and pupil-teacher relationships;
4. To fulfil the emancipatory nature of the critical realist grounded theory methodology.

2.8 – Chapter Summary

This chapter has presented the rationale for the placement and timing of the literature review within the context of the contested nature of reviews within grounded theory methodology. The literature review followed the process of the narrative review model (Paré et al, 2015 p. 185) identifying and presenting the review in themes from across both conceptual and empirical studies. Definitions for key terminology were agreed upon, and powerlessness was identified as the predominant construct relevant to school alienation. The chapter identified a wealth of literature exploring pupil-teacher relationships but found that this volume of literature was not reflected in the fields of school alienation, and even less so in the intersection between the two areas. The rationale for the study was

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[1] *Real* refers to the critical realist domain (Bhaskar, 1978) of reality, explored in detail in chapter three

confirmed through the identification of a gap in knowledge and consulting the literature allowed for the research aims and questions to be reframed and shared.

Chapter three will discuss the methodology used, giving justification and rationale for the chosen approach.

Chapter 3 – Methodology and Research Design

3.1 – Introduction

This chapter establishes the philosophical and methodological framework which guides the data collection and analysis. The chapter begins with an exploration of the philosophy of critical realism. This builds on the positionality statement in chapter one, which shared the ontological and epistemological positions which have guided the methodology and data analysis. Following this, the history of grounded theory, from its discovery by Glaser and Strauss to the subsequent family of grounded theories which have arisen since, provide context for a critical realist grounded theory. The theoretical sampling process employed in this study is outlined, along with the participants and recruitment procedures. Methods of data collection are detailed, demonstrating how they are appropriate for answering the research question. Finally, the chapter explores how the ethical implications of data collection and analysis were carefully considered.

3.2 – Critical Realism

One of the defining claims of critical realism, as a philosophy of meta-reality (Bhaskar, 1978), is the important distinction between knowing and being. Critical realism argues that the world of knowledge is transitive but the world of being is intransitive (Scott, 2010). This places the philosophy towards the positivistic end of the spectrum. However, the different dimensions of reality, claimed by critical realism prevent it from being wholly positivistic. Although a critical realist asserts a singular true reality, they are aware that this reality can manifest itself through a variety of emergent properties. Figure 3.1 shows how the emergence travels upwards through stratified layers of reality to observable actions (Bhaskar, 1978).

Real → Actual → Empirical
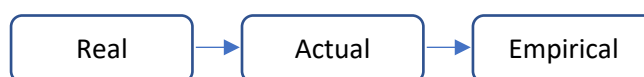
Figure 3.1 Emergent nature of critical realist domains of reality

The boundaries of these three domains; *real*, *actual* and *empirical*, are demarcated by the limits of their ontological and epistemological claims. The *real* domain, focusing on ontology, is where the critical realist perspective of a singular true reality stems from. This domain is where structures and mechanisms occur; they are separate from the way they are experienced, that is to say, they are intransitive (Bhaskar, 1978 p56). The *actual* domain refers to events which may or may not be observable; these events are generated by the mechanisms and structures lying in the real strata. This property of emergence, through stratified reality, is unique to critical realism and separates it from naïve realism which makes an assumption that there is a close correspondence between reality and the terms used to describe it (Bryman, 2016 p.25). Through this generative property of emergence, actions and experiences are observed in the empirical domain, thus the *empirical* domain is entirely epistemological in nature.

Bhaskarian critical realists accept that the emergent properties of objects interact with each other to result in new properties emerging from such combinations (Scott, 2014). These properties rest upon two understandings; i) there is an ontological relationship between structure and agency and ii) that theory or conceptual relationships frame all observational statements (Bhaskar, 1978; Scott, 2014). Applying this philosophy requires the researcher to understand that social, and therefore educational, processes take place in open systems (Scott, 2005; 2014).

It could be argued that a worldview where an objective reality is intransitive does not fit well with sociological research. Cohen, Manion and Morrison's (2017 p. 15) assertion that social science researchers are *"united by their common rejection of the belief that human behaviour is governed by general, universal laws and characterized by underlying regularities"* certainly suggests critical realism is not a philosophy for social research. Creswell (2009, p. 7) agrees, suggesting similar approaches are positivist in nature, with a deterministic philosophy where causes determine outcomes. Indeed, the dearth of social research texts which include critical realism can account for the current under-

labouring of the philosophy (Price and Martin, 2018). Whilst it is true that the ontological primacy given by critical realism resonates with a positivist worldview, there are two key implications which separate it. Firstly, critical realists argue that the researcher's conceptualisation of reality is a way of knowing that reality (Scott, 2010), differentiating themselves from positivists who would argue their conceptualisation directly reflects reality. Secondly, the *actual* strata of reality allows critical realists to include in their explanations theoretical terms which are not directly observable. Unlike positivists, they argue actions that have been observed in the *empirical* domain, might be caused by a theoretical construct in the *actual* domain which was not directly observable. They state the construct must be present for the action to have occurred. This unique generative mechanism of the philosophy is what makes critical realism a suitable philosophy for educational research (Scott, 2010). Furthermore, the critical realist understands and accepts Cohen, Manion and Morrison's (2017 p. 15) statement of a social researcher as one who understands the social world is investigated from the standpoint of the individuals who form part of the ongoing action being researched. It is a philosophy fully aligned with the social scientists' worldview, but with the ability to view the research from a different perspective.

3.3– Selection of the Specific Grounded Theory Approach

Glaser and Strauss' (1967) discovery of grounded theory, which arose in response to the dominance of quantitative methodologies (Corbin and Strauss, 2015 p.6), opened up a new field of research opportunities. Their grounded theory methodology became the most popular form of qualitative analysis in the 50 years following the publication of the discovery of grounded theory (Bryant, 2019).

According to Denzin and Lincoln (1994 p. ix) "their book made a cutting-edge statement because it punctured notions of methodological consensus *and* offered systematic strategies for qualitative research practice". Since its discovery, Bryman (2016) describes grounded theory as having been developed into three separate approaches; classic grounded theory, evolved grounded theory and the constructivist version. Classic grounded theory, also called the Glaserian approach (Bryman, 2016),

requires the researcher to absent their pre-existing knowledge and views from the data and allow theory to emerge directly from the data (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). It gives primacy to discovery and emergence, stating description should not be used as a mode of analysis, and instead only be used in "service of generation" (p. 28). It is intended that the researcher finds a mid-range substantive or formal theory from within the data itself. A substantive theory, developed for a "substantive or empirical area of sociological enquiry" (Glaser, 1978 p.144) is focused on a specific empirical field, whereas a formal theory addresses an abstract or "conceptual area of sociological inquiry" (Glaser, 1978 p.144). Glaser suggests that any particular study can traverse both types of theory, but that the researcher should choose which theory they are intending to develop (1978). The research question for this study "What *real* mechanism(s) exist which lead to pupils experiencing alienation from school?" suggests that either a formal theory (*real* mechanisms) or substantive theory (pupils experiencing alienation) could be developed. However, as formal theories usually require the comparison of multiple substantive theories (Glaser, 1978), it was decided the appropriate approach for this study was to develop a substantive theory.

Glaser and Strauss' disagreement, or schism (Holton, 2008), on the nature of the methodology led to a separation of approaches (Bryman, 2016) and the development of Strauss and Corbin's evolved grounded theory (Chamberlain-Salaun, Mills and Usher, 2013). Glaser criticised Strauss and Corbin's (2015) progression as being overly prescriptive, with too many rules, emphasising the development of concepts instead of theories (Glaser, 1992; Bryman, 2016). Strauss and Corbin's grounded theory (2015) differs from the classic approach primarily through the change in approach to methods and analysis to include deduction in addition to the inductive approach (Singh and Estefan, 2018). Strauss and Corbin's addition of axial coding (2015) and the use of a conditional matrix (2015) strengthened the deductive element and separated it from the classic methodology. This formulaic approach, which identifies dimensions as umbrellas under which data can be explored, is a significant departure from the flexibility of the original. A third approach to grounded theory methodologies, lying in the

constructivist paradigm, differs by arguing that theories do not emerge, but are co-constructed by the researcher through interaction and collaboration with participants (Charmaz, 2006). Charmaz, as the main proponent of this version, argues that the researcher's personal philosophies and backgrounds shape the way the data is interpreted and thus the theory generated is a co-construction of meaning. Charmaz's grounded theory argues that the researcher cannot bracket out their personal influences and thus states that the theory generated must lie in the constructivist paradigm (2006).

To decide which approach to use, the personal philosophy driving the study was compared and considered against the research question being asked. Of the varieties of grounded theory, the constructivist methodology is the area which has been the most common for more than the past decade (Mills, Bonner and Francis, 2006). However, as explored earlier, this research is being approached through a lens that gives primacy to ontology over epistemology. This worldview emphasizes the research being data driven rather than on the interpretation of the collected data. As a result of this, Charmaz's framework for constructing a grounded theory methodology was rejected as its philosophical underpinnings are incompatible with the philosophy behind this study.

Although taking Strauss and Corbin's (2015) more structured approach to the methodology could present a degree of inflexibility in the research design, this is not reason enough to reject this approach. Indeed, their systematic method of axial coding lends itself well to a research design which considers ontology of higher importance than epistemology. However, as with the constructivist design, Strauss and Corbin's evolved grounded theory was rejected from a philosophical perspective. One of the assumptions which underpin the way Strauss and Corbin interpret data is where interior worlds are created and recreated through interaction; where there is no divide between the exterior and interior world (Blumer, 1969 and Corbin and Strauss, 2015). This worldview is at odds with one that considers an objective reality standing separate to that of knowing.

The focus of classic grounded theory on discovery and emergence emphasises the importance of data. Glaser's statement that "all is data" (Glaser, 2001 p. 145) shows that the initial focus on a classic research design must not only begin with reality but gives a greater importance to this, before interpretations can take place. Furthermore, the classic design's use of the term 'discovery' suggests the theory emerges from the data and thus restricts the creativity of the researcher when identifying the theory. This restriction in creativity is most closely aligned with a philosophy that places greater importance on being than knowing. For the reasons outlined above, the research design employed in this study is influenced by classic grounded theory.

3.4 – The Critical Realist Grounded Theory Methodology

The following section will establish how the grounded theory methodology adopted will fulfil critical realism's attempt to establish causal explanations for experiences in the *empirical* domain (Bhaskar, 1978). The critical realist approach to grounded theory considers critical realism's emphasis on being and provides a framework where epistemologically framed experiences are worked backwards to establish the social, ontologically framed, mechanism which led to the action (Looker, Vickers and Kington, 2021). Classic grounded theory's methodological approach complements this principle of critical realism. It prioritises discovery and emergence (Age, 2011), taking the stance that theory emerges from the data, much like the critical realist's assumption that *empirical* phenomena emerge from the *real* domain of reality (Bhaskar, 1978). Critical realism has an emancipatory objective which has been well explored by Wilson and Greenhill (2004) who make strong arguments that these emancipatory goals should not be marginalised to make way for more pluralistic approaches. Bhaskar (1978; 1986) describes the emancipatory objective as the necessity to move people from *demi-reality* to the *cosmic envelope*. Bhaskar's (2002) description of *demi-reality* includes exploitation, oppression, conflict and alienation. His describes the *cosmic envelope* as a state of being where these characteristics are not present. Bhaskar makes it very clear that the critical realist must address issues of inequality:

> *The principle of sufficient practical reason states that there must be ground for difference. If there is no such ground then we are rationally impelled to remove them*
>
> (Bhaskar, 1998, p. 676).

This normative intent is further expanded on by Belfrage and Hauf (2016) who state that the principal concern for critical realist research must be to enable social emancipation. Critical realist grounded theory should therefore be done when the intention of the research is to not only to explore sociological aspects of inequality, but to discover actions which can address this (Bhaskar, 2016; Hoddy, 2019):

> *The critical realist lens, when applied, requires the researcher to focus on individuals or groups of individuals who are alienated from society or micro societies through action, inaction or personal characteristics which generate difference*
>
> (Looker, Vickers and Kington, 2021)

This emancipatory objective is where the intersection of critical realism and classic grounded theory is at its strongest. The aim of classic grounded theory is to generate a substantive theory which gives suggestions for how the initial concern can be addressed (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Furthermore, it is stated that the intentions of this theory should be to predict and explain behaviour, or to equip practitioners with tools to help control situations (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). The purpose of this study was to produce a theory which facilitates teachers' ability to manage predicted classroom behaviours to reduce pupil alienation. This provided an emancipatory purpose for the research, which classic grounded theory is capable of handling. The intended outcome was a substantive theory, situated in the voices of alienated participants, which provided suggested resolutions to move those experiencing *demi-reality* into the *cosmic envelope* (Bhaskar, 2002).

Central to grounded theory methodologies is the identification of a basic social process (BSP) (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Parry, 1998; Parker and Myrick, 2011). The BSP is generated around the core

category and should have two or more emergent stages (Glaser and Holton, 2005). The critical realist grounded theory methodology used in this study identified the core category as the BSP with the emergent stages corresponding to the emergent mechanisms in critical realism.

The remainder of this chapter will explore how the construction of the research design maintained the classic grounded theory approach.

3.5 – Theoretical Sample

Theoretical sampling refers to the process of ensuring that data is collected from sources which allow for generation of theory rather than creating a descriptive account (Breckenridge and Jones, 2009). This means that the process of data collection is directed by the emerging theory, whereby the researcher follows up leads allowing the data to be refined (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). This section outlines how the sample was theoretically relevant.

3.5.1 – The Participants

Participants were pupils and staff based at a secondary school in the West Midlands. Pupils included in the sample were initially identified by pastoral leads in the school as previously demonstrating a lack of engagement in school life; specifically, there must have been a history of intervention by the school previously put in place. It was important to be cautious when using the term 'alienation' whilst on site to ensure participants could be recruited from the widest field possible. Newmann's (1981) identification of the many constructs of alienation highlights how people could interpret this word differently leading to a premature narrowing of data. Although literature on alienation has recognised it as a widespread problem in schools, mostly in adolescence (Trusty and Dooley-Dickey, 1993), there is a lack of consensus on a definition of the term, so the wider description of "demonstrating a lack of engagement in school life" was used. This usually meant the pupils had been in a 'not insignificant'

amount of trouble in the past, defined by the pastoral leads as being placed on report, having parents called in to discuss behaviour and attitude or multiple incidents on the school behaviour log.

Keeping the inclusion criteria intentionally vague led some pastoral leads to identify pupils who were well behaved but showed a lack of engagement in school life by being the 'social outsiders'. Pupils in this category were not theoretically relevant and had generally received informal intervention through means of peer support and teacher monitoring, discounting them from inclusion in the study. Members of staff who participated in the research took one of two roles. They either volunteered to be part of the research by consenting to recorded interviews and spoke about their experiences of pupil-teacher relationships or completed a questionnaire about a pupil they taught who had given an interview. Some teachers took both roles allowing for greater triangulation of their data. As the research progressed, theoretical sampling allowed for pupils and staff who were named by participants to be sought for recruitment. Additionally, as staff completed the questionnaire, they were asked if they would be willing to take part in a follow up interview. Those staff members whose questionnaire data suggested they would provide theoretically relevant data were contacted for a follow up interview. This continual refinement of the sample was controlled by the emergent theory, ensuring that all data collected were relevant as saturation approached.

3.5.2 – Recruitment Procedure

Recruitment procedures were carefully considered and involved several steps to ensure participants were recruited ethically. This section will detail how the five stages taken to recruit participants were structured.

Stage 1

Once ethical approval had been granted (see **Appendix B**) identification of a school site took place by sending an email to three comprehensive secondary schools outlining the research. Of these three

schools, only one replied where the head teacher wanted to meet. After two meetings, entrée was gained granted by the head teacher and board of governors to arrange and conduct interviews (see **Appendix C**)

Stage 2

The second stage involved recruiting staff by attending an afterschool staff meeting and giving a presentation to introduce myself and explain the research (see **Appendix D**). Staff who took an interest were given a detailed participant information sheet and consent form (see **Appendix E** and **Appendix F**) and those who contacted me were invited to take part in a face-to-face interview. Grounded theory methodology requires the researcher to continually analyse data through an iterative process of constant comparison (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) meaning it was important that staff and pupil participants were recruited so interviews with both groups could take place concurrently.

Stage 3

Of the staff who made contact, two were pastoral leads; after arranging meetings with them, some potential pupils who met the inclusion criteria were identified. To reduce the possibility of perceived coercion (Swain, 2017), the pupils were not approached directly. The pastoral leads discussed the project in assemblies to two different year groups (Years 8 and 10). They were provided with a presented and a description to accompany the slides by the researcher (see **Appendix G**) for their assemblies. After this, four form groups were approached which contained a high number of the potential participants identified and the research was introduced again. To help counteract the potential for pupils to feel obliged to take part, due to a perception of power held by an adult (Smith, 2001), all participant information sheets and consent forms were left in the form room. Pupils were reassured there was no obligation to take one or to make contact if they did take one. Additionally, it reinforced that the purpose of the research was to seek to understand the pupils' experiences and

that the researcher lacked the knowledge they possessed (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2017). This was done to help overcome the perceived power differential between adult and pupil. Pupils who met the criteria for inclusion in the study and who voluntarily made contact were invited to attend a face-to-face interview.

Stage 4

Members of staff who taught the pupils who participated in interviews were invited to complete Pianta's (2001) Student-Teacher Relationship Scale (STRS) **(Appendix H)**. An individual secure online survey, using onlinesurveys.com **(Appendix I)**, was created for each pupil and a link to complete the questionnaire was emailed to the teachers who taught each pupil, inviting them to take part. Following completion of the questionnaire, there was an additional question asking if the teachers wanted to take part in an interview. Those who said they were interested were contacted.

Stage 5

Ongoing throughout stages 2-5, participants were prioritised for interview based on analysis of previous interviews. For example, when a pupil participant mentioned a teacher or a pupil by name and the subject matter indicated a line of inquiry worth pursuing, the list of those who had expressed an interest in being involved was consulted. If any names mentioned were on the list of those who had expressed an interest, they were prioritised for subsequent interviews. This process of theoretical sampling allowed the data collected and emerging theory to remain theoretically sensitive.

3.6 – Data Collection
3.6.1 – Interviews

Interviews, with each participant (both staff and pupils) lasted up to 60 minutes and were held either in the meeting room on the school site or in an empty classroom. Although interviews were unstructured to help gain a deep understanding of the participant's experiences, various prompts

were printed out on a piece of paper to ensure the conversation remained relevant (see **Appendix J**). Grounded theory methodology requires the researcher to approach the research question without "a priori assumptions" (Glaser and Strauss, 1967 p. 3). An unstructured, or exploratory, interview was chosen as it is a useful tool when the researcher is unaware of what they do not know and wishes to gather non-standardised information (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2017 p. 509). It is also a suitable method for a grounded theory methodology, as writing questions for a structured or semi-structured interview would require making use of previous knowledge or understanding. Furthermore, the exploratory interview technique is favoured when wanting to generate hypotheses rather than collecting facts and numbers (Oppenheim, 1992 p. 5).

Additionally, to ensure data was personal to the participants, a period of reflection was taken to prepare for the potential need to tolerate attitudes and opinions which might feel unacceptable in order to gain an understanding of participants' experiences (Hammersley and Traianou, 2012 p. 55). After each interview, a memo was written to provide immediate reflection on the interview. Data analysis began after the first interview and continued throughout the data gathering process. This allowed for emerging lines of inquiry to be identified and pursued during subsequent interviews, as aspects of the theory began to emerge. This also led to some slight changes in the prompts used during interviews, as they progressed (see **Appendix J**).

3.6.2 – Student-Teacher Relationship Scale

Although grounded theory is traditionally a qualitative approach to research (Clarke, 2019), quantitative data were also used in this study. Precedent for this has already been set, with Guetterman et al. (2019) finding that there have been at least 61 mixed methods approaches to grounded theory, and Glaser and Strauss indicating the potential for quantitative data to be used in grounded theory (Johnson, McGowan and Turner, 2010). Quantitative data were collected using Pianta's (1991) Student-Teacher Relationship Scale (STRS) (short form). The STRS is a questionnaire

which measures two different aspects of a teacher's perception of their relationship with a particular pupil: closeness and conflict. The closeness subscale measures the "degree to which a teacher experiences affection, warmth and open communication with a particular student" (Pianta, 1991 p.11). The conflict subscale measures the "degree to which a teacher perceives his or her relationship with a particular student as negative and conflictual" (Pianta, 1991 p.11). Although initially stated as being suitable for use with teachers of students aged four to eight (Pianta, 1991), it has since been accepted to be used for children up to the age of twelve (Jerome, Hamre, and Pianta, 2008).

Knowing that the sample of participants would come from a secondary school, where pupils are aged between eleven and sixteen, some minor changes were made to the wording of the questionnaire. These changes were very small, amending some of the language so it was more relevant to secondary school pupils, whilst maintaining the essence of the STRS. **Appendix H** shows the original language of the STRS and the version used in this thesis with the amended words highlighted. Teachers were given the opportunity to complete the STRS for pupils who participated in the research in the form of an online survey (see **Appendix I**). As each pupil participant had between seven and thirteen different teachers, a maximum of thirteen STRS forms could have been received for each pupil. Return rate varied with between three and seven completed STRS forms received per pupil.

3.7 – Ethical Considerations

Alienation from education, as a potentially sensitive topic, meant additional care was given to planning ethical considerations. Conducting research in this field with children provides further complications; BERA's ethical framework requires that all groups of participants engage with the research voluntarily (BERA, 2018), but argue there are additional considerations for children. The guidelines require that researchers comply with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) when participants are children or in a vulnerable group. Conducting research with the best interests of the pupils was paramount, ensuring the children were given the right to express all views freely on matters

which affect them, commensurate with their age and maturity. The following sections outline the steps taken to mitigate the risk of harm for those who participated in the study.

3.7.1 – Informed Consent and Participant Information Sheet

To avoid deception or subterfuge (BERA, 2011), the scope of the research was conveyed clearly in participant information sheets using age-appropriate language (see **Appendix E**) to ensure all participants entered the research voluntarily prior to giving data. The participant information sheet stated that the topic could be potentially sensitive and that they were free to withdraw from the interview or the study should they wish to do so. In addition to acquiring a signed understanding by completing a consent form (see **Appendix F**), a verbal explanation and subsequent understanding was also sought prior to commencement of the interview, giving participants the opportunity to ask questions or withdraw before starting.

BERA (2018) states that robust ethical research should facilitate children to give fully informed consent when they are mature enough to do so. This raises the question of when the child can give informed consent without the need for the parent to agree. The University of Worcester's guidelines (2014) expand on this to suggest that the child gives their assent, while consent of parents and legal guardians are obtained when feasible. It was decided that participation of children could only be done so if consent was given by both pupil and parent. At the start of every pupil interview, the researcher checked separate consent forms were completed and signed by both the participants and the participants' guardians. No interviews with pupils took place until the pupils had brought in a signed guardian consent form and had signed a pupil consent form themselves. All participants were also provided with another copy of the informed consent form to read at the start of the interview and were verbally reminded of their right to withdraw or terminate the interview.

3.7.2 – Anonymity and Confidentiality

All researchers make guarantees or promises to their participants, which they must keep; anonymity and confidentiality are two such promises for ethically-sound research (Stutchbury and Fox, 2009). The University of Worcester's ethics policy expands on this to include the secure storage and collection of data. As such, collecting, securing, and storing the data has been performed according to the University of Worcester's policy, where data is stored in a locked cabinet inside a locked office, or on a securely encrypted device until all dissemination from the project is completed. The nature of the research area gives rise to the possibility that a participant might disclose a child protection issue which must be passed on. The university's guidance in these circumstances states that confidentiality can be over-ridden to protect individuals from harm. When confidentiality was explained to participants, both verbally and in the participant information sheet, this was made explicitly clear. Before any data were collected, all participants were asked to confirm they understood that confidentiality would be broken in this circumstance only. Participants who were teachers were taken to understand the jargonistic terms used when explaining this, so were only asked to confirm they understood. Pupil participants, however, were given examples of what the term 'harm' meant in this situation. They were told that this meant if there was a safeguarding issue mentioned or disclosed which put the pupil at risk of mental or physical harm, it would be reported to the designated safeguarding officer.

Conducting research with multiple participants within one site increases the chance that readers of the research output could identify some of the participants' contributions through knowledge of those who took part. All participants were assigned a code for data analysis and any reference to participants used generalised information only, such as their year group. As data collected had been coded and categorised in the aim to saturate it, the chances of identification are significantly reduced. Participants were informed that any published output, aside from the thesis, will not contain full transcripts of interviews held, also reducing the possibility of identification.

3.7.3 – Use of the Term 'Alienation'

Pupils may be exposed to potential harm when exploring non-reciprocal or negative relationships with teachers. The harm done to children is potentially more damaging than adults (Shaw, Brady and Davey, 2011) thus caution was taken when using the term 'alienation'. A period of reflection was taken to give thought to whether withholding the term 'alienation' from pupils was an act of deception. However, it was decided that children being labelled as 'alienated' might have psychological repercussions, so care was taken not to give children additional labels they retain when data gathering is complete. It was important not to cause harm to any participants (BERA, 2018), so the word did not feature on the participant information sheets for pupils and parents, and it was consciously not used during interviews. Teachers who participated and were aware I would be using this terminology were asked not to use the term with children if the topic of the research arose.

3.8 – Chapter Summary

This chapter has established the philosophical underpinnings of critical realism and the methodological approach required for classic grounded theory. It detailed how classic grounded theory can support the critical realist philosophy. The chapter demonstrated this by showing how the emergence of theory in Glaser and Strauss' (1967) grounded theory intersects with critical realism's epistemological and ontological stance and how the emancipatory objective of critical realism can be handled by the generation of a substantive theory. The methodology and methods used to collect data were considered to be appropriate to examine the phenomena of school alienation and pupil-teacher relationships. The chapter concluded by outlining the participants who took part in the study and discussed how the sample was kept theoretically relevant whilst ensuring they were recruited ethically. The following chapter will outline the process of analysis which ultimately led to the generation of the substantive theory.

Chapter 4 – Methods of Analysis

4.1 – Introduction

This chapter builds on the methodological arguments presented in chapter three. It will outline how critical realism has been used to inform the methods of analysis and present two features which are required to ensure the research design remains critical realist. These features are used to make informed amendments to classic grounded theory's methods and are presented with examples to give a transparent picture of the analytical procedures which took place.

4.2 – Critical Realist Approach to Methods of Analysis

Critical realism is a philosophy concerned with causality (Bhaskar, 2008). It strives to delve into the subjective world of participants' reality and, through an understanding of the emergent nature of being, identify an objective structure or mechanism from which events and experiences have emerged. As discussed in chapter three, classic grounded theory prioritises emergence and discovery of theory. Not only does the terminology resonate with critical realism's emergence mechanisms, but the process to generate the substantive theory also aligns. In classic grounded theory, the researcher is required to absent themselves from the data (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). The process used to do this during data analysis was similar to that required in phenomenology. Drawing on Sartre's technique of bracketing out, or Husserl's epoché (Sartre, 2003 p. 651), allowed the analysis to maintain a focus on the experience being described without being clouded by interpretation and judgement. This process is crucial to the critical realist when trying to establish emergent mechanisms which led to the observed experience. In critical realist grounded theory, all possible emergent properties are theorised, not just those which match the researcher's own experiences.

This approach by itself could easily be used to describe any of the three main grounded theory approaches. To make the research design truly critically realist, two more features were included.

Firstly, the analysis was carried out in the awareness that all data collected is epistemologically located. During analysis, care was taken to avoid the trap of the "epistemic fallacy" where an assumption is made that ontological questions can be rephrased as epistemological ones (Bhaskar, 2008 p. 35). Secondly, the analysis was careful to avoid employing the processes of induction used by grounded theorists and in qualitative research generally (Reichertz, 2014). Instead, the process of retroduction was used (Belfrage and Hauf, 2016; Blaikie 2007; Oliver 2012). Simplistically, this process involved asking the question "what must be true for this to be the case?" (Oliver, 2012 p. 379) when analysing empirical observations. This allowed for the data to be gradually moved from the *empirical* to the *actual* and eventually the *real* domain of reality. This chapter will continue by exploring the methods used by situating them within one of the two features outlined above. These two features which ensured the research design remained critical realist are 'avoiding the epistemic fallacy' and 'avoiding induction'.

4.2.1 – Avoiding the Epistemic Fallacy: The First Feature to make the Research Design Critical Realist

This section will show how open coding, constant comparison, writing memos and making theoretical comparisons have been used to avoid the epistemic fallacy. Each subsection details how the critical realist lens was applied to the analytical methods used to generate the substantive theory.

4.2.1.1 – Open Coding

All grounded theory approaches use a variety of coding techniques to ensure data is interrogated thoroughly (Moghaddam, 2006). There are a variety of accepted coding techniques but there is a scarcity of approaches which are fit for a critical realist lens. The first stage of data analysis employs open coding, based on Glaser and Strauss' "constant comparative method" (1967 p. 105) and is amended for a critical realist approach (Looker, Vickers and Kington, 2021).

To avoid the epistemic fallacy, an additional critical realist category was applied when coding the data (Looker, Vickers and Kington 2021). This is in keeping with Glaser and Strauss' suggestion that data are coded with as many categories as possible (1967). The additional code identified which domain of reality the data relates to and gave the first glimpse into the emergent mechanisms which drive the social process being explored. Table 4.1 shows the process used to identify the correct domain of reality.

Table 4.1 Critical Realist Domain Open Coding Modus, adapted from Looker, Vickers and Kington (2021)

Critical Realist Domain of Reality	Open Coding modus
Empirical	- Participant recalls experiences or phenomena which they witnessed or were a part of. There is no analysis, solely recall. - Participant recalls an event they were not witness to. The participant is sharing their own understanding of what happened, without analysis. - Direct observation by researcher.
Actual	- The participant suggests reasons or analyses to explain the phenomena. - The participant is making inferential comments. This could be about an incident they directly observed, or an incident they have heard others talk about.
Real	Will not be coded during open coding. The researcher's aim is to identify the causal mechanism or mechanisms in the substantive theory.

Almost all codes generated through open coding were also coded with the *empirical* domain of reality. This is because the majority of incidents shared were recollections of experiences or observations. A minority of codes were also coded with the *actual* domain; this was when the participant offered their own analysis. Examples of these are shown in Table 4.2:

Table 4.2 Example coding

Quote	Critical realist domain
"I used to do it in Maths a lot because I would take a little bit of rubber off and I would throw it at the teacher and he wouldn't know where it had come from."	Empirical (this is a recollection of a moment the participant experienced)
I think it is just my reputation from when I was younger. I think I had some of those teachers in Year 7 and I was just a little shit, but I think I have now grown out of that stage now.	Actual (the participant is offering some inference and analysis here)

The open coding process was amended slightly to ensure that the analysis followed the critical realist philosophy, allowing the data be to explored backwards, down the generative mechanism from the *empirical* towards the *actual* domain of reality. This is summarised in Figure 4.1.

Colours are used on all figures throughout the thesis to clearly communicate which critical realist grounded theory coding terminology is being used. A key showing all aspects will be included with each figure.
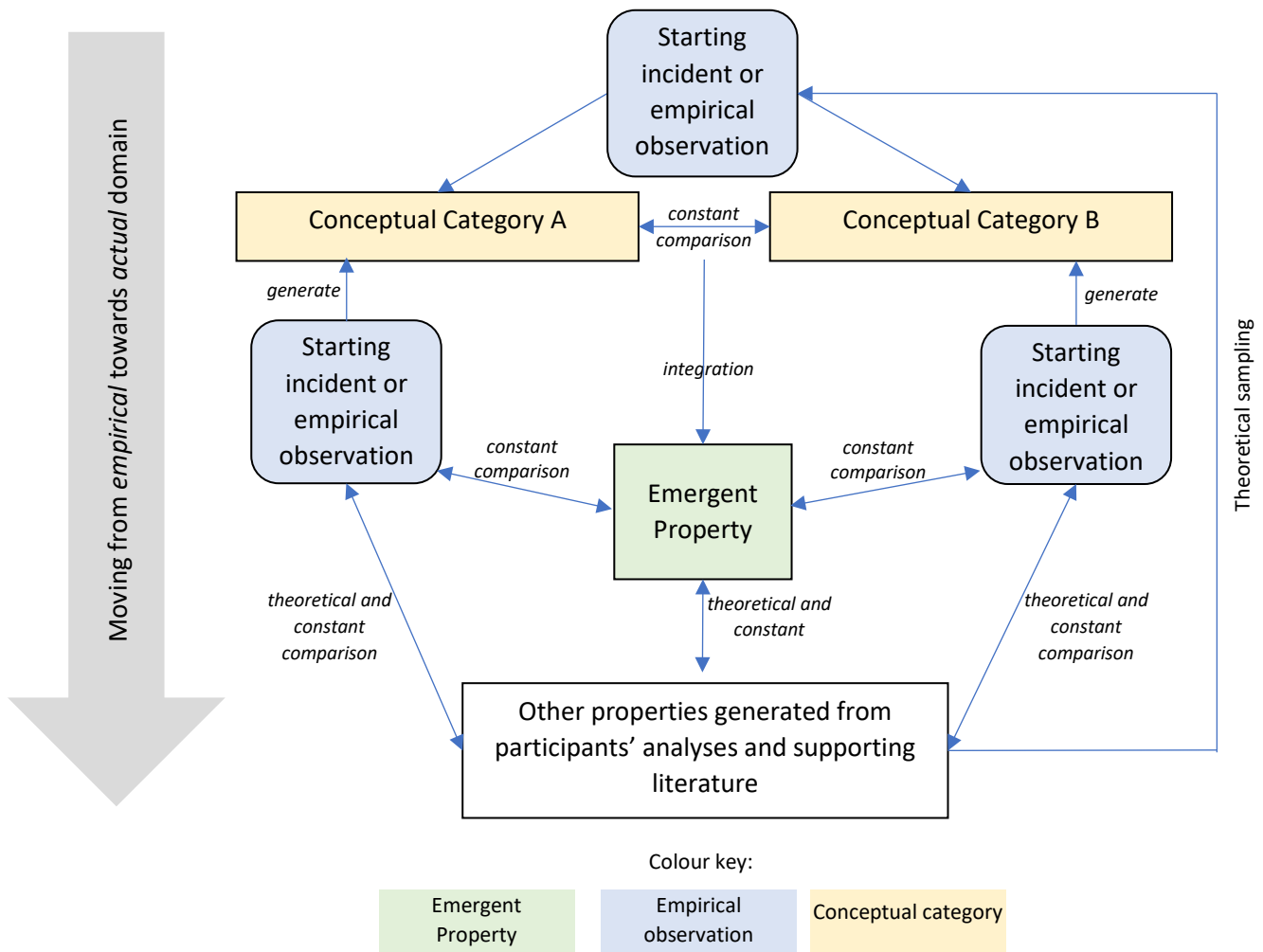
Figure 4.1 Open coding framework (adapted from Looker, Vickers and Kington, 2021)

Figure 4.1 shows how the starting incidents (coloured blue) generate conceptual categories, which were refined through constant comparison into an emergent property. For simplicity, the diagram shows three incidents, two conceptual categories and one emergent property. In reality, the process was not as smooth as this. Glaser and Strauss (1967) suggest the researcher codes as many categories as possible. This led to hundreds of categories and properties coded for initially. The emergent property, shown here in green, is approaching the *actual* domain, as the data was, at this stage, being coded to show a generative event which could have led to the experience. Finally, the white box, demonstrates how other emergent properties and supporting literature were used for theoretical comparisons.

Critical realism describes generative mechanisms where *real* structures are causative, generating

empirical events (Bhaskar, 1978; Bhaskar and Danermark, 2006 and Sayer, 2010). The use of the word

'generate' in the open coding framework (Figure 4.1) is deliberate (Looker, Vickers and Kington, 2021)

and is used to illustrate how the generative mechanism driving the social process works backwards;

coding an incident generates a conceptual category within which the incident fits. Although open

coding can be either descriptive*,* conceptual or theoretical (Saldaña, 2009; Vollstedt and Rezat, 2019)*,*

adhering to Glaser's (2001) argument that classic grounded theory should avoid description where

possible meant the conceptual categories in Figure 4.1 were generated by conceptual or theoretical

codes only. To avoid generating a conceptual category using description, care was taken to follow

Glaser and Strauss' approach to coding (1967), where in vivo codes, using the participants' own

language and the researcher's own observations, are recommended for generating theory. An excerpt

from a participant interview and the codes applied are shown in Table 4.3 to demonstrate this:

Table 4.3 Coding an excerpt from a participant interview

Data	Codes (conceptual categories)	Critical realist domain of reality
Pupil participant: It's better being put on SIMS [data management software, where behavioural incidents are recorded] than being sent out. Putting on SIMS is better than having to go to Hotspot and not having to lose your break time and everything for it. But when I was on report, there was a thing which my Mum agreed with. Say if I had two ticks out of three, the one tick she could keep me up to 15 minutes behind, so if I got all of them wrong I would end up staying for 45 minutes after school.	Awareness of own bad behaviour Being sent to hotspot Behaviour recorded on SIMS Losing break time Parent agrees with punishment Awareness of how to change	Actual Actual Actual Empirical Empirical Empirical
But it depends on how many, because each tick was worth 15 minutes, but she never gave me a detention. Every lesson that I had I went up to her and said *"Miss have I got my tick?"* and she said *"Yes"* so I got all my ticks when I was on report.	Awareness of own responsibilities	Empirical
Researcher: Is it important for you to do well at school?		
Pupil participant: Yes I want to do well in school I want to have a good lifestyle when I am older so that I have money, not a load, but a decent amount of money and a decent house like if I have a family enough to feed them and everything because I want a happy life.	Wants to do well at school Future ambitions	Empirical Actual

Through constant comparison to incidents and their generated conceptual categories, the emergent properties began to be refined. Although not shown in Figure 4.1, during this stage, memos were used to enable analytical and conceptual reflection on the process (Vollstedt and Rezat, 2019). By the end of this iterative process, a series of emergent properties were generated which were all grounded in data. Furthermore, because the process involved simultaneous critical realist coding, the codes and subsequent emergent properties were generated through a critical realist lens. This helped to ensure that the emergent properties were now located, or approaching, the actual domain of reality.

4.2.1.3 – Memos

Memos were used throughout both data collection and analysis to deepen thinking and develop ideas. During data collection, memos were written immediately after the interview to capture any body language or initial thoughts which would not be detected on audio recordings.

Memos during analysis were used, initially, to help understand individual codes and conceptual categories. This strengthened the constant comparative approach, where coding was stopped, and a memo written to capture ideas and potential links between codes as they arise (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). As analysis progressed, memos were used to develop new properties on the conceptual categories; they became more abstract in nature and were used to help integrate emergent properties to develop the data further, allowing the social processes to begin to emerge.

Two examples of memos are shared below. The first, written after eight pupil interviews and two teacher interviews, is shared below. This demonstrates how themes were beginning to emerge, and that these lines of enquiries were reflected upon and pursued:

> *Transcribing and coding now completed for all 8 pupil interviews (for those who turned up and signed consent forms) and two teachers.*
> *Both of these teachers were heads of year and the data gathered from these interviews seems to be less related to the emergent properties. I think perhaps I did not have the*

focus of what pupils were saying so my interview questions have resulted in data which is often irrelevant or off topic.

Future interviews with teachers will explore positive relationships with pupils and negative relationships with pupils.
I will try not to guide them and use this as an opportunity to see if what teachers say fits with the emergent properties from pupils' data.
Future interviews with pupils will aim to continue to explore and deepen understanding why pupils think relationships with some teachers are negative and some are positive. There also appears to be themes of respect and unfair treatment emerging. This will be explored in all interviews.

Thought: It appears that the only teachers who have volunteered are those who already have good relationships with pupils. This is selection bias – teachers who are aware they are struggling would potentially find it difficult to volunteer and talk openly about what they would perceive to be shortcomings.

Memo 1 Reflecting on emerging themes

The second memo was written when integrating conceptual categories. It shows how it was decided that the conceptual category "avoiding confrontation" could be integrated into the emergent property "pupils feeling valued":

When the teacher spoke about avoiding confrontation, it was from the perspective of seeing the pupil as a human being, and therefore wanting to avoid a confrontation with them.

To check if this conceptual category does fit in with the emergent property, we can ask the question "if the teacher did not value the pupil, would they try to avoid confrontation with them?" It is fair to take the leap of faith, that if the teacher did not value the pupil, they would be happy to engage in a confrontation, as they would not be concerned about the consequences this would have on a pupil.

Therefore, I believe this conceptual category does fit with this emergent property. It is also beginning to show the social processes driving this phenomenon (feeling valued).

Memo 2 Integrating conceptual categories

4.2.1.4 – Theoretical Comparisons

As discussed in chapter two, there is no consensus when literature should be consulted during grounded theory methodology. As the critical realist grounded theory methodology is based heavily on classic grounded theory, the literature review and therefore theoretical comparisons were delayed

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until the majority of data had been collected and analysed (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Looker, Vickers and Kington, 2021). Theoretical comparisons are when the analyst takes a conceptual category or emergent property and makes a theoretical comparison where the notion is the same but the "situation from life or the literature…might be substantively different" (Corbin and Strauss, 2015, p. 95). For critical realism, theoretical comparisons can help to move ideas from the *empirical* to the *actual*. Experiences shared (*empirical)* were theoretically compared against each other to identify the events occurring within the *actual* domain which are producing change. The generated emergent properties were likely to be events occurring in the *actual* domain. When emergent properties were identified, they were coded with the additional critical realist code to identify if they were *empirically* or *actually* bounded. When all *empirical* events were moved to the *actual* domain, the search for mechanisms which lie in the *real* began. As the coded data had now abstracted the meaning away from the participants' voices, it was assumed that the emergent properties referred to patterns and not individual actions. This meant the *real* mechanisms were identified from the emergent properties (Looker, Vickers and Kington, 2021). Critical realism asserts a singular true reality but understands this reality emerges and is interpreted differently in the *empirical*. By making theoretical comparisons, the concepts gradually became more identifiable through constant comparison and were refined further or recategorised according to extant literature. Table 4.4 gives an example of how theoretical comparisons were made. These comparisons allowed for the conceptual categories and emergent properties to be refined.

Table 4.4 Example of theoretical comparisons.

Data	Conceptual categories	Emergent Properties	Theoretical Comparisons
Researcher: Can you think of a teacher who you have respect for? **Pupil participant:** Possibly my Maths teacher because I was always bad in his lessons and now he has given me a chance and I am trying my best and some teachers would have just given up on me, but he didn't and he is still trying to coach me now. **Researcher:** Right and do you think he has got respect for you as well? **Pupil participant:** I think he has a bit more now, yes, because I have been trying really hard in his lessons.	Like vs respect Respect – earn it Teacher given pupil a chance Teacher still trying Mutual respect	Respect as an important dimension of relationships Pupils have a perception about the quality of teacher Respect as an important dimension of relationships Respect as an important dimension of relationships	O'Grady (2015) – respect between teachers and pupils is dependent on interactions O'Grady (2015) – respect is reciprocal De Cremer (2002) – respect develops over time

4.2.2 – Avoiding Induction: The Second Feature to make the Research Design Critical Realist.

This section will show how abstraction, various retroductive methods and constant comparison were used to avoid induction. In a similar format to the previous section, each subsection details the analytical methods used to generate the substantive theory through a critical realist lens.

4.2.2.1 – Abstraction

When all *empirical* events were moved to the *actual* domain, the process of searching for mechanisms which lie in the *real* domain began. This process began with using emergent properties, not the people

or codes they derived from. This allowed for the identification of the mechanisms without having them attached to an individual. As data continued to be coded, the codes abstracted the meaning away from the individual who said them. When the conceptual categories had been integrated into emergent properties, the mechanisms driving these were now so abstracted from the individuals they were initially coded from that they now represent patterns and not individual actions. Critical realism asserts a singular true reality but understands this reality emerges and is interpreted differently in the *empirical*. By comparing mechanisms, the concepts gradually become more identifiable through constant comparison, coding and categorising.

4.2.2.2 – Retroductive Coding

When open coding was completed, a series of emergent properties located in the *actual* domain remained. The next stage of analysis focussed on the identification of *real* mechanisms. The process of searching for these *real* mechanisms involved a type of coding called retroductive coding. This process is a critical realist grounded theory feature of delimiting the theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) where conceptual categories and emergent properties are reduced (Looker, Vickers and Kington, 2021). As this process continued, the emerging theory began to encompass many emergent properties as it became increasingly generalised. This stage was crucial to ensure that the substantive theory describes the *empirical* by explaining or identifying the generative mechanism or mechanisms driving the social process in the *real.*

Each step of retroductive coding allowed the analysis to travel back, along the generative mechanisms, to approach the *real* domain. The data was able to be interrogated whilst maintaining the epistemological and ontological stance of critical realism.

4.2.2.3 – Retroduction

As an analytical process, retroduction (Belfrage and Hauf, 2016) calls for the researcher to ask "what must be true for this to be the case?" (Oliver, 2012). Asking this question throughout the second stage

of coding, allowed exploration of causal mechanisms. This stage moved the lens of analysis away from abduction, where insights are inferred on data (Bruscaglioni, 2020) to retroduction, where possible causes are theorised, moving the data backwards through emergent properties of a critical reality.
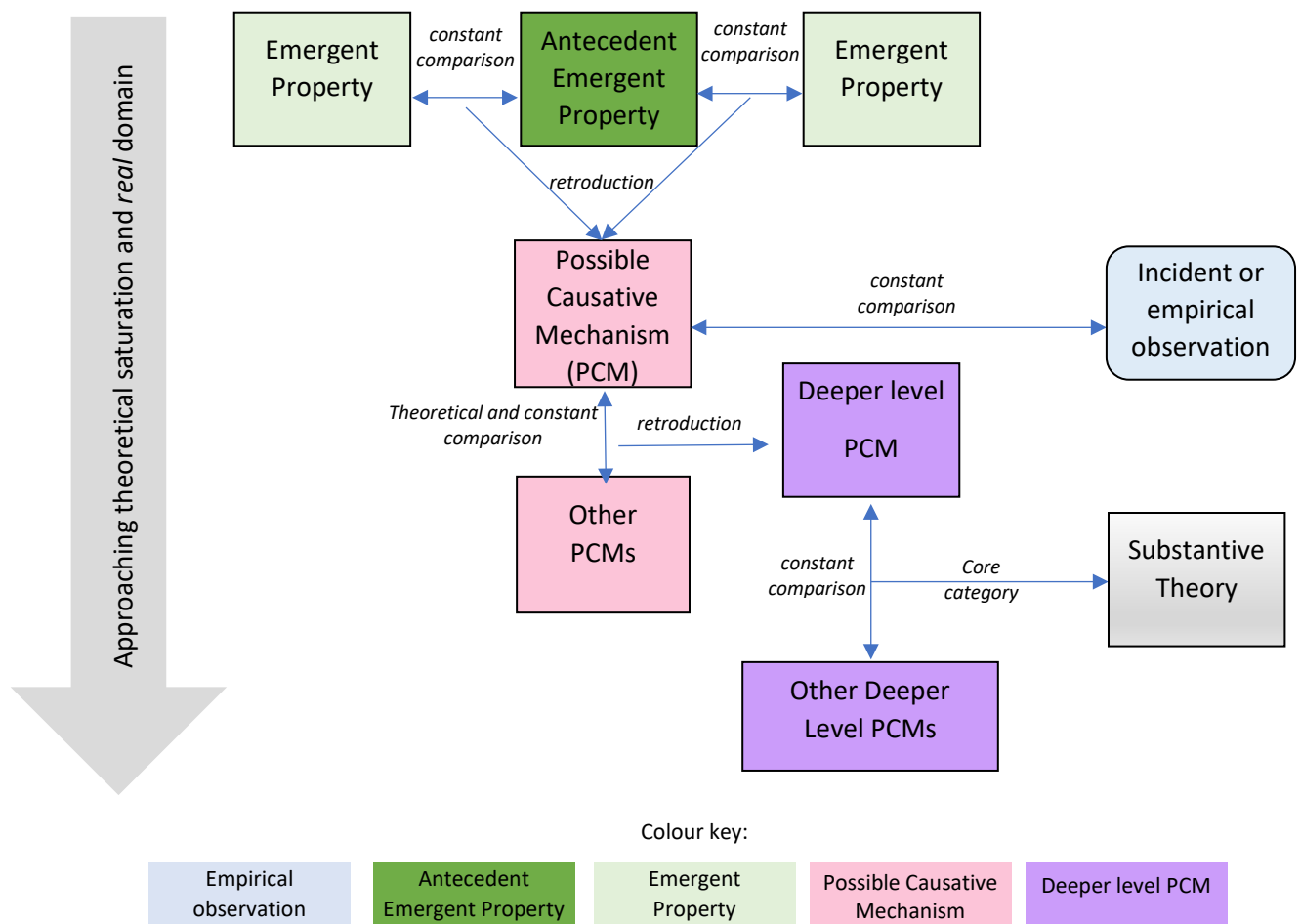
Figure 4.2 Retroductive Coding (adapted from Looker, Vickers and Kington, 2021)

Figure 4.2 shows how retroductive coding was used to generate a substantive theory to explain, to the best of the data's ability, how the phenomenon of alienation, observed in the *empirical,* was generated by causal mechanisms in the *real* (Scott, 2005).

In the first stage of coding, emergent properties generated were compared against conceptual categories and incidents. During this stage, the emergent properties were compared against each other, allowing for the properties to be integrated to develop possible causative mechanisms. The emergent properties were reflected on and analysed to identify causative structures between them

within a possible causative mechanism. Emergent properties were separated into antecedent emergent properties (AEPs) and emergent properties (EPs). AEPs were identified as the structures which form the component parts of the other emergent properties (Bhaskar, 1978); the EPs are the resulting aggregates of the antecedent structures (Bhaskar, 1978). This represented the depth and complexity of the possible causative mechanisms, showing how different *actual* structures can interact in different ways. The EPs and AEPs were initially identified through the frequency of observations. Those which were most frequently observed (comprised of multiple conceptual categories with multiple incidents coded to them) remained emergent properties whilst those with fewer empirical observations were assumed to be antecedent in nature as they were less likely to be observed. Each of these were reflected on and, when necessary, checked using a memo. This process was similar to abduction, supported by Glaser and Strauss (1965), where differing perspectives on a similar phenomenon were raised to an abstract level. Abduction as a method was not appropriate to use for a critical realist approach. Although it is a method of logical inference (Reichertz, 2009) which frees the data from accurate description and focuses it on concepts which fit an emerging theory (Glaser, 2002), abduction only took the data partway towards the *real* strata. Theoretical sense of the data was made during integration (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) of conceptual categories. At this point, a period of reflection focusing on retroduction took place.

Data were now interrogated by asking "what must be true for this to be the case?" (Oliver, 2012 p. 379). The data and theory were delimited (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) through this process of retroduction, taking care not to compose the story, but to allow it to emerge (Glaser, 2002). Glaser and Strauss' (1967) suggestion that this process leads to core theoretical categories was modified to make the process more suitable for a critical realist lens. The core theoretical categories were instead named possible causative mechanisms (PCMs). The process of travelling backwards through the generative mechanism of critical realism allowed the data to reveal a possible *real* mechanism, which

had causative or generative properties. A summarised example of this is given in Table 4.5. It demonstrates how retroduction was used to generate a PCM and checked using a memo.

Table 4.5 Example of how retroduction was used to generate a PCM

Emergent property	Retroduction	PCM
Respect as an important dimension of relationships	Both pupils and teachers are aware that respect is reciprocal, can be earned as well as lost and intersects with pupils liking their teachers. Mutual respect must be important for teachers and pupils in establishing positive relationships. If a lack of mutual respect exists, or is perceived to exist, pupils dislike the teacher	A lack of mutual respect between teacher and pupil
Pupils express they like a teacher		
Pupils have a perception about the quality of a teacher		
Memo: *The PCM "A lack of mutual respect between teacher and pupil", when applied back through the emergent properties remains relevant. Respect develops over time (De Cremer, 2002) and is dependent on interactions between teacher and pupils (O'Grady, 2015). So, if a teacher is perceived as not having respect for a pupil, the reciprocal nature of this is violated and pupils are less likely to like their teacher. This has been checked against all conceptual categories, and they all remain relevant to the language of the PCM.*		

4.2.2.4 – Retroductive Memos

During this stage of retroduction, memos were used to highlight how researcher bias has been limited. The memo in Table 4.5 shows how it was used to compare the original emergent properties to the PCM. As there was deemed to be a clear link between the two, the PCM was accepted as fitting within the data. These memos were important in adding rigour to the approach (Gasson, 2004) by maintaining objectivity; potential bias which could have been imposed was kept under constant review.

4.2.2.5 – Constant Comparison

The constant comparative method (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) outlined earlier continued in the retroductive coding process. Although the mechanics of the process were the same, the conceptual

categories, emergent properties and PCMs were compared to the findings from the quantitative data obtained from the Student-Teacher Relationship Scale (Pianta, 1991). The findings from all data sources were compared against each other, further emergent properties were generated and PCMs amended and generated.

4.3 – Theoretical Saturation

Theoretical saturation, used as a criterion for deciding the point at which data collection is terminated (Saunders et al., 2018), is accepted as commonplace across a range of qualitative approaches. It is defined by classic grounded theory as the point where "no additional data are being found whereby the sociologist can develop properties of the category" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 61). The approach to saturation being data-driven is continued in Corbin and Strauss' approach (2015), where they suggest saturation is about concepts and not led by the number of participants.

The use of theoretical saturation as a decision to stop data collection is closely tied to the process of theoretical sampling; data collection, sampling, and analysis work concurrently "rather than treating them as separate stages in a linear process" (Bryman, 2012, p. 18). In the study, data were collected and analysed to inform future data samples. When conceptual categories were approaching saturation, similar instances were seen "over and over again" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p 61) meaning data were coded to existing categories. The stages outlined in the recruitment procedure allowed for thorough exploration of the data by keeping the data theoretically relevant. This, combined with concurrent data analysis, led to the establishment of well-defined conceptual categories. These were linked and integrated with other categories and supported by detailed memos, allowing for the saturation of conceptual categories to be achieved.

As the theory began to emerge, data which were still being coded were now coded to PCMs. Memos were written to show how new and previously coded *empirical* observations could be caused by the PCMs. An example of this is shared in memo 3:

An experience shared by this pupil participant resonated so well with previous experiences shared by their peers. These previous experiences were coded to emergent properties which were eventually coded into the PCM "Pupils feeling a sense of injustice". As this incident was so similar, it was able to be immediately coded to the PCM, as the constant comparative method had already established this as a possible cause for this experience.

Participant quote which was coded directly to PCM:

"Miss is the Spanish teacher and sometimes we don't really get on. It was just little things that have happened in the past that she didn't believe me, and I was actually telling the truth about and everybody found out that it was me telling the truth but she didn't believe me. I was getting really upset by it and I was getting into trouble for it, but I hadn't actually done it."

Memo 3 Coding directly to a PCM

There were a small number of categories where saturation was not achieved. Davis et al., (2020) have shown how this can be accommodated for in grounded theory research. They argue that due to the nature of sociological research, there are likely to always be cases or concepts which are contrary. Their study showed that, providing the data collection is robust and leads to a rich conceptual framework, saturation of all concepts does not need to be achieved. Furthermore, this approach is allowed for by Glaser and Strauss. During data collection and analysis, their processes were followed; incidents which did not reach saturation were categorised and placed into a memo to allow for inclusion in the substantive theory if relevant (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). An example of this is shared in memo 4:

This memo serves as a reference point for holding data which do not fit into the PCMs. This is being done so they can be included in the substantive theory, if relevant (Glaser and Strauss, 1967)
Two participants (one pupil and one teacher) have mentioned how their parents have had, or have tried to have, an influence on their attitude to learning at school.
The pupil participant said that their father stressed the importance of doing well in English and maths and that their mother reprimands them for answering a teacher back: "she then says that it is not your place to say, show respect, she is a teacher and she is only doing her job."
The teacher participant mentions that sometimes they have to deal with parents who do not provide the support needed to the school. The incident shared was of a mother who had "failed to attend 3 meetings that we've made; she hasn't rung into school. The three meetings we've put in the calendar, she's not rung in to say she couldn't make it."
Both these experiences, shared by participants, are of interest but have not surfaced in other interviews. They are currently coded under "parental influence (positive)" and "parental influence (negative)"

Through constant comparison, they do not fit into any emergent properties or PCMs.

Possible causative mechanisms (PCMs) which had been identified through retroductive coding were subjected to a final round of constant comparison and integration to identify deeper level PCMs. These were similar to higher level concepts, but rather than having been worked on the data, they had been retroduced (Looker, Vickers and Kington, 2021) from the data. The core category had emerged through constant comparison and was meaningfully related to the deeper level PCMs (Holton, 2008). The data, which was now organised into deeper level PCMs and memos represented the substantive theory; it was grounded in data and located in critical realism's *real* domain. This is summarised in Figures 4.3 and 4.4:

Conceptual categories

- A feeling that relationship are not good
- Negative teacher attitude to pupil (pupil perception)
- Dimensions of trust between pupil and teacher
- Pupil has negative feelings toward teacher
- Pupils express they like a teacher
- Respect as an important dimension of
- Pupils have a perception about the quality of teacher
- Varying perceptions of relationships between pupils and teacher can affect how valued pupils feel
- Interacting with pupils on a
- A feeling that relationships are
- Teacher demonstrates consistency

- Negative relationships increase feelings of alienation in pupils (self-fulfilling prophecy)
- A lack of mutual respect between teacher and pupil
- Pupils feeling valued can lead to positive relationships being formed

Pupils have a need to feel valued

Figure 4.3 Deeper level PCM - pupils have a need to feel valued.

Conceptual categories

- Pupils feeling a sense of injustice
- A sense of fairness is important
- Pupils perceive teacher as being prejudiced
- Critical incidents
- CLCH group have extreme feelings
- Pupil Self Awareness (own bad behaviour)
- Teachers display power
- Past experiences with teacher expressed as still relevant
- An enjoyment or lack of enjoyment of subject
- Pupils agency; pupils express desire to want to do well

- Pupils feeling a sense of injustice
- Critical incidents can exaggerate feelings of alienation in Closeness Low Conflict High
- Pupils having a feeling of powerlessness

Pupils experiencing powerlessness are not content

Figure 4.4 Deeper level PCM - pupils experiencing powerlessness are not content.

Colour key:

Conceptual category	Emergent Property	Possible Causative Mechanism	Deeper level PCM

Theoretical comparisons continued to be made, which led to the deeper level PCMs undergoing continual reorganising as the theory was developed. The final deeper level PCMs and substantive theory are shared in chapter seven. Due to the retroductive process, the substantive theory has a generative property, allowing for suggestions to be made to address the observed alienation, fulfilling the emancipatory objective of critical realist research.

4.4 – Chapter Summary

This chapter has detailed the methods of analysis employed in this thesis, bringing together critical realism (Bhaskar, 1978) and classic grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). The ontological and epistemological assumptions shared in chapter three informed the approach, giving rise to two features to ensure the analysis was done through a critical realist lens. Throughout the chapter, examples have been given to illustrate the analytical processes. This started by showing how the critical realist domains were coded as an additional code, followed by how conceptual categories were integrated into emergent properties. Theoretical comparisons with emergent properties were demonstrated which led to a summarised example of how the PCMs were developed. Examples of memos were shared to model how they were used in the theory generation process. The following chapter will explore the five possible causative mechanisms which were generated from the analysis of the qualitative data.

Chapter 5 – Discovery of Five Possible Causative Mechanisms

5.1 – Introduction

This section presents five possible causative mechanisms (PCMs) which have been identified by a thorough examination of the interview data. The PCMs refer to potential *real* critical realist structures which could exist. They are, therefore, a summary of the potential structure which could be generating the observed phenomena. Each PCM is presented with a summary of the theoretical conceptual categories and a diagram showing the interconnectedness of the emergent properties (EPs), and the voices of participants to ground the PCMs in data. The PCMs are worded using language to emphasize their possible causative nature and location in the *real* domain. Additionally, the relationships described between the EPs within each PCM uses critical realist language, where appropriate and possible.

5.2 – Pupils Feeling Valued can Lead to Positive Relationships Being Formed

This PCM illustrates how the pupil participants conveyed a feeling of being valued by their teachers when discussing good relationships with teachers. It also shows how teachers perceive a connection between valuing pupils as individuals and forming good relationships with them. Table 5.1 shows a summary of the conceptual categories and emergent properties which form the PCM[2].

Table 5.1 Possible Causative Mechanism 1 – Pupils feeling valued can lead to positive relationships being formed

Possible Causative Mechanism 1 – *Pupils feeling valued can lead to positive relationships being formed*	
Emergent Property	**Conceptual Category (initial code)**
A feeling that relationships are good	Building relationships Closeness varies equally Connect with teacher Eye contact to build relationships Fresh start Good relationship with teacher Identify with pupils Interactions outside classroom

---

[2] This table is shown for the first PCM only. The tables for the other PCMs are presented as appendices.

	Nice
	Perception of closeness
	Physical proximity to build relationships
	Pupil switched off in lesson - maintains good relationship
	Rebuilding relationship after incident
	Teacher talking through sanctions
	Relationships - step by step
	Relationships continue to develop over time
	Repairing relationship
	Dialogue between teacher and pupil after incident
	Show interest in pupil - to build relationship
	Talking to pupils
	Teacher finding positives
	Teacher perceived to have a good personality
	Teacher seen as fun and interesting
	Teacher seen to be approachable
	Teacher uses humour
	Teachers see relationships in positive light
	Year 8 and 10 relationships seen as the same
Pupils feeling valued by their teacher	Actively seeking positives
	Avoid confrontation
	Care - not caring
	Confidence
	Does not know pupils well
	Does not shout unless needed
	Does not get away with stuff
	Feeling valued
	Get on with pupils
	Having manners
	Individualising approaches to pupil
	Kind
	Listening to the pupils
	Not feeling valued
	Polite
	Praise
	Pupil given chances
	Pupil perceives teacher as helping
	Pupils given second chance or opportunity to prove themselves
	Pupils want to feel valued
	Some teachers would have given up on pupil
	Teacher given pupil second chance
	Teacher - caring
	Teacher accepting fault when appropriate
	Teacher apology
	Teacher championing pupil
	Teacher helping pupil
	Teacher helps pupil
	Teacher makes time for pupil
	Teacher recognising pupil

	Teachers perceive praise as important
	Thoughtful (pupil perceive teacher as)
	Valued - not feeling it
	Valuing pupils
Teacher demonstrates consistency	Acting
	Boundaries
	Calm
	Control class
	Expectations (teacher)
	Seating plan
	Strict
Interacting with pupils on a personal level	Engaging on a personal level
	Engaging with students

All teachers expressed an opinion that interacting with pupils on a personal level is a contributory factor to positive relationships. The causative nature of this was explicit throughout interviews with teachers and implicit throughout interviews with pupils. Teachers often cited asking pupils about their weekend or finding a common area of interest between them as a means to begin building a positive relationship. This was seen to be of particular importance when building relationships with pupils who present challenging behaviour:

> *Talking to them and finding something you can talk to them about whether it is their pet rabbit or 'you know you did really well when you did the cross country run at the weekend?' or 'I hear you did this', or so and so said 'you did that really well'. I try and find something positive or something I can relate to them with.*
>
> Teacher (pastoral lead)

This pastoral lead saw herself as having good relationships with pupils, even those who were particularly troublesome around the school. When pupils voluntarily spoke about her, they did so in a positive manner, indicating they felt valued by her and had good relationships with her because she interacted with them on a personal level:

> *[She] is a good teacher. She has a good personality with us and because of that we will work for her. We don't get away with stuff with [her] because we know we won't get away with stuff.*
>
> (Year 10 pupil)

> *Researcher: You get on really well with [your head of year]?*
> *Pupil: Yes.*

Researcher: What is it that you like about her?
Pupil: I don't really know to be honest, she is just lovely.

<div align="right">(Year 10 pupil)</div>

When pupils feel valued by their teacher, they are more likely to perceive their relationship with that teacher positively. Although not always able to articulate what it is which has led to this feeling, pupil responses indicate a perception of a positive relationship which, subsequently, leads to an increased perception of feeling valued, showing an iterative relationship between the two emergent properties.

If it's like 'excuse me can you not do that.' That would be like a calm response, like a nice
'I don't really want to yell at you' kind of one and then full hammer head shark, on kids.

<div align="right">(Year 8 pupil)</div>

Pupils also demonstrated a perception of feeling valued by recounting experiences where teachers' manner and demeanour conveyed an appreciation for them as people, not just part of a teacher's job:

They are kind and they will always try and help you when they can and they are always
there when you need them.

<div align="right">(Year 8 pupil)</div>

Yesterday even though [name] still messes around, [name] said "Can I work with Year 8
pupil, can we have one chance please" she would say "yes, yes as long as you don't mess
around" then she gives us one chance and stuff like that whereas other teachers don't do
that. Then we can prove that we can work well and we can work together whereas the
other teachers don't give us that chance to prove that we can work together and work
well.

<div align="right">(Year 8 pupil)</div>

Banter. If you just want to get on with a teacher, like you do with anyone else.

<div align="right">(Year 10 pupil)</div>

This sentiment was echoed by teachers, who felt it is important that teachers are able to reflect on their actions, identify moments they regret and make amends:

You know we are just all human beings in a big melting pot aren't we and I do think
sometimes 'gosh I was a bit sharp there. I shouldn't have been so sharp, that wasn't very
nice' so I would consciously make an effort to say to them 'I was a bit sharp. Sorry about
that I should have been a little bit softer'.

<div align="right">(Class teacher)</div>

All teachers spoke about a consistent approach to behaviour management being pivotal to forming good relationships, and the majority of pupils mentioned or alluded to this without prompting. Pupil responses that were coded to feeling valued were almost always also coded to a dimension of being treated fairly, indicating that perceptions of value and fair treatment are linked. Pupils felt that when they were valued as individuals, they were treated fairly:

> *Pupil: Everyone is on one side [of the room] and then me and [name] are just at the back in the corner and he is more one sided with them than he is with just us two.*
>
> *Researcher: What do you mean by that?*
>
> *Pupil: So, if something has gone on he is just as likely to say it to [reprimand] us than any other people on the other side of the classroom.*
>
> (Year 10 pupil)

> *She still pushes me to learn and as I have big hands and stuff being 6ft odd, she gets out her ukulele which is bigger than most and it's easier for my fingers. She just helps me more with everything.*
>
> (Year 10 pupil)

Teachers expressed a feeling that being polite and consistent with their approach to all pupils was an important way to demonstrate they value their pupils. One teacher spoke about actively avoiding patronising the pupils she teaches whilst emphasizing that she talks 'with' pupils, not 'at' them:

> *I do think I always say 'please' I always say 'thank you' I will hold open doors for them, I talk to them. I don't try to patronise them and I try to talk with them as well.*
>
> (Pastoral Lead Teacher)

A pastoral lead, when speaking about the importance of consistency, shared that she believed it was important to give pupils a chance as she could not always be aware of external factors which might influence their behaviour. When pupils are given a chance, it increases their feeling of self-worth and are therefore more likely to respond positively:

> [when discussing an incident where a pupil has repeatedly not worn shoes to school]

Teacher: I gave him some chances and I told him what the punishment would be if he didn't sort himself out. I told him very clearly if he had not got them the next day he would lose his break and lunch and he didn't have them the next day so he lost his break and lunch.

Researcher: So, do you think he saw that as fair?

Teacher: Hopefully, I didn't do anything that I said I wasn't going to do, and he is in shoes today.

(Pastoral Lead Teacher)

To a lesser extent, some teachers identified teaching as an 'act' where teachers felt they should be able to compartmentalise their personal feelings and present a consistently enthusiastic attitude in lessons:

But not even that, it's in and around the classroom. Just that being pleasant to them; its normal personable stuff. That I think comes over in my personality. That I think actually, sometimes that's an act. I'm not necessarily like that all the time, but I know that when I've got a class that I need to really invigorate, I'm putting it on. Whether I'm in a bad mood, or good mood.
Because you know, you go home at the end of the day and you're not always that happy 'let's get everybody enthusiastic' self

(Pastoral Lead Teacher)

Teachers and pupils understood that positive relationships are not based solely on pupils feeling valued, but there was a consensus that without this dimension, good relationships would be difficult to form or sustain.

The above emergent properties and excerpts are summarised in Figure 5.1 showing how they are related to each other.
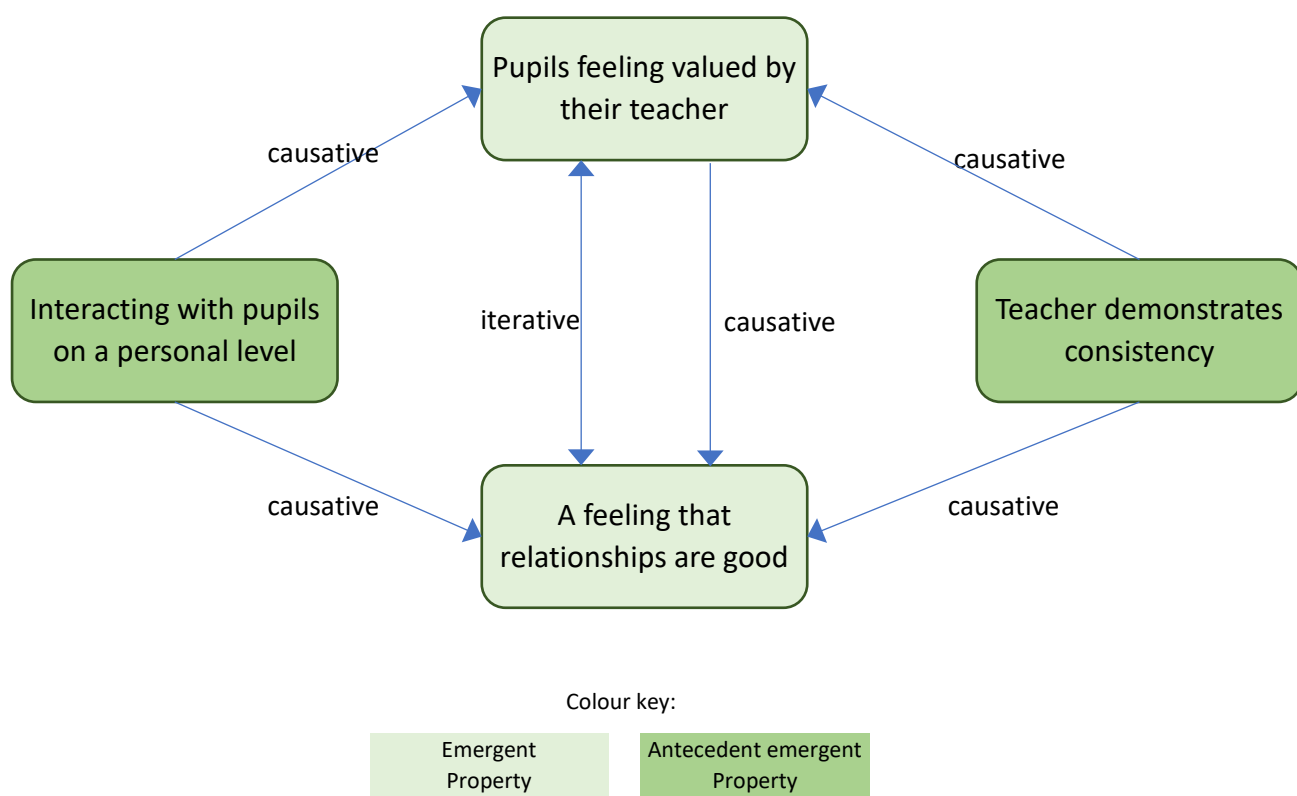
Figure 5.1 PCM: Feeling valued can lead to positive relationships being formed

Figure 5.1 shows when teachers and pupils felt their relationships were good, this interacted with pupils feeling valued by their teachers which, in turn, increased a sense of positive relationships. These two properties were also influenced by interactions with pupils on a personal level and a demonstration of consistency in classrooms. Pupils understood that when teachers did this, they felt more valued and, in turn, believed relationships were good.

The arrows with the 'causative' label are showing how the causative, emergent structures of reality are working within this PCM. Although each structure is an emergent property, there are layers of emergence and interaction between the structures and within the PCM. Those coloured in darker green are called 'antecedent emergent properties'; these are the structures that form the component parts of the other emergent properties (Bhaskar, 1978). Put another way, the pale green emergent properties are aggregates of the antecedent structures (Bhaskar, 1978). For example, when it is perceived that a teacher demonstrates consistency, this can emerge as a feeling of being valued.

Therefore, the teacher demonstrating consistency is an antecedent cause (Cruickshank, 2002), whilst remaining an emergent property because it has been created by the interaction of two lower order properties (Bhaskar, 1978). The iterative arrow between the two emergent properties is used to emphasise that these feelings are interlinked and were frequently raised simultaneously by participants when sharing their experiences.

5.3 – Pupils Feeling a Sense of Injustice

This PCM demonstrates how pupil participants experienced strong feelings of injustice associated with teachers with whom they have negative relationships. Pupils were able to recall a range of incidents and recollections to illustrate their experiences. When recalling such events, pupils often spoke in an agitated manner, indicating their feelings of injustice were unresolved. A summary of the conceptual categories and emergent properties which form the PCM can be found in **Appendix K.**

Every pupil recollected at least one event where they either felt they had been treated unfairly or they witnessed others get treated unfairly. Pupils were able to speak at length when sharing experiences related to feeling a sense of injustice. They spoke using emotive language and with frustration in their voice as they relived their events. One Year 8 pupil did not feel like she had been treated unfairly, but she was able to recall occasions when she felt she had witnessed unfair treatment of others:

> *Well, I do find it a bit unfair, I know some boys get sent out, like, like that. Really fast, whereas, another guy could get loads of chances and by the end of the lesson, he still wouldn't get sent out. Which is a bit unfair in my opinion.*
>
> (Year 8 pupil)

This perception of unfair treatment was echoed by pupils who have experienced being sent out of the classroom for reasons they felt were unjust. Pupils did not always disagree with their teachers' assessment of the situation and who blame should be apportioned to; instead, they disagreed with

the severity of the punishment handed to them:

Then we were watching this movie and it got really cringey and I went "Oh my god" and she went "Year 8 pupil don't eat that chewing gum" and "I went what chewing gum" and she sent me out and everything and started telling me off. She took all my chewing gum off me; she refused to give it me back.

(Year 8 pupil)

But then when everyone was speaking for a bit, me and [name] started speaking because he sits over there in the corner and I'll sit in the middle. She starts to tell us to stop being immature because we were making weird noises and she told us to stop being immature and get on with our work, but even when the two girls are talking she didn't say anything to them at all.

(Year 10 pupil)

She will always pick on us. She will always have a go at us for little things but if someone else does it she might not have a go at them. She will send us out but she won't send any of the others out.

(Year 10 pupil)

However, pupils reported more incidents where they disagreed with teachers' assessments of incidents and instead recounted experiences where they felt the teacher made inaccurate assumptions of the situation:

Year 8 pupil: This teacher she is serious about everything. She will hand out detention like that. The other week, my mate, I had like a massive hole and I had a scab on my shin and this was two days after I had done it so the bruise and everything was there.

Researcher: Is this from skateboarding?

Year 8 pupil: Yes my scooter, it hit me in the thing and it just took a chunk out. My mate he kicked me with the back of his heel and his heels are, they are the shoes that are quite slick at the front and at the back they are quite sharp and he kicked me and I groaned quite loud and she said "you are staying in at break time" and I was quite mad and I was trying to explain to her and she just wouldn't listen to me, so then at break time I had to get up and go up to her to show her where Sam had kicked me and then she finally let me out.

Researcher: Okay. Did you see that as unfair?

Year 8 pupil: Yes because I didn't do anything wrong. All I did was make a noise to show that I was in pain, well my shin had all swollen up, my shin was black and I had a chunk of flesh missing out of it… and then I was like "why do I still have to stay in because he just kicked me where I have hurt myself." I tried to explain. No she told me to 'be quiet' because we were in silent reading.

80

I have been sent out in a lesson when I wasn't the one who had done anything. I was maybe with a group of people that was doing the thing but sometimes my mates act up with me and they send me out rather than the main person who did it and I just think well, maybe explore the situation a bit more and you will see who did it, not me.

(Year 10 pupil)

I explained to him outside and he said "stop answering me back, I saw your lips move" and it wasn't actually me.

(Year 8 pupil)

In an attempt to rationalise to themselves why they felt they were unfairly treated, pupils described a feeling of bias against them. Pupils believe their teachers discriminate against them, resulting in them being identified, incorrectly, as culprits. The assumed bias was mainly described as resulting from a past reputation which pupils found hard to shake:

I think it is just my reputation from when I was younger. I think I had some of those teachers in Year 7 and I was just a little shit, but I think I have now grown out of that stage now. When I got to Year 9 I thought shit, I have got to get my head down. I have actually got to do some work. With Miss I think it is discrimination.

(Year 10 pupil)

I am not sure to be honest with you. Last year I did used to mess around a lot as well and that is probably why she didn't believe me, if you get what I mean. I did honestly used to mess around quite a lot last year. I don't this year but maybe it's because last year I used to mess around and maybe she just automatically assumes that I am doing something wrong.

(Year 8 pupil)

I think it is my reputation. Earlier on in the year I was slightly more immature and stupid and did things that I wouldn't do now.

(Year 10 pupil)

Those pupils who reported a feeling of discrimination against them also reported a heightened belief that a teacher should treat pupils fairly. It is not surprising that when pupils are treated unfairly, their sense of injustice increased. However, this behaviour also seems to increase the sense of importance that pupils place on being treated fairly. Pupils who feel they are treated unfairly have an increased sense of alienation:

Sir just kept having a go at me. Then I was silent just doing my work and I just thought 'I

give up I am just going to do my work and be absolutely silent and look at my papers so that he can't have a go at me.' The next thing I know 'Year 8 pupil…be quiet'.

(Year 8 pupil)

Last lesson I didn't understand it because we did it slightly different and then I asked for her help a few times, but maybe she was ignoring me or maybe she didn't hear me. I don't know, because she just carried on with the lesson then she stopped the whole lesson and started telling us. In the end I did most of it but I didn't do all of it because I didn't understand really. I was asking other people how to do it but then I get told off for talking.

(Year 8 pupil)

It's unfair. I'm targeted and I haven't done anything wrong and I have tried to tell her that. She uses 'well it wasn't a question. It was a yes or no question and I don't want anything else' that's what she says.

(Year 10 pupil)

I just want her to be a lot nicer. With me and [name] most teachers will tell you that we are nice to teachers, we are respectful but we find that they don't respect us but teachers get away with it because they are teachers but we don't.

(Year 10 pupil)

Teachers tended to agree with pupils that treating everyone fairly is an important dimension of relationships and a means to keep pupils engaged with learning in lessons. Teachers wanted pupils to think of them as being fair, suggesting this is an important aspect for teachers as well as pupils:

I would hope that they would say that I was fair with them; that they knew that I cared about them, that I wanted them to improve and they knew how to improve; and if they felt that they could not understand something they could come and talk to me or they could e-mail me

(Class teacher)

I'm also fair so if a kid hasn't got a pen I am not going to put them in detention I have got better things to do and we know there are probably rules somewhere that I am breaking, like I am supposed to do that but I am not going to. You know I'll get a pen; let's get a pen and get sorted.

(Class teacher)

When asked about pupils being unfairly targeted, the two pastoral leads were not able to rebuke this. Although, professionally, they said they felt compelled to take the opinion of the teacher over the opinion of the pupil, both pastoral leads were able to recollect at least one incident where it appeared the pupils' account of events were correct:

Professionally you have to take, almost 99% of the time you have got to go with what the

teacher has said because they are the adult in the room. There have been and I can't think what, but I know there was an incident where the teacher said one thing but there was a T.A. in the room and they said actually the child was right, but that is rare.

(Pastoral Lead Teacher)

Yeah possibly. I remember that, I remember him talking to me about that. I was like "[name], you didn't really have your hand up for that long" and he was like "yeah I did" again he's probably stubborn and just kept it there because she knew it was annoying her and she was annoying him. I don't know, I wasn't there.

(Pastoral Lead Teacher)

This indicates that, although pupils are unlikely to be completely innocent every time they claim it, there are occasions when they are. This enables pupils to justify their enhanced feeling of discrimination, resulting in further feelings of injustice and alienation.

Pupils did not express that they wanted teachers to stop reprimanding; they wanted reasonable sanctions:

Miss, she is just fair if you know what I mean. Some teachers are not fair but they don't realise it, but she is fair. If you do something wrong she will tell you off for it, but she won't go over the top with it she will just tell you off and she will give you another couple of chances and then she will tell you off more. But other teachers they won't really give you a chance.

(Year 8 pupil)

No pupil stated reprimanding alone as a reason for feeling alienated or having negative relationships; instead, they stated being treated justly as a mechanism for forming positive relationships:

Researcher: So, what makes you like a teacher?

Pupil: I don't know like if they are respectful as well and if they are equal to everyone not just choosing certain kids.

(Year 10 pupil)

Pupils' feelings and anxieties of injustice were so strong, that they frequently expressed a need to correct a teacher when they incorrectly apportioned blame. Pupils did this, despite knowing that it could often exacerbate the problem, by appearing to answer the teacher back. Their sense of injustice was so strong that pupils felt they needed to try and exonerate themselves in spite of the potential additional consequences:

Researcher: And why do you think that you have to say that it wasn't you?

Pupil: Because I don't want her getting the wrong impression of me. 'I don't want her to think he is talking watch out for him I just want her to know that it wasn't me.

(Year 10 pupil)

The above excerpts and emergent properties from Table 5.2 are summarised in the relationship diagram in Figure 5.2, capturing the connections between the emergent properties.
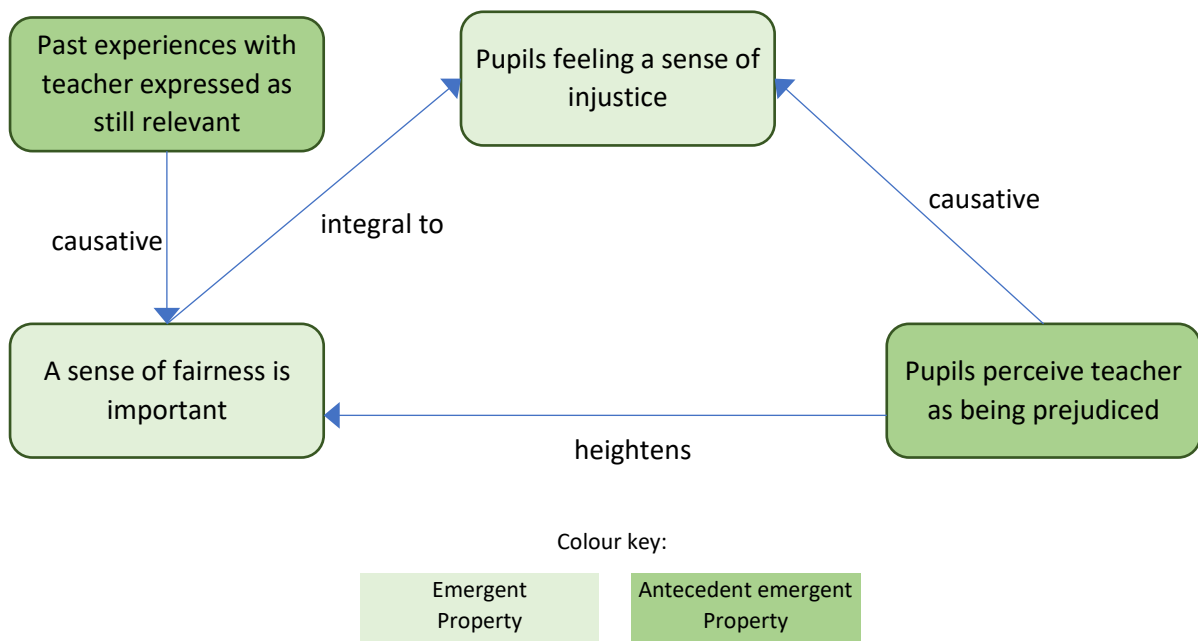
Figure 5.2 PCM: Pupils feeling a sense of injustice

Figure 5.2 summarises this PCM. Pupils feel a sense of injustice in myriad ways; a major contributing factor to this is a perception that teachers' behaviour is influenced through prejudice. This, in turn, heightens pupils' sense that fairness is important, causing greater conflict between pupil and teacher. As with the first PCM, the antecedent emergent properties are shown in darker green. These are the basis of the causative structure within the mechanism. For example, when pupils perceive one of their teachers to be prejudiced this can emerge as a feeling of injustice. The perception of prejudice can also heighten the sense that fairness is important, which has itself emerged from the belief that teachers will treat pupils differently based on their past experiences.

5.4 – Pupils Having a Feeling of Powerlessness

This PCM reveals the feelings of powerlessness shared by the pupil participants. Powerlessness was expressed in multiple ways, indicating a complex experience for participants. The majority of emergent properties shared codes between each other suggesting powerlessness featured prominently in a range of experiences shared by participants. **Appendix L** shows a summary of the conceptual categories and emergent properties which form the PCM.

Each pupil showed an awareness of their bad behaviour. The degree of transparency varied, with some pupils describing their bad behaviour as a thing of the past, whilst others spoke openly about a negative attitude continuing to the present:

> *I get easily distracted and probably it's my group of friends as well. We are not always on task or doing the work that we are meant to be doing. Like in Maths I have got a friend and I'll be honest we do mess about a bit.*
>
> (Year 10 pupil)

> *I know I am in the wrong, but I don't really mind it [being reprimanded]. It doesn't affect me as a person really, I just don't mind it but I know I have done wrong.*
>
> (Year 10 pupil)

This self-awareness was often spoken about in conjunction with pupils expressing their personal agency; although pupils were aware their behaviour was not always good, they still voiced a desire to perform academically well in those subjects. This relationship between the two emergent properties indicates pupils are not always able to control their social relationships during lessons to the detriment of their learning. Pupils are experiencing powerlessness; they explain that they are trying to do well, or have tried to change their behaviour, but never express this as a completed action. That is to say, they are unable to state that their behaviour is now good:

> [When talking about how another pupil has tried to change his behaviour]
>
> I *saw that it wasn't getting me anywhere and I realised that it was getting too close to*

stuff like GCSE's so I decided I'd better try and be good and try to learn in lessons and try and get places.

<div align="right">(Year 8 pupil)</div>

I saw that it wasn't getting me anywhere and I realised that it was getting too close to stuff like GCSE's so I decided I'd better try and be good and try to learn in lessons and try and get places.

<div align="right">(Year 8 pupil)</div>

I know I should do well; I know that I can do better.

<div align="right">(Year 10 pupil)</div>

If you are trying to work the teacher is always nipping at you for little stuff and you can't actually do the work properly.

<div align="right">(Year 10 pupil)</div>

The majority of pupils spoke about teachers holding a degree of power over them. They felt that this was in opposition to their desire to perform well, where teachers' displays of power were a contributory factor to pupils being unable to express their agency in lessons:

[A teacher] just tries to be intimidating because he is a big guy and he thinks he can just, well tower over you like he is in charge.

<div align="right">(Year 10 pupil)</div>

I think she feels that she has a lot of power, but she used to keep people in detention a lot and I think that made her feel more powerful. I think she feels like she is the queen of the school or something like that.

<div align="right">(Year 10 pupil)</div>

I said 'Miss, can I sit here please I am not going to cause any trouble.' She just didn't even know me and I had never had her before so I just sat with my mate and then she has never liked me since. She hated me every lesson. She would give us homework and I wouldn't do it and I have never got on with that teacher. Never, ever, ever.

<div align="right">(Year 10 pupil)</div>

Researcher: Considering you want to do well, what is actually stopping you doing well in those lessons to enable you to do well in that exam?

Pupil: Teachers.

<div align="right">(Year 10 pupil)</div>

The class teachers did not echo this perception of teachers over-stepping their authority, however, the four class-teachers who participated saw themselves as having positive relationships with pupils,

including those presenting more challenging behaviour. The pastoral leads, whose job requires them to intervene with behaviour incidents across the school and are therefore exposed to the extremes of negative pupil-teacher relationships did agree with the pupils. They recalled occasions where they witnessed teachers abusing their power and believed this could have an impact on pupil enjoyment and engagement in learning:

> *I think is it a power play? Is it saying 'well I'm in charge in this classroom and you will do what I say…this is my room and you will do what I say straight away'. I don't work like that and I suppose it might work for some teachers, but I suppose every classroom is so different and every teacher's manner is so different, I think the kids struggle with that.*
>
> (Pastoral Lead Teacher)

> *Researcher: Do you think some teachers do almost have a power play?*
>
> *Teacher: Yes very much I think there can be a level of intimidation as well… I think there is and I have seen certain people who rule by fear and I do think that happens.*
>
> (Pastoral Lead Teacher)

To a lesser degree, pupils identified not enjoying a subject as a reason preventing them from performing well. Their focus tended to be on the subject itself:

> *I don't see when I am going to need it because I find if you go to Spain you can get by because there is always someone British there. I have bad handwriting and I could use that time doing handwriting or spelling practise or something.*
>
> (Year 8 pupil)

> *It's just the subject as well. English Literature is like poems. I'm never going to use poems in my life. English Language is important. I want to get English language because it's compulsory but English Literature is I see it as pointless.*
>
> (Year 10 pupil)

However, there was an intersection between the perception of the teacher and enjoyment of the subject, indicating that teachers can enhance a feeling of dislike for a subject:

> *Because I enjoy the subject and the teacher. For some subjects, the teacher can be…if you make a wrong answer they might be like you should know that, you need to know that. I like the History teacher because there is not a right or wrong answer.*
>
> (Year 8 pupil)

It's not the subject it is the teacher really.

(Year 10 pupil)

There was a general agreement among pupils that their past experiences with teachers continued to be relevant, even when pupils had made conscious efforts to improve their behaviour. Pupils demonstrated feelings of powerlessness; they were blamed for an action they had not done and believed this happened because of their past reputation:

> *If you mess around one year for a whole year which I was, for a whole year like messing around and always getting into trouble. This year I feel like sometimes I have not done as bad I think I have done, but because I did it last year they just assume that it's me.*
> (Year 8 pupil)

This feeling was confirmed by teachers, who were able to recognise that they would sometimes inadvertently and incorrectly assume the negative behaviour stemmed from one individual:

> *When you look there and sometimes you can over focus on the behaviour and over focus on the one person and it is not always that one who is the protagonist it's a few others.*
> (Class teacher)

The above excerpts and emergent properties in **Appendix L** are summarised in Figure 5.3. Pupils feeling powerlessness is a complicated mechanism, which results in a wide range of observable behaviours.
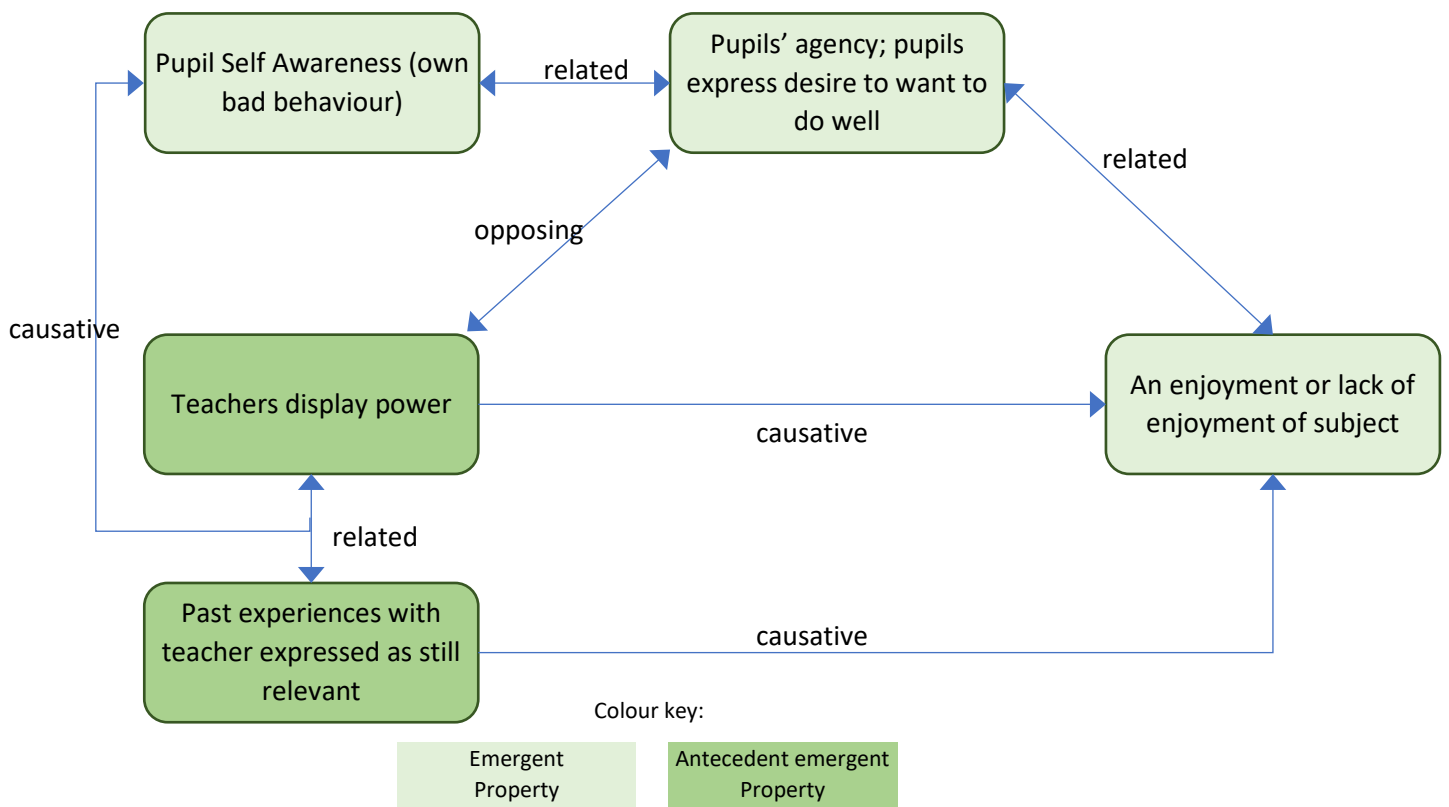
Figure 5.3 PCM: Pupils having a feeling of powerlessness

Pupils are aware of their own bad behaviour, want to perform well and are varied in their enjoyment of different subjects. The antecedent emergent properties (shown in dark green) represent the causative structures residing within this PCM. Both these antecedent EPs intersect with each other leading to the emergence of pupils awareness of their own bed behaviour and modifying pupils' enjoyment of the subject being taught. Both of these EPs are, in turn, related to pupils' desire to want to succeed in the subject but this is often restricted by the feeling that teachers display power unreasonably, restricting pupils' belief in their ability to take control of their own learning.

5.5 – Negative Relationships Increase Feelings of Alienation in Pupils (Self-Fulfilling Prophecy)

This PCM deals with the interaction between negative pupil-teacher relationships and feelings of alienation in pupils. The connection between the two is a complex intersection incorporating feelings of distrust. These feelings of distrust can lead to pupils having a negative perception of their teacher which, in turn, damage the relationship. This is suggestive of a negative cycle, or self-fulfilling prophecy. **Appendix M** shows a summary of the conceptual categories and emergent properties which form the PCM.

Pupils unanimously agreed that when negative relationships existed between themselves and teachers, feelings of discontentment towards the teacher were also present. There were no relationships which were expressed as negative without reports of feelings of annoyance, frustration or unhappiness. Whilst this is not unexpected, the relationship appears to be causative; negative feelings towards a teacher, irrelevant of the source, are a causal factor in a perception that relationships are not good:

> *She's quite bland, she doesn't really have any enthusiasm for the subject that she teaches. To be quite honest, I think she's only in it for the money. Sometimes she doesn't know what she's going on about.*
>
> (Year 10 pupil)

> *I can't stand her. I have never liked her. She has never liked me because I had a lot of time off in Year 9 and my Mum had to have a lot of meetings with her. I don't think she has ever liked her, and I think she was saying 'I have always liked you boys, you have always been my favourites.' She has never even spoken to us to be honest.*
>
> (Year 10 pupil)

When talking about this causal factor, feelings of trust emerged as an important dimension. Pupils felt that trusting a teacher was important, was related to feelings of negativity and was a contributory factor to a perception that relationships are not good. Trust manifested in various ways, ranging from the trust that teachers would not make pupils feel humiliated, trusting that teachers have pupils' best interests at heart and trust that the teacher will respond to incidents in fairly way:

It's constant. My cards are marked, I know. And then she is constantly just looking at me.

(Year 10 pupil)

Researcher: Why do you dislike them?

Pupil: Because I am really good at P.E. and I really enjoy P.E. but if you are good at football you get into every sport. So for cricket, athletics and rounders you are guaranteed to be in it, but if you don't do football you are not in the sport, you don't get into them activities no matter what.

(Year 8 pupil)

Researcher: would you put your hand up and ask that question in front of the whole class?

Pupil: I have done it before and felt like an idiot after and I wouldn't feel comfortable again.

Researcher: Who made you feel like an idiot?

Pupil: Miss.

Researcher: And how did she do that?

Pupil: She just like "well [name] that's a bit obvious isn't it". I know it's not much but I am very, very sensitive so that type of thing can knock people down on a scale of relationship with teachers. I think it kind of ruins it in a way.

(Year 8 pupil)

Such feelings of trust were found to be important to pupils on a personal level. They felt that teachers who they saw as untrustworthy treated pupils in a different way, further impacting on the ability to establish a positive relationship:

Our teacher, [name], I don't really get on with her and quite a few of us don't in the class. She gets the impression that we are all the naughty ones so she treats us different, completely different to all the other ones.

(Year 10 pupil)

She [the teacher] sent out one of my friends for not doing anything and I got annoyed at that because he hasn't done anything this lesson, and he has been trying his hardest. She said 'I can see you are going to do something so I'm sending you out,' and I was like but why?

(Year 10 pupil)

Furthermore, pupils reported that they felt teachers made it clear when they disliked a pupil. Pupils recounted incidents where teachers demonstrated this by not listening to their pupils, ignoring pupils or being rude:

He should have spoken to me and listened to what I was trying to say rather than automatically thinking 'Oh no it's definitely all of them not you'. He didn't really listen to me he just had a go at me for answering back and stuff like that.

(Year 8 pupil)

So I said 'Miss why did you put this?' and she said 'can you put your hand up' so I put my hand up and I had my hand up for about 15 or 20 minutes and she just looked at me and ignored me.

(Year 8 pupil)

It's just because she is just rude. That's it really, she is just rude.

(Year 10 pupil)

Although such incidents are recollections from pupils who feel aggrieved to their teachers and are experiencing alienation, they felt strongly about these incidents and their feelings associated with them. In addition to this, pastoral leads were able to corroborate, to some extent, some of these incidents:

There are some teachers you hear shouting quite a lot. But again, I don't know the effectiveness in their lessons particularly.

(Pastoral Lead Teacher)

It is clear that when there is a perception that relationships are not good, pupils can recount occasions and actions to support these feelings. These events simultaneously reinforce a perception that the bulk of the accountability for the negative relationship lies with the teacher:

I didn't really have a good relationship. She was moody with me so I was moody with her and then it came to me that I literally did not like her at all, and she didn't like me.

(Year 10 pupil)

Furthermore, when asked whose responsibility it is to stop a negative cycle of pupil-teacher interactions, it was felt that it was the teacher's responsibility. Pupils knew they had a degree of responsibility but felt that as teachers were the adults in the relationship, it was up to them to make the first move. This feeling was echoed by teachers who felt the power of an apology from the teacher could help to repair relationships:

Hers. Hers. To be more fair and not being as rude and just saying sorry. I still think she would carry on being like that if I said sorry. She's the adult so she should make the first move. I know we've both started this and I'm not always good but. I guess we both started it but she should be the first to stop having a go at me for the same things or smaller things that other people do.

<div align="right">Year 10 pupil</div>

You know we are just all human beings in a big melting pot aren't we and I do think sometimes 'gosh I was a bit sharp there. I shouldn't have been so sharp, that wasn't very nice' so I would consciously make an effort to say to them 'I was a bit sharp. Sorry about that I should have been a little bit softer'.

<div align="right">(Class teacher)</div>

The emergent properties in **Appendix M** and excerpts above are summarised in the relationship diagram in Figure 5.4.
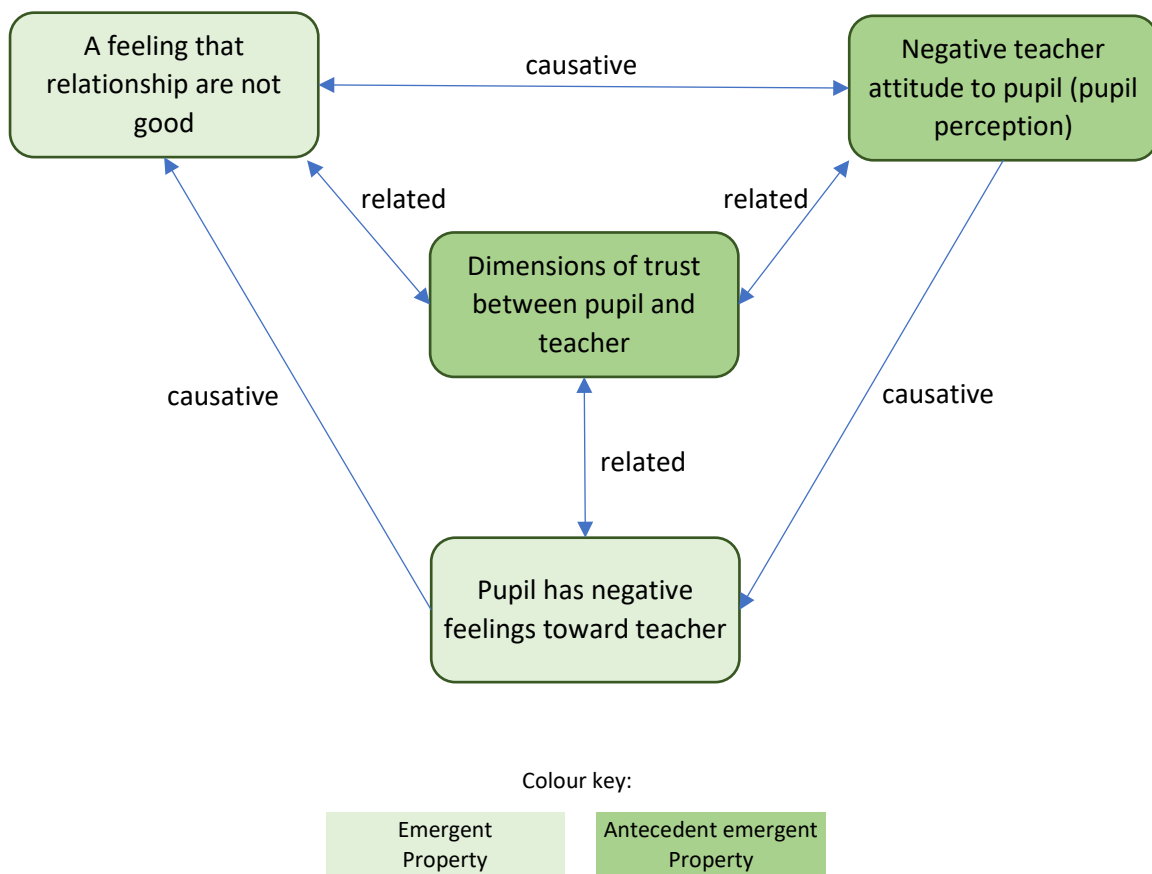

Colour key:

Emergent Property	Antecedent emergent Property

Figure 5.4 PCM: Negative relationships increase feelings of alienation in pupils (self-fulfilling prophecy)

Figure 5.4 summarises these findings, showing that dimensions of trust interact with negative feelings and perceptions that relationships are bad. The findings further demonstrate negative perceptions and attitudes between pupils and teachers play a crucial role in feelings among pupils that relationships are not good. Once relationships are deemed to be negative, pupils can enter a self-fulfilling prophecy cycle where bad relationships not only increase feelings of alienation, but these increased feelings of alienation also further cement a feeling that relationships are bad. This cycle is demonstrated by the three EPs shown on the outer part of the diagram. They are all responsible for the causative mechanisms within this PCM. Unlike the previous PCMs, it is not only the antecedent EPs which can cause properties to emerge; the other EPs are also responsible for this. It is this unique property of the PCM which adds to its complexity and can result in the negative self-fulfilling prophecy described by participants. As with the other PCMs, the EPs and antecedent EPs were separated by analysis of the number and type of codes applied. The antecedent EPs refer to those which use more causative language, whilst EPs use language which is more likely to be observable. The EPs also had more conceptual categories and incidents coded to these than the antecedent EPs, highlighting how they are closer to the *empirical* strata of reality (Bhaskar, 1978).

5.6 – A Lack of Mutual Respect Between Teacher and Pupil

The fifth possible causative mechanism identified concerns mutual respect between teacher and pupil. There are three main components to this, which are all related to each other (see **Appendix N**). Pupils and teachers felt that mutual respect is central to positive relationships and were able to talk about how they viewed the difference between 'like' and 'respect'.

Mutual respect was expressed by every pupil as an important dimension of forming positive relationships with teachers, and as a means of engaging with learning. Pupils saw a difference between liking and respecting a teacher. They described liking teachers and respecting teachers as distinct feelings; they felt they were able to like a teacher based on their characteristics and personality:

liking a teacher is more like you have that connection with them in class. They can help you, and they can exceed your learning.

<div align="right">(Year 10 pupil)</div>

he is really kind and helps me whenever he can.

<div align="right">(Year 8 pupil)</div>

If I liked the teacher and I didn't like the subject I think I would do well or I would do better in it.

<div align="right">(Year 8 pupil)</div>

We get along with her and have jokes with her but we do work for her because we do like her

<div align="right">(Year 10 pupil)</div>

Respect tended to be partitioned to professional behaviours and the role of a teacher in society:

Respecting a teacher I think is just manners. It's just the general manner you give to a normal person. You are there to listen, you are there to sometimes try your hardest and sometimes you might drift a little bit like I do in lesson. But you are there to give them that respect that they have earned as a teacher and you need to listen, you need to make sure that you are concentrating sometimes. You need to make sure that you are always putting in a 100% effort in that respect.

<div align="right">(Year 10 pupil)</div>

The difference is respecting a teacher, like not saying anything to them but they may not be the greatest teacher. But you would still respect them in the way that they are still human. Liking a teacher would be like you like their like traits, and how they teach and stuff I think.

<div align="right">(Year 8 pupil)</div>

Despite being seen as separate entities, liking a teacher and respecting a teacher are related to each other. Respecting a teacher (or not) was far more emotive for pupils than liking a teacher; respect was expressed in terms of a teacher fulfilling their responsibilities of the job and showing mutual respect. Pupils felt personally aggrieved when they felt they were not respected, and as a result they would choose to not show respect to their teacher. This was also true when teachers and pupils showed respect for each other, suggesting a reciprocal relationship for respect between pupils and teachers:

She is just not very nice, you know. If she is not going to respect me then I am not going to respect her. It makes her not like me even more. She doesn't like me in the first place so it doesn't really matter.

<div align="right">(Year 10 pupil)</div>

Yes, if the teacher is nice and stuff and they let you have a joke and stuff I would obviously get a better attitude and like them a lot more than other teachers. But obviously if they are respectful as well, I am going to be respectful back, but if they are not. I should be not disrespectful but sometimes I am if they are.

(Year 10 pupil)

Mutual respect was subject to continued negotiation, suggesting pupils and teachers can develop and erode mutual respect throughout the course of a pupil-teacher relationship:

Researcher: Can you think of a teacher who you have respect for?

Pupil: Possibly my Maths teacher because I was always bad in his lessons and now he has given me a chance and I am trying my best and some teachers would have just given up on me, but he didn't and he is still trying to coach me now.

Researcher: Right and do you think he has got respect for you as well?

Pupil: I think he has a bit more now, yes, because I have been trying really hard in his lessons.

(Year 8 pupil)

Respect is like listening when she is speaking, but then I think that respect goes both ways and she should listen to when I am speaking.

Year 10 pupil

There is a slight difference because you can like a teacher as them personally but I don't feel like you respect them. So, I like Miss. I don't dislike her as a person but I know that there has been times when I haven't been respecting her.

(Year 10 pupil)

The perception of the quality of teacher also plays a role in how pupils develop respect for their teachers. Pupils expressed opinions on the quality of a teacher as a means of evaluating the levels of respect they held for them:

Pupil: [A teacher], I don't think he is a very good teacher.

Researcher: What makes him not a very good teacher?

Pupil: When I had him, I know it has changed it is a few years now but he just didn't explain the task properly and then when you did ask him for some help he would just get a bit annoyed because he said 'you're not listening even if you had been listening,' he thinks you are in the wrong.

(Year 10 pupil)

Everyone learns in different ways and she sort of doesn't know how to find other people's different ways to learn.

(Year 8 pupil)

The above excerpts and emergent properties (see **Appendix N**) have been summarised through the relationship diagram in Figure 5.5.
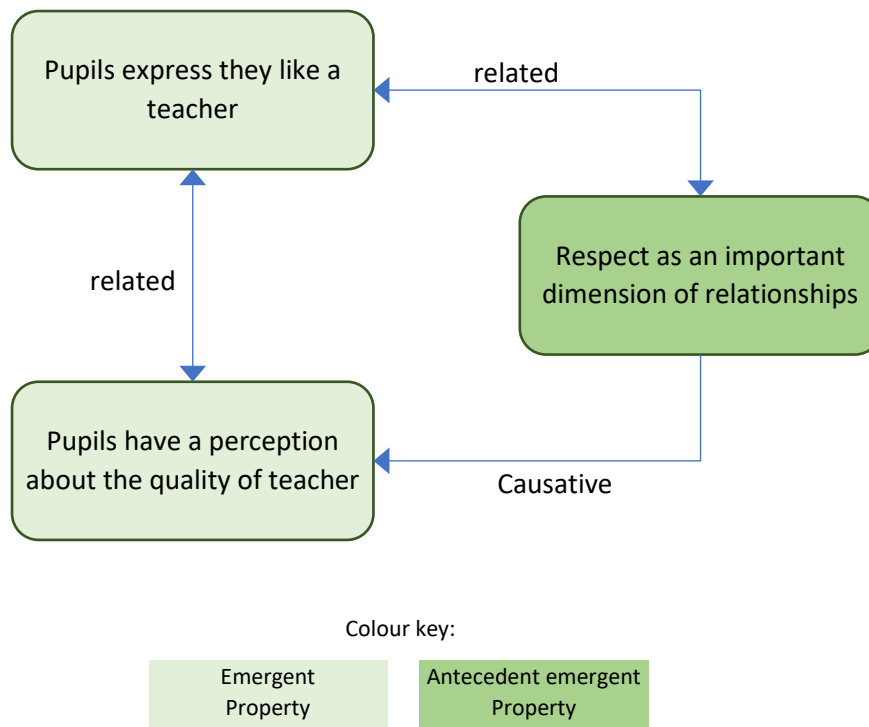
Figure 5.5 PCM: A lack of mutual respect between teacher and pupil

It has been shown to have three major components which all interact with each other. Respect as an important dimension of relationships is shown as the antecedent EP and is therefore responsible for the causative structure within the PCM. The participants recalled experiences where knowledge about respect was a causative factor in how pupils perceive the quality of their teacher; pupils expressed they liked certain teachers based on personality traits and linked this with respecting teachers. 'Like' and 'respect' are not necessarily synonymous, but they are related. This is shown by the two 'related' arrows; the arrow at the top shows how individual knowledge about what respect means can modify how pupils express their liking of a teacher. Knowledge of the term 'respect' is also modified by how pupils understand the meaning of 'like'. This can, in turn, vary how a pupil perceives the quality of their teacher.

5.7 – Chapter Summary

This chapter has presented five possible causative mechanisms which have been generated from open and retroductive coding. The PCMs are located in the *real* domain of reality and are exemplified using direct quotes from pupil and teacher participants. The PCMs are interlinked, as many of the quotes were coded to more than one conceptual category. Each of the PCMs are complicated mechanisms, which result in a range of experiences in the *empirical* shared by participants. Feeling valued, a sense of injustice, powerlessness, mutual respect and an understanding that negative relationships increase feelings of alienation have emerged as important to pupil alienation from school. The next chapter will share the methods of analysis and findings from the quantitative data.

Chapter 6 – Findings from Quantitative Data

6.1 – Introduction

This chapter describes the analysis of the Student-Teacher Relationship Scale (STRS) (Pianta, 1991).

There will be some methods of analysis explored throughout this chapter, which were not shared

during chapter four due to their close connection to the findings themselves. This chapter will explore

the results of the statistical analysis from the STRS and present six findings resulting from this analysis.

The methods of analysis follow those outlined in the STRS professional manual (Pianta, 1991) and are

used to elicit findings from the data.

6.2 – Inclusion of Quantitative Data

Grounded theory's iterative approach to data collection and analysis has shown it is a methodology

capable of handling mixed data (Johnson, McGowan and Turner, 2010; Guetterman et al., 2019).

Glaser's dictum that "all is data" (Glaser, 2001 p. 145) suggests that the researcher should use

whatever data is available, providing it is theoretically relevant, to saturate concepts. To gain a broad

and deep understanding of the phenomena, the Student-Teacher Relationship Scale (Pianta, 1991)

was used to explore teachers' perceptions of their relationships with students. Analytical methods

followed those suggested in the STRS manual (Pianta, 1991) and were supplemented with the

inclusion of descriptive statistics to identify statistical differences between groups of pupils.

A reflection on the benefits of comparing qualitative and quantitative data is shared in Memo 5:

> *Reflecting on the findings of the quantitative data and comparing it with the emerging*
> *qualitative data, I believe the decision to include both types of data has been shown to be*
> *beneficial. As Crotty (1998) argues the decision whether to include mixed data is not rooted*
> *in positivism versus non-positivism, but instead, rests upon the merits of qualitative versus*
> *non-qualitative methods. Critical realism's unique philosophical standpoint (positivist*
> *ontology, interpretivist epistemology) resonates with Crotty's argument that types of data*
> *are not bound by the philosophical worldview held by the researcher, but by the type of*
> *questions one is trying to answer. Furthermore, it has been argued that 'the use of mixed*
> *methods can enrich and improve our understanding of the matters under study… in order*

to give answers to questions that are difficult to answer by a sole classical method.' (Lopez-Fernandez and Molina-Azorin, 2011 p. 1460).

In this study, the question which needed answering required both the formation of facts (the degree of conflictual and close relationships teacher participants felt they had) and the development of ideas (how pupils experienced these different relationships). Individually, the data from answering these types of questions would have given interesting findings, but neither one of them individually would have allowed for the discovery of possible causative mechanisms. This is where critical realist grounded theory's methodology has shown its strength. By making comparisons between the two types of data, possible real *mechanisms were identified which were able to explain both quantitative and qualitative findings.*

Memo 5 Reflecting on the inclusion of quantitative data

One of the benefits from examining both data sets together was broadening and deepening the understanding of the phenomenon. Not only were findings from the qualitative data confirmed by the STRS, but the survey also provided an additional finding which was subsequently confirmed using interview data. An additional finding arose from the fact that some participants reported very negative relationships with pupils on the STRS but did not consent to follow up interviews. This is not surprising as it has been shown that the anonymity of a questionnaire can provide participants with the security of giving honest answers without the worry of exposing themselves (Murdoch et al., 2014). The inclusion of quantitative data provided an opportunity to verify participants' recollections in interviews in addition to generating findings which were then able to be coded and integrated with existing emergent properties and possible causative mechanisms.

6.3 – Descriptive Statistics

In total, 55 STRS questionnaires were completed by 18 different teachers. The number of questionnaires returned per pupil participant ranged from three to nine. The questionnaire gave two subscale scores: a conflict and a closeness score for each pupil whom the questionnaire was completed about. The subscale raw scores for closeness range from 8 to 40 with a higher score indicating a greater perception of closeness and the subscale raw scores for conflict range from 7 to 35 with a high score indicating a greater perception of conflict. The means of the scores given by

teachers on the STRS and the associated standard deviations were calculated. These are presented in

Table 6.1:

Table 6.1 Descriptive statistics of STRS data.

Pupil ID	Mean closeness Score (max = 40)	Mean conflict score (max = 35)	Standard deviation closeness	Standard deviation conflict
S1	25.5	7.8	4.2	1.3
S2	29.4	11.0	3.4	3.3
S3	30.7	11.1	6.9	3.5
S4	19.5	15.3	5.4	6.7
S5	20.0	22.3	2.5	4.3
S6	23.6	15.8	6.7	5.7
S7	29.0	7.0	6.7	0.0
S8	21.3	10.3	3.9	4.0
S9	27.5	9.0	4.4	3.5
S10	28.4	17.8	7.8	5.7
S11	23.8	24.8	5.8	10.4
S12	29.0	18.0	4.7	7.9

All columns are the calculated scores from the responses by teachers on the STRS forms. Comparing

the means against the standard deviations gives an insight into how responses vary between teachers

as the mean scores increase.

6.4 – Comparing Standard Deviations and Means of Closeness and Conflict Scores

The mean closeness scores were plotted against the standard deviation of the closeness scores for the

teachers completing the STRS (n=18). This process was repeated for the conflict scores. Standard

deviation is a measure of how much the members of a group differ from the mean value of the group.

This means that if the standard deviation for the closeness score is high, the pupils within the group

have a wider range of closeness scores than those in the group when the standard deviation is low. In

other words, when the standard deviation for the closeness score is high, teachers disagree more on

how close they feel to those pupils than when the standard deviation is low. Graph 1 shows the

relationships between the standard deviation of closeness scores and the mean closeness scores; it

shows there is no correlation between the two and teachers vary equally in their perceptions of closeness for all pupils.
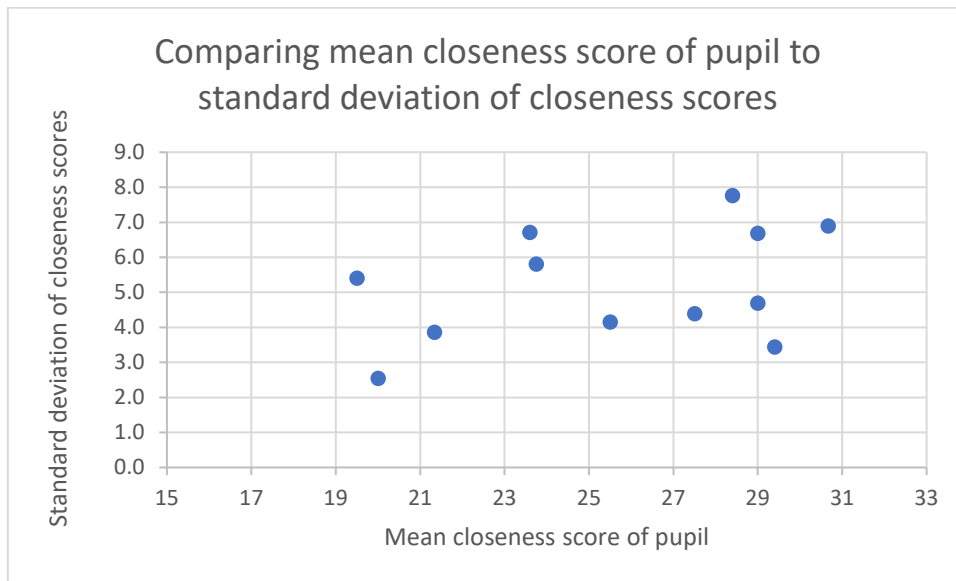
Graph 1 Comparing mean closeness scores of pupils to standard deviation of closeness scores.

This contrasts with Graph 2, which shows the relationships between standard deviation and mean conflict scores. A positive correlation is seen between the mean conflict and the standard deviation scores. This shows that as mean conflict scores increase, so does the range around the mean; pupils who are seen, on average, as more conflictual have a larger range in scores than those who are seen as less conflictual.
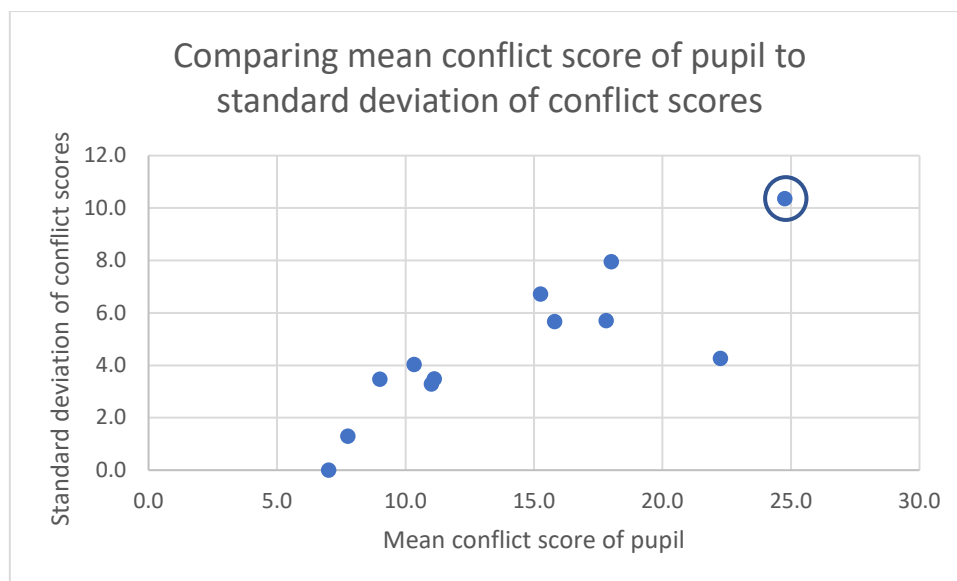
Graph 2 Comparing mean conflict score of pupils to standard deviation of conflict scores.

This variation is highlighted when considering one Year 8 pupil (circled on Graph 2). They have a mean conflict score of 24.8, and a standard deviation of 10.4. This participant is seen, on average, as having highly conflictual relationships, but this is not the perception between all members of staff who completed the STRS. On examination of the individual conflict scores, Table 6.2 shows that teachers 1 and 4 have indicated a very high conflict score, whereas teacher two has indicated a very low conflict score.

Table 6.2 Conflict scores of highlighted Year 8 participant.

Teacher	Conflict score
1	33
2	9
3	22
4	35

This degree of variability, shown in Graph 2, increases as the mean conflict score increases. This suggests that as a pupil is increasingly perceived as having a more turbulent relationship with members of staff, there is less congruence between how staff perceive their relationship as conflictual.

This phenomenon is not replicated in the closeness scores where there is no clear trend between mean scores and the standard deviation between these scores. Teachers are as likely to perceive variations in their closeness with pupils who, on average, have a low mean closeness score compared to those who have a high mean closeness score.

6.5 – Comparison of Year 8 and Year 10 Pupils

All pupil participants came from either Year 8 (ages 12-13) or Year 10 (ages 14-15). A null hypothesis and alternative hypothesis were formulated. The null hypothesis stated there would be no significant difference between the perception of closeness and conflict across the year groups ($H_0: \mu_1=\mu_2$). The alternative hypothesis stated there would be a difference in closeness and conflict scores across the year groups; the two populations are not equal ($H_1: \mu_1 \neq \mu_2$). To test this, an independent samples t-test was conducted using SPSS to identify if there was any significant difference between the mean closeness and mean conflict scores of pupils in different year groups.

Table 6.3 Independent samples t-test results.

Year group	Mean closeness	Mean conflict
8	26.3	15.0
10	26.2	13.5
t-value	0.64	0.753

The t-values, shown in Table 6.3, are below the critical value of 1.6736 (significance of >0.05). The null hypothesis fails to be rejected; there is no significant difference between the perceptions of closeness and conflict across the year groups. Teachers, in the sample, do not feel they have closer or more conflictual relationships with pupils in Year 10 or Year 8.

Skewness values were calculated to confirm this result. Table 6.4 shows that, across the entire sample of pupil participants, teachers perceive their relationships with pupils to be more positive; the skew shows a shift towards higher closeness scores and lower conflict scores.

Table 6.4 Skewness results.

Scale/subscale	Skewness		
	Year 8	Year 10	Entire sample
Closeness	-0.71	0.10	-0.16
Conflict	0.93	0.79	0.99

However, skewness by year group suggests that teachers reported having a higher feeling of closeness and a lower feeling of conflict with Year 8 pupils than those in Year 10. This is in contrast to the t-test indicating that one of the tests must be producing results that are unreliable. The t-test is a parametric test, intended to be performed on a sample where a normal distribution is assumed. The skewness values show that a normal distribution is likely not to be the case in this sample. When the assumption of a normal distribution is not met for an independent samples t-test, it is suggested that the non-parametric Mann-Whitney U test is done (Kent State University, 2019) which can test for significance when the two variables are not normally distributed. The results are shown in Table 6.5:

Table 6.5 Mann-Whitney U test results.

	Null Hypothesis	Test	Sig.a	Decision
	The distribution of closeness is the same across categories of year group.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	.832	Retain the null hypothesis.
	The distribution of conflict is the same across categories of year group.	Independent-Samples Mann-Whitney U Test	0.966	Retain the null hypothesis.
a. The significance level is .050.				

Table 6.5 shows the outcome of the Mann-Whitney U test, confirming the results of the t-test, and rejecting the results of the skewness test. The data shows moderate skewness from a small sample size. As skewness is heavily influenced by sample size, the relatively small sample of data combined

with conflicting t-test and Mann-Whitney U test suggests that skewness cannot be relied upon. The results from the t-test and the Mann-Whitney U test are accepted, showing there is no significant difference between the year groups. Teachers in the sample do not feel they have closer or more conflictual relationships with pupils in either Year 10 or Year 8.

6.6 – Item Level Statistics

The STRS professional manual (Pianta, 1991) shows how item level statistics can identify variability across the scale and can check for skewness for individual items. Table 6.6 presents the analysis of the item level statistics including the means, standard deviations, and skewness for each of the 15 items.

Table 6.6 Item-level statistics

Item description	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness
1. I share an affectionate, warm relationship with this child. *this refers to a professional relationship	3.5818	1.11705	-.668
2. This child and I always seem to be struggling with each other.	2.0182	1.17837	1.021
3. If upset, this child will seek comfort from me.	2.4364	1.18265	.192
4. This child is uncomfortable with physical contact from me.	2.7091	1.40992	.254
5. This child values his/her professional relationship with me.	3.6000	1.04704	-1.129
6. When I praise this child, he/she beams with pride.	3.9273	.93995	-.684
7. This child spontaneously shares information about himself/herself.	3.2000	1.37975	-.374
8. This child easily becomes angry with me.	1.8364	1.03214	1.284
9. It is easy to be in tune with what this child is feeling.	3.3273	1.05505	-.408
10. This child remains angry or is resistant after being disciplined.	2.0909	1.29490	1.153
11. Dealing with this child drains my energy.	2.1273	1.24803	1.056
12. When this child is in a bad mood, I know we're in for a long and difficult lesson.	2.1636	1.31605	.901
13. This child's feelings toward me can be unpredictable or can change suddenly.	1.8545	1.12905	1.338
14. This child is sneaky or manipulative with me.	2.1091	1.31477	.908
15. This child openly shares his/her feelings and experiences with me.	2.9636	1.31886	-.283

Generally, all items showed comparable variability; the standard deviations for most items were similar. Items 5, 6, 8 and 9 show a lower standard deviation than the other items, indicating teachers' perceptions related to these items vary the most for the sample. The items reflecting a positive relationship (shaded in blue) tend to demonstrate a negative skew, whilst the items reflecting a negative relationship (shaded in grey) tend to demonstrate a positive skew. This shows that teachers in this sample tend to view their relationships as more positive than negative.

6.7 – Handling of Closeness and Conflict Scores

To examine the degree to which teachers perceive their relationships with pupils as conflictual or close, conflict scores and closeness scores were mathematically manipulated. Table 6.7 shows the values when conflict scores are subtracted from closeness scores. A low number indicates a troubling relationship, whereas a high number indicates that closeness scores are high and conflict scores are low. Participants S5 and S11 (circled on the table) had a negative closeness-conflict score, showing their teachers perceived having more of a conflicting than close relationship with these pupils.

Table 6.7 Closeness scores minus conflict scores

Participant ID	Year Group	Mean closeness Score of pupil	Mean conflict score of pupil	Closeness - conflict
S1	8	25.5	7.8	17.8
S2	10	29.4	11.0	18.4
S3	10	30.7	11.1	19.6
S4	10	19.5	15.3	4.3
S5	10	20.0	22.3	-2.3
S6	10	23.6	15.8	7.8
S7	10	29.0	7.0	22.0
S8	8	21.3	10.3	11.0
S9	8	27.5	9.0	18.5
S10	8	28.4	17.8	10.6
S11	8	23.8	24.8	-1.0
S12	8	29.0	18.0	11.0

To further investigate the relationships between closeness and conflict scores, participants' scores were compared against the mean scores. The highlighting in these columns shows where participants received a closeness score lower than the mean closeness score (mean = 26.25) and a conflict score higher than the mean conflict score (mean = 14.20). These data show where the potentially most problematic relationships between the pupil and teacher exist. This is even greater when the closeness score is lower than the mean and conflict is greater. There are four occasions where this is the case (S4, S5, S6 and S11). Three of these are with Year 10 pupils. These four participants are grouped together as the "closeness low, conflict high" group (CLCH).

6.8 – Findings from the STRS

The inclusion of quantitative data in this study presented a significant development in the understanding of the phenomena. The STRS questions were phrased in a way to ask teachers to begin analysing their relationships with pupils, suggesting the quantitative findings are located in the *actual* domain of reality. The concurrent analysis of qualitative and quantitative data sets advanced by critical realist grounded theory (Looker, Vickers and Kington, 2021) meant that comparison between STRS findings and *actual* emergent properties from interview data could begin. This unique approach allowed for three substantial developments in the emerging theory. Firstly, quantitative data were able to be integrated into existing emergent properties and possible causative mechanisms. Secondly, constant comparison and integration of both data sets led to one PCM being amended to accommodate the new findings. Finally, and possibly most importantly, it led to the identification of a new PCM which had a significant impact on the substantive theory. Without the use of quantitative data, it is likely that the final, sixth PCM would not have been identified and could have limited how close the final theory came to explaining the *real* mechanisms resulting in school alienation.

The six findings from quantitative data are presented below, summarising the discoveries through the analysis of the STRS detailed in sections 6.2 – 6.7:

1. Teachers' perceptions of closeness with pupils tend to vary equally at all levels of closeness;
2. There is no significant difference between how teachers perceive their relationships with pupils in Years 8 and 10;
3. Teachers tend to perceive their relationships as more positive than negative;
4. Teachers scored pupils responding positively to praise most highly with the lowest standard deviation;
5. Teachers' perceptions of conflict with pupils tend to vary more as a pupil is increasingly seen as more conflictual;
6. Four out of 12 pupils in the sample scored lower than the mean for closeness and higher than the mean for conflict. They were grouped as the CLCH group.

As explained earlier, due to the iterative nature of grounded theory, these findings were not accepted into the generation of the theory until they were checked against, and integrated with, findings from the qualitative data. This process of triangulation, constant comparison and integration of data is fully explored in chapter 7.

6.9 – Chapter Summary

This chapter has detailed how the STRS has been analysed using descriptive statistics and manipulation of the raw data. The STRS data has identified that teachers from the sample are more likely to have disagreeing perceptions about conflict with pupils who are, on average, the most conflictual. They do not appear to disagree greatly about their perceptions of closeness. Teachers do not have differing perceptions about closeness or conflict with pupils in Years 8 and 10; they see their relationships as equally close and conflictual. A subgroup of pupils has been identified; these pupils have a lower closeness score than the mean of the sample, and a greater conflict score than the mean. This provided lines of enquiry for further examination during analysis of the interviews. The following chapter will continue the constant comparative method and triangulate both sets of data to further explore the "closeness low, conflict high" group of pupils identified in this chapter.

Chapter 7 – Triangulation of Qualitative and Quantitative Data

7.1 – Introduction

This chapter builds on the analysis of the qualitative and quantitative data by comparing and integrating the findings from the STRS with the findings from the analysis of interview data. This comparison between quantitative and qualitative data deepened the analysis and followed the process suggested by Holton and Walsh (2017) who recommend that analysis of both types of data should be conducted in parallel. As detailed in chapter six, the STRS findings were used to generate emergent properties. This chapter shows how they were triangulated and compared with findings from the qualitative data (shared in chapter five). The findings presented in this chapter were only discovered through constant comparison between quantitative and qualitative data. Through this process, a sixth possible causative mechanism is identified in this chapter for inclusion in the final substantive theory.

7.2 – Generating Emergent Properties from Comparison Between STRS and Interview Data

The findings from the STRS survey were subjected to constant comparison to develop emergent properties, which were then compared against the emergent properties from concurrent analysis of interview data.

Table 7.1 Coding STRS findings

STRS Finding	Conceptual categories	Emergent property	Source of emergent property
1. Teachers' perceptions of closeness with pupils tend to vary equally at all levels of closeness	• Perception of closeness • Closeness varies equally	A feeling that relationships are good	Through analysis of interview data
2. There is no significant difference between how teachers perceive their relationships with pupils in Years 8 and 10	• Year 8 and 10 relationships seen the same		
3. Teachers tend to perceive their relationships as more positive than negative	• Teachers see relationships in a positive light		
4. Teachers scored pupils responding positively to praise most highly with the lowest standard deviation	• Praise • Teachers perceive praise as important	Pupils feeling valued by their teacher	Through analysis of interview data
5. Teachers' perceptions of conflict with pupils tend to vary more as a pupil is increasingly seen as more conflictual	• Perception of conflict • Higher conflict, higher variation in scores	Highly conflictual pupils are perceived differently by different teachers	Through analysis of STRS
6. Four out of 12 pupils in the sample scored lower than the mean for closeness and higher than the mean for conflict. There were grouped as the CLCH group	• CLCH group • High conflict, low closeness	CLCH group have extreme feelings	Through analysis of STRS

Table 7.1 shows the conceptual categories which were generated by the findings from the STRS and the emergent properties these findings were ascribed to. Findings 1-4 formed part of pre-existing emergent properties (already generated through analysis of interview data), whereas findings five and six generated emergent properties which were only found through analysis of the STRS. Finding six (highlighted) shows the discovery of the CLCH group. Pupils who form the CLCH group are those who have a conflict score higher than the mean and who have a closeness score lower than the mean. This group is further analysed in sections 7.4 – 7.6.

7.2.1 – Comparison of the first four findings

Findings 1-4 were checked against other conceptual categories and data from interviews as a validation process. Table 7.2 shows how findings 1-3 were compared against conceptual categories from interviews with teachers within the emergent property "a feeling that relationships are good".

Table 7.2 Comparing STRS findings with emergent properties from interview data

STRS Finding	Emergent property	Quotes for comparison
1. Teachers' perceptions of closeness with pupils tend to vary equally at all levels of closeness	A feeling that relationships are good	*"So, I think he has quite a good relationship with me because I will listen to him and so by listening to him, he feels valued."* – Teacher (pastoral lead) *"I really genuinely believe that, because if you don't have a relationship with the children, you can't teach them. I firmly believe that."* – Teacher (pastoral lead)
2. There is no significant difference between how teachers perceive their relationships with pupils in Years 8 and 10		*"I think I have built up a good relationship with them over the last few years"* – Class teacher *"You find out what their interests are and even further in you take them away on a school trip. That has all helped in my experience to build up a really good relationship with kids."* – Class teacher
3. Teachers tend to perceive their relationships as more positive than negative		*"they feel safe and confident to work with one another and … there just doesn't seem to be barriers that get in the way of them being able to get cracking with a good lesson."* – Class teacher *"My year 10's I think I have got a pretty good relationship with them. The reason why I know that is I've got them pretty much eating out of the palm of my hand in the lesson"* – Class teacher

Comparing the data from the STRS and interviews, shown in Table 7.2, showed high levels of similarity. Teachers spoke positively about their relationships with pupils from all year groups and perceived having positive relationships, even with some of the more challenging children. Although teachers might not have used the term 'closeness', there was congruence with the feelings of closeness and the language used by teachers to describe their relationships. The existing emergent property "a feeling that relationships are good" appears to stand and can encompass the findings from the STRS.

The same process was applied to the emergent property "pupils feeling valued by their teacher" in Table 7.3. This emergent property also existed before analysis of the STRS and constant comparison allowed to check if it still held and was able to encompass the STRS findings.

Table 7.3 Comparing STRS findings with emergent properties from interview data

STRS Finding	Emergent property	Quotes for comparison
4. Teachers scored pupils responding positively to praise most highly with the lowest standard deviation	Pupils feeling valued by their teacher	"I do sort 'Chef of the Week' type things and we did a certificate" – class teacher "I respect her as a teacher because she helps us" – Year 10 pupil "we have formed an Eco Club with [the teacher], so that's a good thing" – Year 8 pupil "I was always bad in his lessons and now he has given me a chance and I am trying my best and some teachers would have just given up on me, but he didn't and he is still trying to coach me now." – Year 8 pupil

Although praise scored the highest in the STRS survey, it was not a topic often raised by teachers or pupils during interviews. An example where it was specifically raised was with a class teacher, who spoke about using a system of praise and how it was beneficial for a relationship with a particular pupil

(shown in Table 7.3). Other comparisons show some similarity to praise, indicating an overlap with the feeling of being valued. The item on the STRS talks about praising a child leading to the child "beaming with pride" – this is associated with a feeling of being valued, so the emergent property does encompass this new conceptual category, despite a lack of explicit reference during interviews.

7.2.2 – Comparison of the fifth finding

The fifth finding from the STRS was compared against several emergent properties which were generated from the qualitative data. Four emergent properties which already existed were identified for comparison. Memo 6 details the comparative process:

Emergent property (EP) from STRS "highly conflictual pupils are perceived differently by different teachers" was compared against the following EPs (from the interview data)

1. *Pupils perceive teacher as being prejudiced*
2. *Pupils feeling valued by their teacher*
3. *A feeling that relationships are not good*
4. *Respect as an important dimension of relationships*

The first emergent property, "pupil perceive teacher as being prejudiced" does not have text coded to it from all teacher participants. The other three do, and as the language of the EP from the STRS is about teachers' perceptions, the data it is being compared against should be from teacher participants.

After comparing against the remaining three EPs selected for comparison, "pupils feeling valued by their teacher" shows the highest degree of similarity. The quotes below are all from teachers who were talking about their relationship with a pupil/group of pupils who display challenging behaviour around school:

- *So I think he has quite a good relationship with me because I will listen to him and so by listening to him, he feels valued*
- *And I don't think he feels valued in that classroom, do you know what I mean*
- *He didn't enjoy school. He hadn't enjoyed primary school in year 6 until he had a really good relationship with his year 6 teacher and he was happy to go to school.*
- *Talking to them and finding something you can talk to them about whether it is their pet rabbit or 'you know you did really well', 'when you did the cross country run at the weekend?' or 'I hear you did this', or so and so said 'you did that really well'. I try and find something positive or something I can relate to them with.*
- *Yesterday, there is a lad in a year group, he is a lad, he is nice, he is a lad and I like him a lot and but he has had trainers on for about 3 months. So I have been nagging and nagging and nagging and nagging and nothing happened. So before half term I said "where are you shoes?" "Oh they are at my Dad's". "When are you going to your Dads?" reply "Saturday", I said "If you are not in trainers on Monday we are going to have to do something about it".*
- *You know we will always try and find a little positive there I mean some children you really struggle with because they are so negative that you just can't win with them*

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- *He is pleasant enough he comes in, he doesn't do a lot but his behaviour is acceptable. He does enough to get by with but then he does an exam then he just blows it deliberately, so that is one that I am going to really work on as I am not totally sure on that but we will have to think of some sort of strategy*
- *I Good Neighboured him, which is where I just stuck him next door and then he would come back and say 'you hate me miss' and … I was like 'you know I don't hate you'. 'You know I don't hate you' I said 'but you pushed me to the limit', he would be really like 'I know Miss, I know'.*

The teachers all speak using language which shows an awareness that other teachers do not have a good relationship with these pupils. The pupils are perceived as being highly conflictual by other teachers, whereas, the participants believe they have a good relationship. They do not perceive the challenging pupils in the same way that others perceive them.

To test the two emergent properties were describing the same empirical phenomenon, an inverse statement was written:

"The differing perceptions of challenging pupils by teachers is not associated with the feelings of being valued"

The inversed statement is not supported by the pupil participants – when pupils talk about feeling (or not feeling) valued by their teachers, it is said from how the pupils believe they are treated differently. The quotes below show this:
- *Like in Maths I have got a friend and I'll be honest we do mess about a bit, but then I feel like the teacher only targets me and him, even though sometimes it's not me and him.*
- *It makes her not like me even more. She doesn't like me in the first place so it doesn't really matter.*
- *We were sat at the back, right at the back, she is in the corner working on the computer and she looked over and everyone was speaking so it wasn't that everyone was quiet and we were loud, people were speaking and we weren't doing it loud, so I don't know if she heard what we were talking about or if it was just because we were talking… I said well 'there are two girls and two boys talking' and she said 'they are not doing it as loud as you, that much because you are doing it quite a lot.' The only reason we were talking was that we had finished our work.*
- *Miss is a good teacher. She has a good personality with us and because of that we will work for her. We don't get away with stuff with Miss because we know we won't get away with stuff*

Because both the emergent property "pupils feeling valued by their teacher" and the emergent property developed from the STRS data are composed of conceptual categories which refer to differences in perceptions, these EPs can be merged. Pupils feeling valued (or not) is based on different perceptions, comparing relationships and differences in how pupils are treated; teachers speak about how some of their colleagues treat pupils who can be difficult to manage differently. The two EPs can be merged to form:

*"Varying perceptions of relationships between pupils and teacher can affect how valued pupils feel"*

This was checked against the possible causative mechanism the emergent property resides in (Pupils feeling valued can lead to good relationships being formed) to ensure the causative

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structure remains. The structure was found to remain sound, so the PCM is updated with the integrated EP.

Memo 6 Comparison of fifth finding from the STRS

As the emergent properties were now integrated, the original PCM (Pupils feeling valued can lead to good relationships being formed) was updated to include the renamed EP (see **Appendix O** and Figure 7.1).
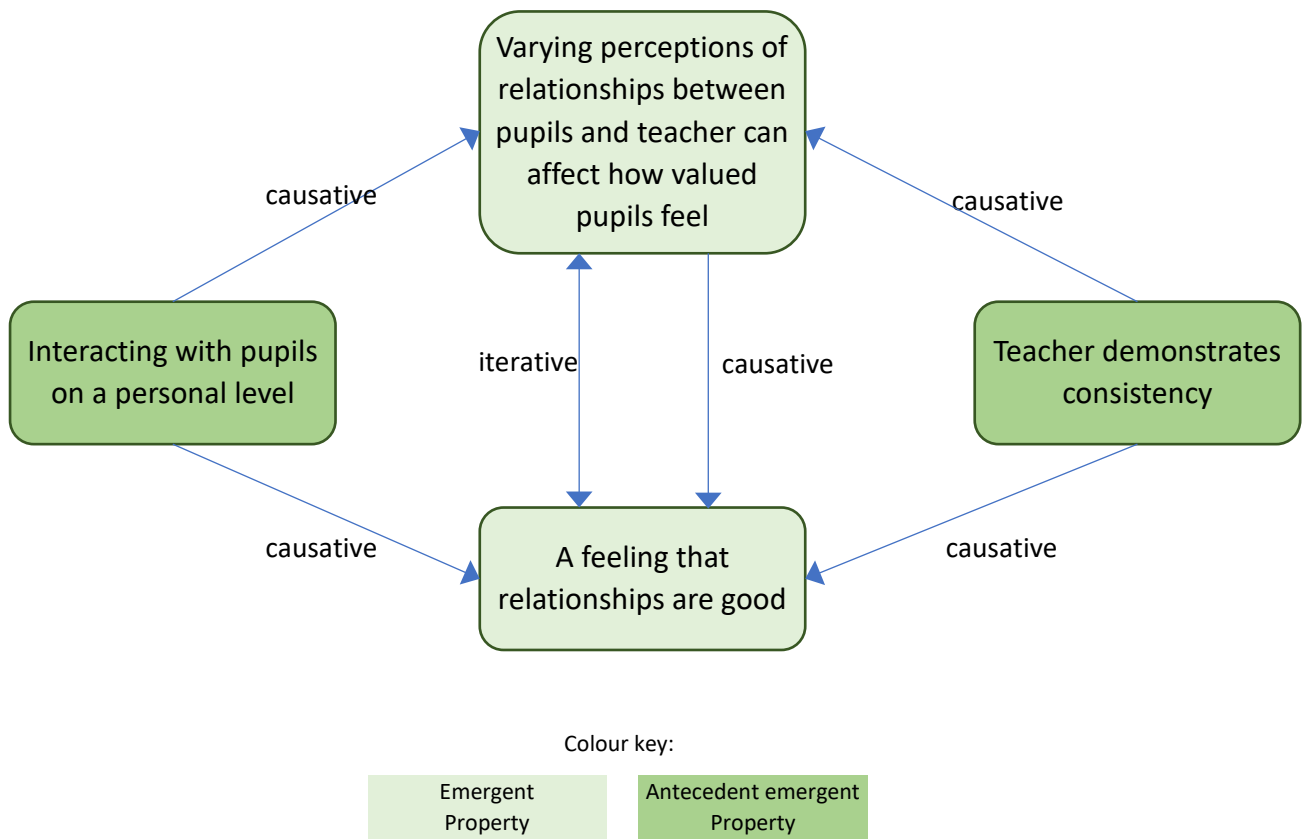
Figure 7.1 Updated PCM "Pupils feeling valued can lead to good relationships being formed"

The updated figure is presented alongside the updated commentary; changes made are highlighted:

Figure 7.1 shows when teachers and pupils felt their relationships were good, this interacted with the differing perceptions of relationships, increasing a feeling of being valued by some teachers which, in turn, increased a sense of positive relationships. These two properties were also influenced by interactions with pupils on a personal level and a demonstration of consistency in classrooms. Pupils understood that when teachers did this, they felt more valued by those who did and, subsequently, believed relationships were good.

When it is perceived that a teacher demonstrates consistency, this can emerge as a feeling of being valued by that teacher. Therefore, the teacher demonstrating consistency is an antecedent cause (Cruickshank, 2002), whilst remaining an emergent property because it has been created by the interaction of two lower-order properties (Bhaskar, 1978). The iterative arrow between the two emergent properties is used to emphasise that these feelings are interlinked and were frequently raised simultaneously by participants when sharing their experiences.

7.3 – Comparison of the CLCH Group with Others

The decision to compare the codes generated from interviews with the CLCH group with the rest of the sample arose from a memo (Memo 7) written during the analysis of the STRS, and was informed by Holton and Walsh's (2017) recommendation to analyse all data as one set:

> *I am really interested in the CLCH group. They represent a subgroup of the alienated pupil participants within the study. I have been wondering why the teachers who responded to the questionnaire have had difficulty in forming positive pupil-teacher relationships with these pupils. Unfortunately, the teachers who took part in the STRS are a mixture of those who have agreed to give interviews and those who haven't. The voices of the teachers who have identified a low feeling of closeness and increased feeling of conflict are not wanting to be interviewed, so I need to explore this in a different way.*
>
> *The findings from the STRS have identified that teachers feel less close and more conflictual about CLCH pupils than the others, so I have decided it is worth exploring this further by comparing the CLCH group against other pupils in the sample. This will allow me to see if CLCH pupils feel differently and corroborate the STRS findings.*
>
> *Possible ways to compare:*
>
> - *Use SPSS and check codes for emergent properties. Do CLCH have more than non CLCH? – Can this be done?*
>
> - *Compare language used by CLCH with non CLCH? Is it more emotive/full of anger?*

Memo 7 Reflecting on ways to explore the emergence of the CLCH group

Comparisons were made by using SPSS to generate hierarchy charts to compare the number of coding references for those in the CLCH group and the remainder of the sample. Two PCMs were revealed to be of significance (see **Appendix P**); Table 7.4 shows the number of times these PCMs were applied to

data from interviews with participants. The data is separated into those participants within the CLCH group, and those in the remainder of the sample.

Table 7.4 Examining the number of times possible causative mechanisms were coded to CLCH group and the remainder of sample

Possible Causative Mechanism	CLCH group (n=4)	Remainder of sample (n=8)
Pupils feeling a sense of injustice	196 (57%)	119 (43%)
Pupils having a feeling of powerlessness	145 (62%)	90 (38%)

The CLCH group form 33% (n=4) of the sample yet account for 57% and 62% of the coding of conceptual categories attributed to the possible causative mechanisms (PCMs) "pupils feeling a sense of injustice" and "pupils having a feeling of powerlessness" respectively. Whilst all participants are experiencing alienation to varying degrees, these data show those from the CLCH group are experiencing feelings of alienation more acutely. Teachers perceive a more pronounced negative relationship with participants from the CLCH group and those participants, in turn, experience stronger feelings of alienation.

For example, pupils from the CLCH group can recall incidents where they felt an overwhelming sense of injustice, coupled with feelings of powerlessness:

> *I finished the assessment early, and I literally didn't do anything wrong. I did the assessment early and she said "[name] can you put everything in your folder", because everything was a mess out of my folder, because we like to use the booklet and everything. So I did that, I got the paper and I went like that [mimes shuffling paper to straighten out the sheets] twice, and it didn't really make a noise and then I did like that [mimes putting paper into a folder] to shake it into it.*
>
> *She comes up to me saying "you are the most selfish boy I know in the world" I was like what have I done and then she said "get out" and I had to go to the next classroom. I didn't know why, because all I did was what she told me to do but I made like a little bit of noise.*
>
> (Year 8, CLCH group, pupil)

The links between powerlessness and injustice were wide-ranging, with pupils showing how these experiences can negatively impact their perceptions of mutual respect:

They shouldn't be able to treat you like a piece of shit on your shoe, if you know what I mean. Or if you do something just minor and they make a major out of it and then send you to Hotspot, and sometimes when they lie - they will tell a higher up teacher something that hasn't even happened like exaggerate it, and the higher teacher will believe them, and then you try to say something and they say it's a lie. If, you know what I am saying. How teachers will lie and they will get away with it and make you look like you have done worse than you actually have.

(Year 10, CLCH group, pupil)

This is indicative of a dyadic perspective of relationships between pupils in the CLCH group and their teachers. CLCH pupils and their teachers hold a mutually negative belief and expectation of their relationships which are continually reinforced through their interactions. No teachers who volunteered for interviews had relationships that they perceived as volatile or persistently negative with pupils. However, the pastoral leads for Years 8 and 10, who participated in interviews, were able to speak about negative cycles of relationships between pupils in the CLCH group and their teachers, where they had intervened as part of their pastoral role:

I think she was his form tutor last year so I think she built walls up with [name] and then perhaps [name] built walls up with her and they're still there so he doesn't like her … For me it's about wall building and I've used that in meetings with parents. You sit in there and you've got a kid from that class again … he was having real problems with one particular teacher. And all he was doing was building walls up. He was coming into his classroom, chewing gum and all these things because he knew it would wind her [the teacher] up. And then she was getting wound up and nobody was trying to take the bricks away and build that relationship together.

(Pastoral Lead Teacher)

This sense of powerlessness and lack of control pupils in the CLCH group experience, identified by the pastoral leads, is expressed in an emotive way by the pupils:

I am not a naughty kid. I don't want to make out like I am a naughty kid, because I don't personally think I am, but most teachers, well I don't think they know who I am.

(Year 10, CLCH group, pupil)

if you are trying to work the teacher is always nipping at you for little stuff and you can't actually do the work properly.

(Year 10, CLCH group, pupil)

> *She is just really rude to us really…It's just constantly me and [name] being picked on and the way she speaks to us and doesn't let us have our word. Everyone else laughs at it and it annoys me and [name] a lot.*
>
> <div align="right">(Year 10, CLCH group, pupil)</div>

Whereas pupils who were not part of the CLCH group spoke about feelings of powerlessness differently. They did not experience it as intensely as their peers and had less of a sense of injustice associated with their feelings:

> *If I properly tried as I have said before "I am going to settle down and do the work; I am not going to get told off" because I have done it before in other lessons in Maths. So I know I can do it.*
>
> <div align="right">(Year 10, non-CLCH group, pupil)</div>

> *I know I am in the wrong, but I don't really mind it. It doesn't affect me as a person really I just don't mind it but I know I have done wrong and I won't do it again, in a lesson.*
>
> <div align="right">(Year 10, non-CLCH group, pupil)</div>

Despite being a subsection of pupil participants, CLCH group pupils had a disproportionate number of injustice and powerlessness codes applied to their data. Pupils in the CLCH group have a greater sense of injustice and feelings of powerlessness when compared to non-CLCH group pupils. An emerging theme of mutually held negative perceptions of relationships and expectations seems to be a contributing factor to this.

7.4 – CLCH Group and Injustice

Further analysis of the data, using SPSS to generate hierarchy charts, identified which dimensions of the PCMs were attributed to the CLCH group the most. Table 7.5 shows the number of times a conceptual category was applied to the participant interviews. The three conceptual categories shown are the modal conceptual categories for the PCM "pupils feeling a sense of injustice".

Table 7.5 Examining the number of times conceptual categories were coded to CLCH group and remainder of the sample

Conceptual Category	CLCH group (n=4)	Remainder of sample (n=8)
Unfair	42 (71%)	17 (29%)
Unfair – sanction	26 (70%)	11 (30%)
Pupil feels targeted	21 (78%)	6 (22%)

Between 70% and 78% of the three modal conceptual categories for this PCM were coded from interviews with participants from the CLCH group, despite this group only accounting for 33% of the total sample size. The CLCH group not only have greater feelings of injustice than their peers, but they are more likely to feel targeted and treated unfairly. These feelings of injustice are linked to pupils who have poor relationships with their teachers:

> *She told me to sit at the front on my own next to her desk, so I didn't want to sit there. So I am sat there like this, some girl was talking over here and I think someone swore or something on the front row and I'm down here like that, and there was her desk. She thought it was me that swore she told me to get out and I said to her 'Miss I didn't even swear' she said 'get out of my lesson'.*
>
> (Year 10, CLCH group, pupil)

When pupils described their feelings of injustice, they were often linked to their perceptions of how teachers treat other pupils for similar wrongdoing. Public classroom reprimands are witnessable by all members of the class; all pupils in a class can observe a teacher reprimand other pupils. When recalling their experiences, members of the CLCH group compared other pupils' misconduct and sanctions to misconduct with their own experiences. CLCH group pupils perceive others are treated more leniently. They subsequently experience stronger feelings of injustice than the rest of the sample, and can recall events to illustrate this:

> *So if something has gone on he is more just likely to say it to us than any other people on the other side of the classroom…we were arguing me and [name] and that girl was arguing because we were talking at the back and then the girl told us to f... off and she has got a bit annoyed and then [name] got sent out for it but she never got in trouble for it.*
>
> (Year 10, CLCH group, pupil)

She will always pick on us. She will always have a go at us for little things but if someone else does it she might not have a go at them. She will send us out but she won't send any of the others out.

<div align="right">(Year 10, CLCH group, pupil)</div>

She [the teacher] said we were talking the most out of everyone and then she moved (name) over to the corner...

We were sat at the back, right at the back, she [the teacher] is in the corner working on the computer and she looked over and everyone was speaking so it wasn't that everyone was quiet and we were loud...

I said well 'there are two girls and two boys talking' and she said 'they are not doing it as loud as you, that must be because you are doing it quite a lot.' The only reason we were talking was that we had finished our work...

I just maybe thought it was a bit harsh what she said to us two.

<div align="right">(Year 10, CLCH group, pupil)</div>

The sense of injustice is not confined to comparative events. Pupils in the CLCH group feel unfairly treated if they believe the sanction is too severe for the transgression. Pupils reported times when they would seek reassurance from other authority figures to confirm their belief the punishments were too strict. If such figures of authority agreed with them, the pupils' feelings of injustice were heightened:

So I waited outside and I was sat on a chair outside and she comes out and she starts talking to me and said 'maybe for once in your life you can show manners' and I said 'what do you mean by that' she said 'you don't show manners at all' and I went 'well I do' and then we had an argument and then she said 'can you go and get Hotspot please' to the teaching assistant and the teaching assistant said [to me] 'there was no point you getting Hot-spotted' and Hotspot said 'you shouldn't have been Hot spotted'.

<div align="right">(Year 8, CLCH group, pupil)</div>

Again, CLCH pupils had a disproportionate number of injustice emergent properties applied to their data. Pupils in the CLCH group report experiencing more actions that they identified as being unfair. This is particularly the case for the emergent property 'pupil feels targeted' , indicating the relationship between pupil and teacher has broken down by a significant degree.

7.5 – CLCH Group and Powerlessness

Table 7.6, again shows the distribution of conceptual categories across the CLCH group and the remainder of the sample analysed using hierarchy charts. The conceptual categories shown are the modal conceptual categories for the emergent property "pupil self-awareness (own bad behaviour)", which forms part of the PCM "pupils having a feeling of powerlessness".

Table 7.6 Distribution of conceptual categories across the CLCH group and the remainder of the sample

Conceptual Category	CLCH group (n=4)	Remainder of sample (n=8)
Awareness of own bad behaviour	28 (78%)	8 (22%)
Awareness of own responsibilities	24 (86%)	4 (14%)
Pupil purposely antagonising teacher	9 (60%)	6 (40%)
Awareness of how to change	6 (43%)	8 (57%)

Pupils in the CLCH group were more aware of their bad behaviour and responsibilities than their peers. Each pupil was able to identify at least one occasion when they were aware of their bad behaviour, but those in the CLCH group were able to identify multiple occasions or volunteered self-awareness without prompting:

> *Researcher: What is your behaviour like in your opinion in those lessons in all honesty?*
> *Pupil: All around I would say it is not the best I would agree to that, it's not the best behaviour*
>
> (Year 10, CLCH group, pupil)

Pupils who are part of the CLCH group often couple their acknowledgement of their bad behaviour with feelings of guilt and a desire to change. They express their experiences and feelings in complicated terms, suggesting they do not want to misbehave but are in a cycle where they are unable to stop themselves:

Sometimes I push them [the teacher] and you know you are pushing them, I know I have pushed them once I get the punishments, then I realise I probably shouldn't have done that.

(Year 8, CLCH group, pupil)

In the past two years I haven't done as well as I could have. Back in primary school I wasn't like this so I don't know why I am now but like I mess about a lot, I wasn't like that in primary school. In Year 9 I said to my Mum for my GCSE's and everything I am going to start knuckling down and I am really going to try.

(Year 8, CLCH group, pupil)

This cycle is further complicated by the recognition that pupils in the CLCH group are more likely to purposely antagonise their teachers than those in the remainder of the sample.

Well when it's my last day or something like the 6 weeks break, I just go and knock on his door. He doesn't know it's me but he is just one person that I don't get on with at all.

(Year 10, CLCH group, pupil)

Furthermore, when sharing experiences where they have purposely antagonised their teachers, pupils in the CLCH group tend to describe these occasions with joy. The increased feelings of alienation pupils in this group feel are replicated by an increased feeling of pleasure when they retaliate and deliberately frustrate their teachers:

If I have a pen I will ask her to borrow a pen because she hates it. If you borrow equipment off her, it's like her pet hate lending out equipment because we are purposely lending equipment off her.

(Year 10, CLCH group, pupil)

Researcher: So now in Maths do you ever purposely try to annoy your teacher?
Pupil: I think me and [name] do sometimes. [Name] does silly noises, quite immature noises, and then I start laughing and then what me and [name] do is, we are like the jokers in the class so we will end up getting everyone to laugh and then it goes on from there, she sends us out.

(Year 10, CLCH group, pupil)

The desire to retaliate is often so strong in pupils from the CLCH group that they consciously irritate their teachers despite an awareness this could negatively affect their academic achievement in the subject:

Some subjects I need badly and then those teachers are just 'tits' so you just can't crack on with your work, because they piss you off as soon as you get into that lesson and you just won't do anything, just annoy them and get one-up on them.

(Year 10, CLCH group, pupil)

This awareness is further complicated by pupils in the CLCH group reporting a lack of awareness of how to change their behaviour compared to their awareness of their bad behaviour and responsibilities. Pupils in this group are not able to vocalise practical suggestions to change their behaviour, despite being able to express an understanding of their conduct around the school:

Researcher: Do you know if there is something you could do to stop her having a good go at you?
Pupil: I still think she would carry on even if I did find a way to stop it.

(Year 10, CLCH group, pupil)

Researcher: Considering you want to do well, what is actually stopping you doing well in those lessons to enable you to do well in that exam?
Pupil: Teachers.

(Year 10, CLCH group, pupil)

The inability to provide practical steps to address their negative attitude to learning is further emphasised when comparing pupils in the CLCH group to those in the remainder of the sample. Pupils who do not form part of the CLCH group were able to articulate changes they could make to their behaviour:

I saw that it wasn't getting me anywhere and I realised that it was getting too close to stuff like GCSE's so I decided I'd better try and be good and try learn in lessons and try and get places…my Mum came in for a meeting and I realised that they were always trying to help me and I was just messing about and then I just sort of stopped and tried to be good then.

(Year 8, non-CLCH group, pupil)

Well, I could probably just settle down a bit more and do what I should be doing.

(Year 10, non-CLCH group, pupil)

I sometimes mess about then sometimes there is a topic that I am not very sure on I will put my head down and work really hard to make sure that I do it well.

(Year 10, non-CLCH group, pupil)

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Analysis of the closeness and conflict scores from the STRS found that pupils in the CLCH group have more negative relationships with their teachers. The pupils from this group report a greater understanding of their poor behaviour as a result of having been reprimanded more often. This increase in reprimands acts as a reminder of their bad behaviour and responsibilities as pupils leading to greater self-awareness. However, this increased recognition of their attitude is not reflected by pupils in this CLCH group being equipped with the knowledge or tools to help them change their behaviour.

Pupils from the CLCH group express a desire to do well academically. Those in the CLCH group had a higher proportion of the conceptual categories assigned to them than expected (shown in Table 7.7); CLCH pupils have a stronger desire to achieve than their alienated peers.

Table 7.7 Distribution of 'agency' emergent property across the CLCH group and the remainder of the sample

	CLCH group (n=4)	**Remainder of sample (n=8)**
Emergent Property – Pupils' agency; pupils express a desire to want to do well	17 (61%)	11 (39%)

When asked to imagine how they would feel if their GCSE results were not as good as they want or expect them to be, pupils from the CLCH group expressed mixed feelings of self-blame and blame for the teachers:

> *Researcher: How does that make you feel then just thinking that in a year's time you will have sat all your GCSE's? How do you feel about knowing that with those lessons you might not achieve what you could?*
>
> *Pupil: It's bad really isn't it? I feel bad in myself because it's my fault but they shouldn't, well I don't know.*
>
> *Researcher: Do you blame yourself?*
>
> *Pupil: Yes, sometimes, most times, sometimes. Most of the time it is the teachers but it's my fault for pissing the teachers off for them to have a go at me and for me not to learn. Yes, it is my fault, if I think about it.*
>
> (Year 10, CLCH group, pupil)

CLCH group pupils had a negative self-belief of their academic ability, coupled with a perception that

changing their behaviour to address their concerns is difficult or out of their capabilities:

I have to crack on with my work because I am not very good at it, at Maths, but I want to get the GCSE so every lesson I just sit down and crack on.

(Year 10, CLCH group, pupil)

Researcher: Do you want to do well in Maths?

Pupil: Yes but I don't think I will at all. I'm just not very good at it. I know I am going to have to redo it because I don't think I am going to pass it all, but I want to pass it to go on to other stuff. I know I will have to just do another year or whatever at college and I could be doing other stuff that I wanted to do.

(Year 10, CLCH group, pupil)

I try to do well but I just end up getting distracted.

(Year 10, CLCH group, pupil)

Researcher: Have you ever thought I want to work to get out of this teacher's class?

Pupil: No, well I have once but it is just hard to work.

(Year 10, CLCH group, pupil)

This is suggestive of an inverse relationship between CLCH pupils' perceptions of academic

competence and potential to improve their behaviour. Pupils in this group tend to tether their low

opinions on their academic ability to a resignation to underperformance. The pupils are not equipped

with the skills or knowledge to change their behaviour and are at risk of succumbing to a negative self-

fulfilling prophecy.

7.6 – CLCH Group have Extreme Feelings

The comparison of the CLCH group with interview data discussed in sections 7.4 and 7.5 generated

two additional findings (findings 7 and 8), shown in Table 7.8:

Table 7.8 Comparison of STRS findings with interview findings

	STRS Finding	Conceptual categories	Emergent property
7.	The CLCH group disproportionately report feelings of injustice, powerlessness, a desire to do well and critical incidents	• CLCH group • CLCH – feelings of injustice (high) • CLCH – feelings of powerlessness (high) • CLCH – desire to do well (high) • CLCH – critical incidents (high)	CLCH group have extreme feelings
8.	The CLCH group disproportionately report awareness of bad behaviour and responsibility, but this is not reflected in knowledge of how to change	• CLCH – high awareness of behaviour • CLCH – high awareness of responsibilities • CLCH – low knowledge of how to change	

This shows that pupil participants who have been identified by their teachers as having a lower-than-average closeness score and greater-than-average conflict score experience alienation differently from their peers. The CLCH group of pupils' disproportionate reporting of feelings of injustice, powerlessness and a desire to perform well is matched with a disproportionate awareness of bad behaviour. Additionally, these pupils are less aware of how to change their behaviour, suggesting a cycle of events that is difficult to escape from. Through further constant comparison, these conceptual categories were shown to be closely related with the emergent property from finding 6 "CLCH group have extreme feelings" and so these findings were integrated into this emergent property.

7.7 – Critical Incidents can Exaggerate Feelings of Alienation

The triangulation and constant comparison between both sets of data led to the discovery of the CLCH group. This discovery prompted a revisit of the interview data and, through constant comparison, a sixth Possible Causative Mechanism concerning the CLCH group and critical incidents was identified (see **Appendix Q**). Table 7.9 shows pupils in the CLCH group had a disproportionately larger collection

of conceptual categories from the PCM "critical incidents can exaggerate feelings of alienation" assigned to them than those in the rest of the sample.

Table 7.9 Frequency of critical incident codes assigned to the CLCH group and remainder of the sample

	Frequency of codes	
Possible Causative Mechanism	CLCH group (n=4)	Remainder of sample (n=8)
Critical incidents can exaggerate feelings of alienation	26 (81%)	6 (20%)

Each of the participants in the CLCH group referred to at least one critical incident which happened early into the formation of relationships. Only two participants from the rest of the sample mentioned at least one critical incident. A critical incident, when experienced by pupils, is remembered in detail; the events are spoken about emotionally and conveyed with a sense of injustice and powerlessness:

> There were a few things, like I did this worksheet and instead of doing it on the worksheet I did it in a book and she put 'needs more work' with an exclamation mark. So I said "Miss why did you put this" and she said "can you put your hand up" so I put my hand up and I had my hand up for about 15 or 20 minutes and she just looked at me and ignored me. She wasn't doing anything and my friend had to go up to Miss and say "can you answer (name) please because he has had his hand up for 20 minutes and you have told him to put his hand up". Then a massive argument broke out about it and literally she started telling me off saying, it was hectic really.
>
> That's the one major thing I remember but there are lots of other things
>
> (Year 8, CLCH group, pupil)

The majority of critical incidents cited by pupils in the CLCH group occurred during the first encounters with teachers. These encounters usually happened in the first two weeks of the new school year starting, often taking place in the first or second lesson:

> I remember when we first had her she was, it felt like we were walking into the army. She was like a proper strict, she would tell you what to do and you had to do it and if you didn't she would get quite mad.
>
> (Year 8, CLCH group, pupil)

When we first had her she was really, really demanding.

(Year 8, CLCH group, pupil)

Well she is newish and she came this year and the first lesson with her she was just rude to be honest and if she is going to be rude to me then I am going to be rude to her. I can hardly remember it was ages ago but ever since she is still rude. She has not liked me from that day because apparently I have got a bad reputation from that first lesson.

(Year 10, CLCH group, pupil)

Participants from the CLCH group believe such episodes have long-ranging implications for relationships with their teachers; they express a perception that their teachers continue to feel negatively towards them due to the initial incident:

This was after my first or second lesson because we had a double and I walked in and I just sat in the wrong place or something, because she had a seating plan. I sat in the wrong place next to my mate, she then asked me to move and I just didn't move, I said 'Miss, can I sit here please I am not going to cause any trouble.' She just didn't even know me and I had never had her before so I just sat with my mate and then she has never liked me since.

(Year 10, CLCH group, pupil)

We had gone to lesson and had her for one lesson when she came back and then me and [name] were speaking and she was on us straight away, putting us on opposite sides of the room.

(Year 10, CLCH group, pupil)

It was like the first lesson she had us was like a demo lesson and Year 8 pupil was sat at the back and we were talking doing nothing bad and stuff and she moved us straight away she said 'I am not going to stand for any of this' and it's been like this for the year, for that period of time, because she said she is going to make her mark.

(Year 10, CLCH group, pupil)

As a result, these pupils felt they were labelled in their teachers' minds and subsequently believed there was no way to escape the circular nature of negative relationships. As one pupil put it "your card is marked" (Year 10, CLCH group, pupil).

Figure 7.2 summarises the relationships between the emergent properties which form the possible causative mechanism. For context, the most commonly coded conceptual categories are shown in yellow, which are part of the 'critical incidents' emergent property.
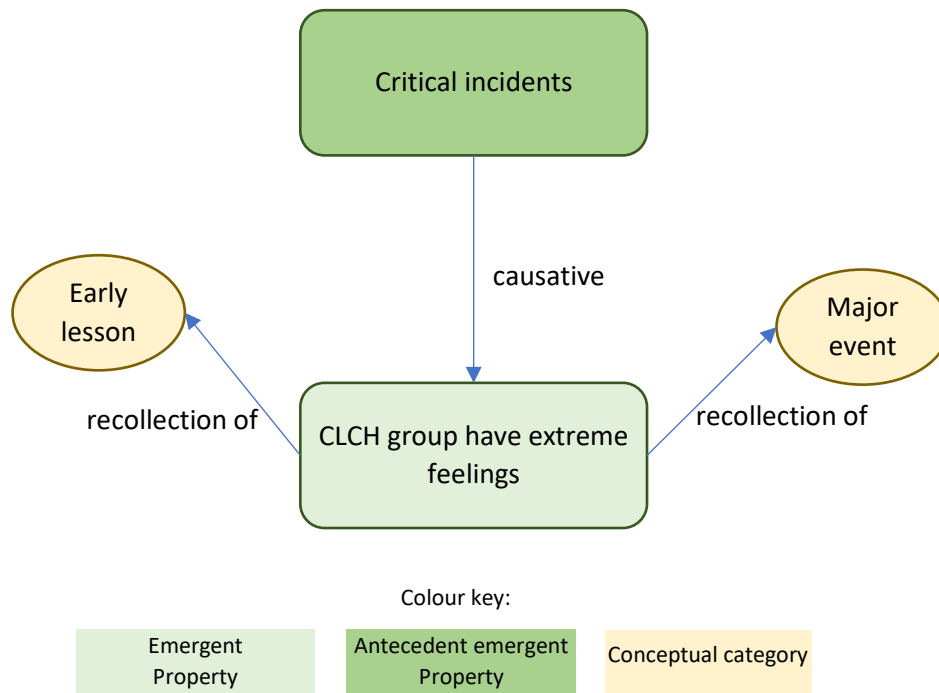
130

Figure 7.2 PCM: Critical incidents can exaggerate feelings of alienation

Figure 7.2 shows how pupils frequently relate feelings of alienation from their teachers to an incident that occurred a long time ago and early on into the formation of their relationship. The arrows between the EP and the conceptual categories show how pupils with extreme feelings of alienation recall incidents that they often consider to be a major event which happened in an early lesson. Pupils in the CLCH group have more extreme feelings of alienation, and more frequently relate these to a critical incident. As the critical incident occurred before the extreme feelings of alienation, the critical incident is the antecedent EP, suggesting a causative relationship between this and the extreme feelings. Again, the EP had more empirical conceptual categories assigned to it, showing how this is closer to the *empirical* domain of reality (Bhaskar, 1978).

7.8 – Chapter Summary

The analysis and constant comparison method shared in this chapter showed how eight findings were coded and compared against data, conceptual categories and emergent properties from the qualitative data. Four findings from the STRS generated conceptual categories which fitted in with pre-existing emergent properties. The fifth finding led to a slight adjustment in one of the existing PCMs, whilst the final three findings led to the discovery of the CLCH group of pupils and generated new emergent properties. Comparison of these with the emergent properties from the qualitative data gave rise to a sixth PCM, showing that CLCH pupils have greater feelings of injustice and powerlessness. The five PCMs shared in chapter five were identified by all participants. This chapter has presented a sixth PCM that relates only to the CLCH subgroup of pupils. These pupils spoke emotively about a critical incident that they believed was the root of the extremely negative relationships they had with teachers.

The next chapter will continue the constant comparative method and use theoretical comparisons to identify the deeper level PCMs, generate the substantive theory and situate it in literature.

Chapter 8 – Discussion

8.1 – Introduction

The previous chapter presented the findings from interviews with participants and analysis of the Student-Teacher Relationship Scale. Emerging from the data were six possible causative mechanisms (PCMs) which could give rise to experiences of alienation. This chapter will show how these PCMs have been synthesised into deeper level PCMs, before being used to develop a substantive theory. Chapter two has previously offered a review of the literature surrounding alienation and inclusion in education. This provided context for the thesis, showing how the research aims were relevant. This chapter continues the exploration of the extant literature, by establishing the PCMs within the literature, demonstrating how the research contributes to new knowledge. The chapter revisits the literature used previously, whilst including a range of new literature strengthening theoretical comparisons and forming the basis of the discussion. The chapter concludes with the presentation of the substantive theory and a discussion about how this theory addresses the research aims.

8.2 – Deeper Level Possible Causative Mechanisms

Once the conceptual categories and emergent properties had reached saturation, and possible causative mechanisms (PCMs) had been identified, the next stage of integration began to find deeper level PCMs (Looker, Vickers and Kington, 2021). These are intended to be located in the *real* domain and, as such, need to be interrogated with literature (as described in chapter three) to identify any possible extant theories.

Initially, the PCMs were integrated by comparison of the emergent properties and looking for overlapping themes. This generated the structure shown in Figure 8.1, with 'pupils have a need to feel valued' and 'pupils experiencing powerlessness are not content' identified as the deeper level PCMs.
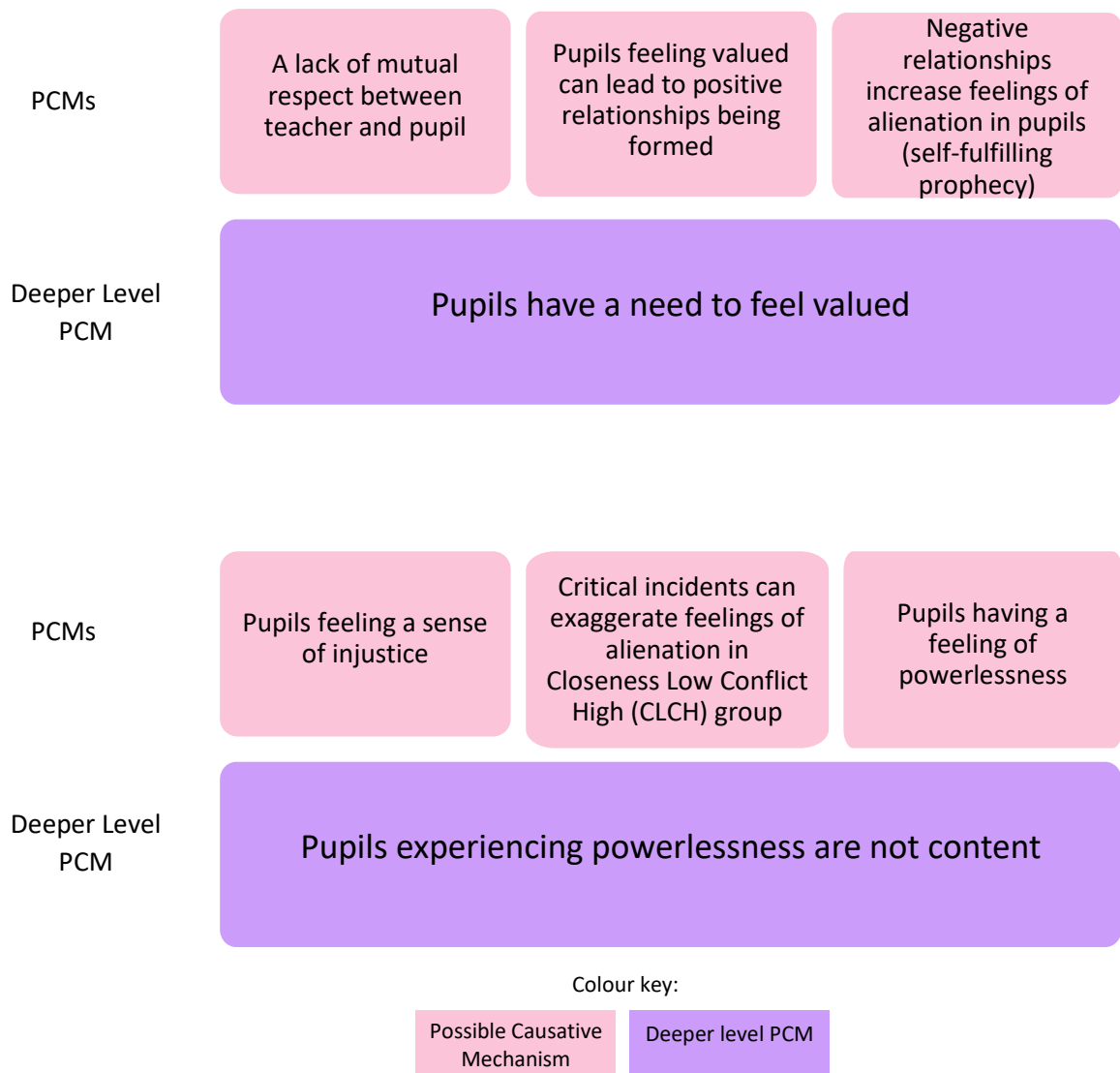
PCMs

| A lack of mutual respect between teacher and pupil | Pupils feeling valued can lead to positive relationships being formed | Negative relationships increase feelings of alienation in pupils (self-fulfilling prophecy) |

Deeper Level PCM

Pupils have a need to feel valued

PCMs

| Pupils feeling a sense of injustice | Critical incidents can exaggerate feelings of alienation in Closeness Low Conflict High (CLCH) group | Pupils having a feeling of powerlessness |

Deeper Level PCM

Pupils experiencing powerlessness are not content

Colour key:

| Possible Causative Mechanism | Deeper level PCM |

Figure 8.1 The initial structure of the deeper level possible causative mechanisms

This structure, with PCMs organised according to their deeper level PCMs, allowed for an initial theory to be developed, which was subsequently adapted over time as more literature was incorporated. A summary of the process of theory development is presented in Figure 8.2, showing how the theory changed as theoretical comparisons were made:
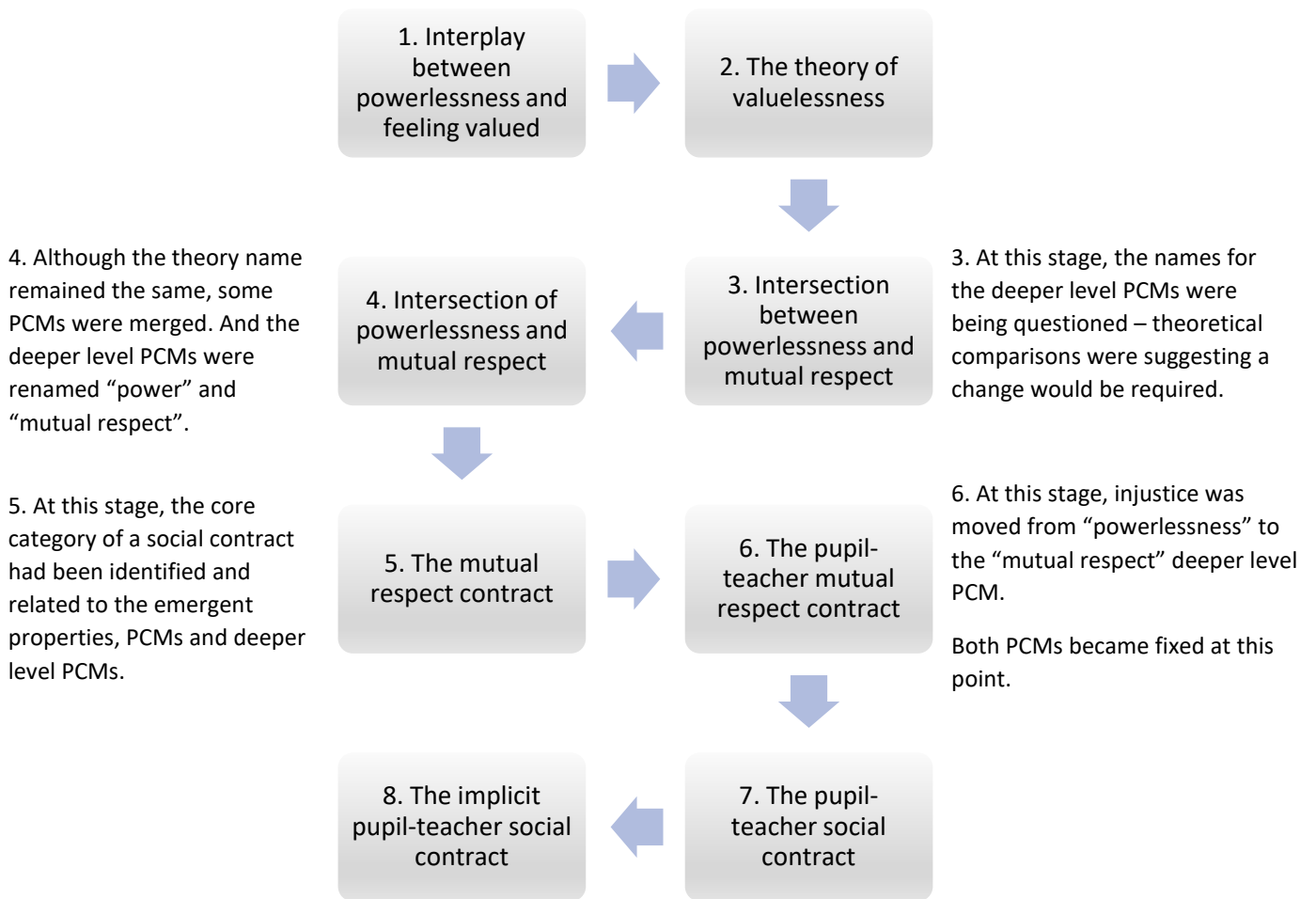
Figure 8.2 A summary of how the theory developed

Each stage in Figure 8.2 shows the wording of the emergent substantive theory. The initial theory was

phrased as the "Interplay between powerlessness and feeling valued". This emerged almost entirely

from the data, with few theoretical comparisons made at this point. By stage four, although the theory

was still looking at powerlessness and feeling valued, it had become clear, through theoretical

comparisons, that some of the PCMs should be integrated.

For example, Memo 8 shows how the PCM of 'Pupils feeling valued can lead to positive relationships

being formed' was integrated into 'a lack of mutual respect between teacher and pupil':

'Feeling valued' and 'mutual respect' are shown to be linked within the extant literature.

Darwall (2004) – respect is referred to as 'esteem' towards. Particularly esteem through the virtue of being a person. This language is very similar to the language used by participants when talking about feeling valued e.g.: "he has given me a chance and I am trying my best and some teachers would have just given up on me, but he didn't and he is still trying to coach me now".

Contractualism states that mutual respect rests upon respect for the value of others (Scanlon, 1998; 2003; Kumar, 2010) – that "what we owe to each other as a matter of respect for the value of one another as persons is constituted…by an indefinite number of … principles, each for the regulation of a certain type of situation." (Kumar, 2010). This language shows that feeling valued, or showing value to others is part of having respect for another.

I have thought this before, and when coding and during earlier constant comparisons, the two were briefly integrated, before being separated again.

They were kept separate because of the initial language "pupils feeling valued can lead to positive relationships being formed" is written using positive language, and this is due to how participants spoke about this. "A lack of mutual respect between teacher and pupil" is written using negative language.

However, if the first one is reversed to "pupils feeling unvalued can lead to negative relationships being formed", then it can be integrated into "a lack of mutual respect between teacher and pupil".

Memo 8 Integrating PCMs (feeling valued and mutual respect)

At stage six (see Figure 8.2), there was enough literature to suggest that the PCM of 'pupils feeling a sense of injustice' should also be integrated into 'a lack of mutual respect between teacher and pupil'.

Memo 9 explains how this decision was made:

PCM "pupils feeling a sense of injustice" is currently situated within the deeper level PCM "pupils experiencing powerlessness are not content".

This position was decided based on the integration of the EPs and constant comparison between conceptual categories, EPs and the emerging PCMs.

"Pupils feeling a sense of injustice" was the only PCM that did not immediately 'fit' within either deeper level PCMs which emerged. I have deliberated over where to place this. There were elements that fitted within "the need to feel valued" and those which fitted within "powerlessness". It is clear there is a link between the two.

Theoretical comparisons have resurrected the debate.

Scanlon's contractualism (which is significantly influenced by Rawls (1958)), states that actions need to be justifiable to one another to maintain mutual respect. A feeling of injustice can, therefore, be described as a person experiencing an action which they perceived as unjust, or not justifiable, resulting in consequences for mutual respect (Scanlon, 1975; 2003)

Rasooli et al. (2019) found that the pupil in their study spoke of themes, where the pupils would "apply distributive, procedural, and interactional justice principles (e.g., equity, equality, respect, and accuracy as outlined earlier) to arrive at a perception of fairness." (p. 704). This puts justice, fairness and respect as inseparably linked, and resonates with participants in my study.

Jiang et al., (2018) had 1735 pupil participants and found "that the more students felt treated justly by their teachers, the more they felt respected, felt a sense of belonging to their class, and felt proud of being a member of the class." (p. 7). This, again supports the above.

The use and meaning of the phrase "a sense of injustice" within this study resonates with mutual respect, meaning it can be moved across the deeper level PCMs and integrated into "a lack of mutual respect between teacher and pupil".

Memo 9 Integrating PCMs (injustice and mutual respect)

As the process of theoretical comparison advanced, the core category began to emerge and the wording of the deeper level PCMs was altered slightly. By the fifth change to the theory, the core category was identified and by the sixth change to the theory, both PCMs and deeper level PCMs became fixed. The deeper level PCM of "pupils have a need to feel valued" was edited the most. Figure 8.3 summarises the above discussion, showing how two of the original PCMs were integrated into the "a lack of mutual respect between teacher and pupil" PCM. As this PCM now contained a large amount of data, it was decided that the deeper level PCM should reflect this, and so was reworded from "pupils have a need to feel valued" to "mutual respect".
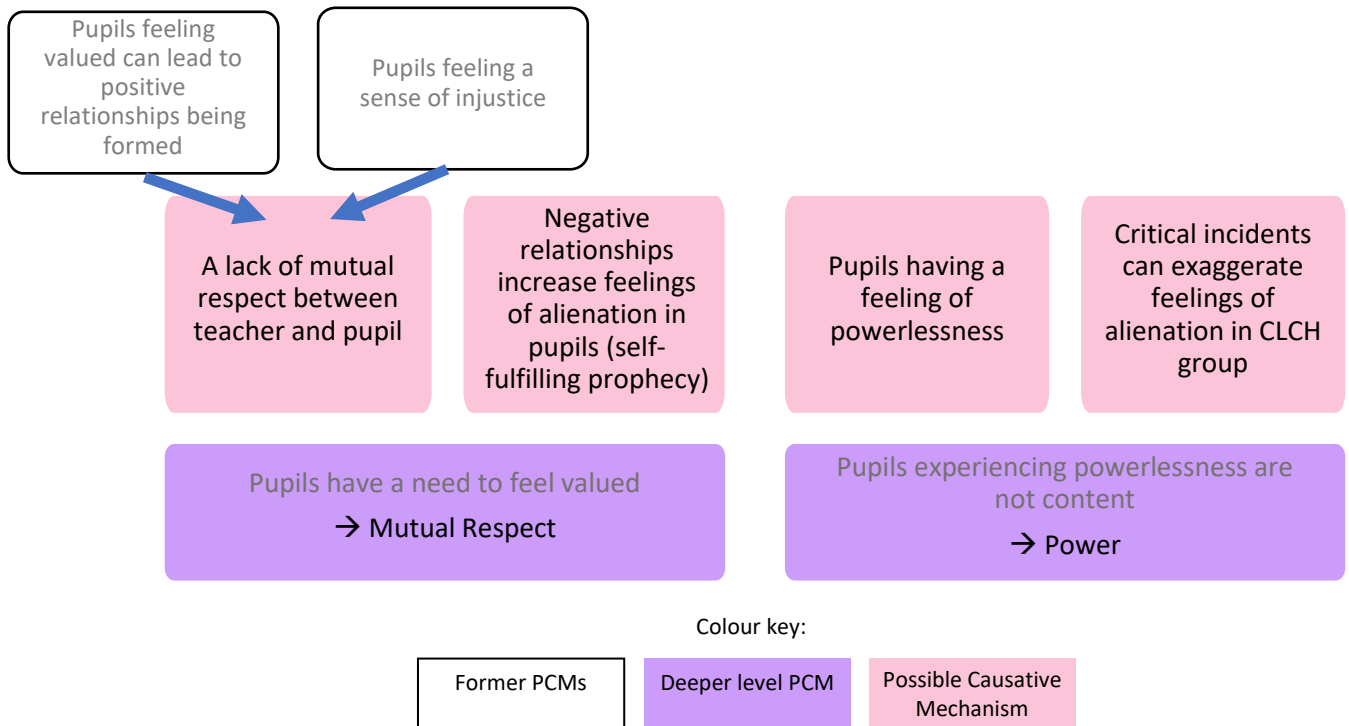
Figure 8.3 A summary of how the deeper level PCMs changed during theoretical sampling

The PCM "pupils experiencing powerlessness are not content" was changed to "power", as the literature identified the power differential between pupils and teachers was important. The greyed-out words and boxes in Figure 8.3 show the original wording of the deeper level PCMs and original PCMs. The arrows indicate the changes made as a result of theoretical comparisons.

Much of the theory has been built using the voices of pupil participants. This was triangulated with teachers' perspectives from interviews and completion of the Student-Teacher Relationship Scale (Pianta, 1991), but the theory is still largely written from the perspective of the pupils. This is a deliberate decision. Firstly, the teachers who consented to interviews were those who already had positive relationships with pupils. Often the pupil participants confirmed this by mentioning them by name when speaking about positive relationships. The quantitative data, which came solely from teachers, gave rise to eight findings. These were all compared against, and upheld by, interview data, mainly with pupils, substantiating the experiences they shared. Furthermore, it has been said that we can lose something significant if we fail to listen to the voices of young people (Tucker, 2011; Trotman,

Martyn and Tucker, 2012) and that young people can, and do, act as "reliable witnesses" (Trotman et al., 2015 p. 238). Secondly, this research aimed to generate a substantive theory with an emancipatory objective. The intention of this was to give voice to the alienated pupil participants resulting in a theory which has an emancipatory element.

During theoretical comparisons, social contracts emerged as significant. Specifically, the theory of contractualism (Scanlon, 1975; 2003; Kumar, 2010) was identified as the core category. The next section presents a summary of contractualism, to provide context and situate it as part of the social process being investigated before continuing to discuss the final deeper level PCMs.

8.3 – Contractualism: The Core Category

Social contracts were first described by Rousseau (1795), who says that although they "may perhaps never have been formally promulgated, they are yet universally the same and are everywhere tacitly acknowledged and received" (p. 19). His suggestion that everyone is equal and free because everyone forfeits the same rights in a community arguably led to the current understanding of tacit social agreements between members of a community. Contractualism as a moral theory relies on the principle that parties have a mutual understanding of what is right and wrong (Southwood, 2013). The account of contractualism used in the construction of this grounded theory is that proposed by Scanlon (1975; 2003). Scanlon's contractualism is indebted to Rawls' social contract theory (Kumar, 2010), but differs through the nature of how the contract is formed. Rawls advances universal principles which all must agree to (Rawls, 1980), and places those within the social contract behind a "veil of ignorance", where all parties are unaware of key facts of each other's identity. Scanlon, on the other hand, suggests that it is an actor's desire to be able to justify their own actions to others that drives the social contract. For Scanlon, when one actor wrongs another through their actions, it can be deemed morally unjustifiable if the actions cannot be reasonably defended (Scanlon, 1975; 2003; Kumar 2010). It draws on the social contract theory advanced by Rousseau (1795) where mutual

respect forms part of a hypothetical agreement between members of a community (Kumar, 2010). Kumar clarifies that the hypothetical nature of the agreement does not make it any less real (2010). Instead, it should be viewed as an implication between actors that actions must be justifiable to each other to maintain the contract (Kumar, 2010).

Pupil-teacher relationships have been studied in depth (Hamre and Pianta, 2001; Davis, 2003; Barth et al., 2004; Kington, 2012; Darwich, Hymel and Waterhouse, 2012; Sointu et al., 2017) but a link has not yet been made between the dyadic relationships between pupils and their teachers, and the moral theory of contractualism. However, much of the discussion around pupil-teacher relationships discusses constructs that echo this key principle of contractualism. For example, Hajdukova et al. (2014) define positive pupil-teacher relationships as being "characterised by mutual respect, caring and closeness" (p.146). They found that teachers improving relationships with children with behaviour problems has a positive impact on pupils' academic and social development. This indicates that there is an interplay between success, social interactions and how one is treated by others. Furthermore, Payne's (2005) discussion of Covey's (1989) emotional deposits and withdrawals deals with how pupils can feel respected or disrespected through teacher actions. This is backed up by Pianta (1999) who suggests that the nature of classroom life is social and emotional. Kohn (2006) further suggests that when children fail academically, it is most commonly due to a feeling of unwelcomeness or detachment from others in their educational world and not due to a lack of intellectual ability. Contractualism is concerned with implicit contracts between members of a social group, stating that moral convictions can be justified through common-sense (Kumar, 2010). This chapter will situate the findings from chapters five and six in the extant literature of pupil-teacher relationships and Scanlon's contractualism (2003). It will show how the pupils' feelings of alienation are linked to a breach of the implicit social contract between them and their teachers.

8.4 – Situating the Deeper Level PCM: Mutual Respect

When all theoretical comparisons and integration of categories and PCMs had been completed, there were two deeper level PCMs identified, each containing two PCMs. This section will focus on situating the theory in the extant literature surrounding the first deeper level PCM – mutual respect. It will first examine literature related to the wider social process of mutual respect before exploring pupil-teacher relationships, injustice and the Pygmalion effect. Throughout this section, reference will be made to the theory of contractualism, detailing how the emergent deeper level PCM of mutual respect is a key construct of contractualism. Figure 8.4 shows the deeper level PCM of mutual respect and the integrated PCMs which comprise this. It is shown alongside the greyed out deeper level PCM of power to demonstrate how the two are related, before they are used to build the theory presented at the end of this chapter.
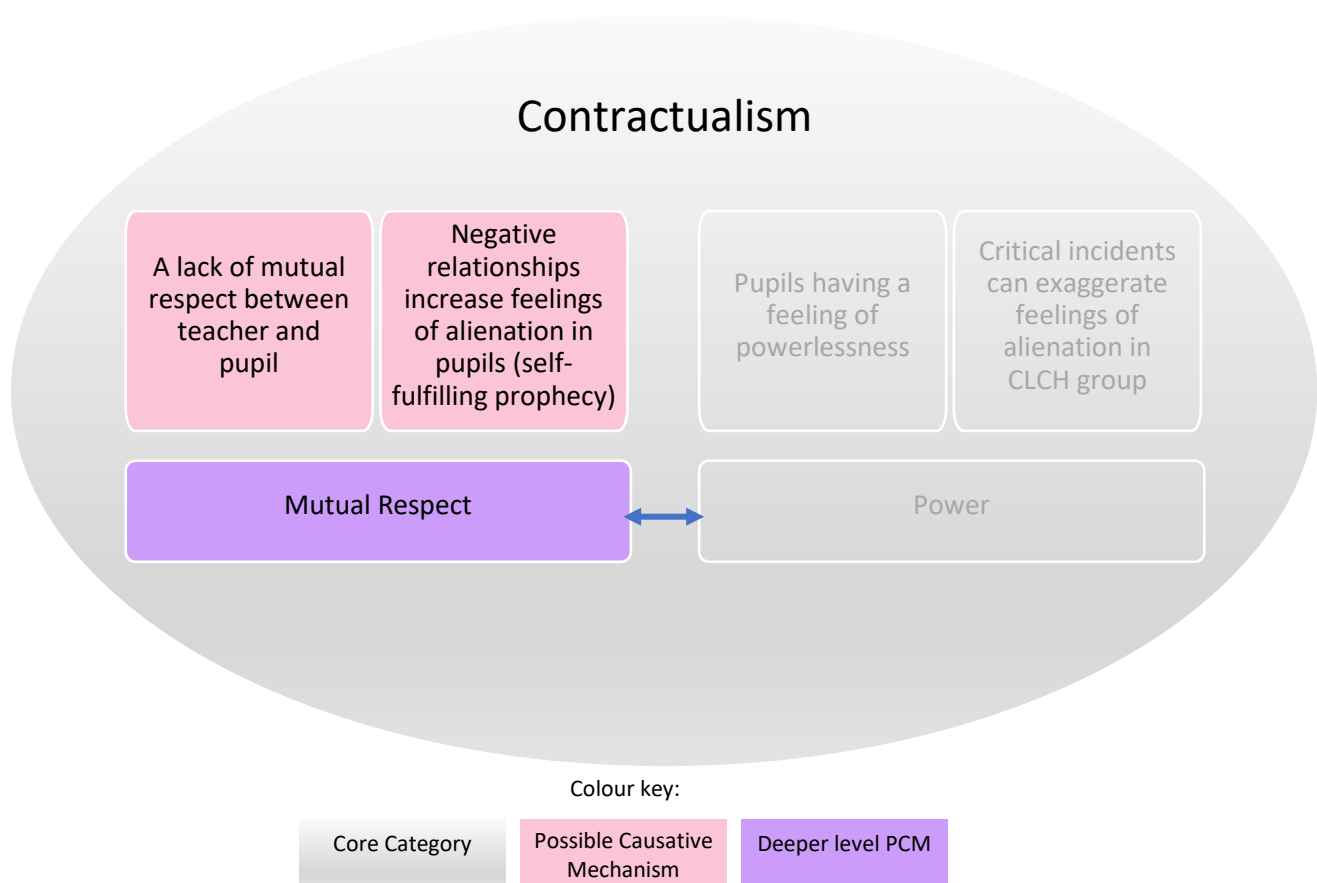
Figure 8.4 Deeper level PCM of mutual respect

Respect is a term that is used widely but can be understood differently depending on the context. O'Grady (2015) states that respect between teachers and pupils is dependent on interactions between them, although Darwall (2004) considers respect in terms of esteem towards or derived from others. The language used suggests that respect is a social construct, with de Cremer (2002) stating it can be symbolic of one's position within a group. On the other hand, for contractualism, mutual respect is a product of human nature and humans' ability to think rationally. Contractualism, as a theory, prioritises mutual respect over other values (Wong, 2020). Its assertion that an action can be deemed wrong when it has violated principles which cannot be reasonably rejected (Scanlon, 1975) is important when discussing a breakdown of mutual respect between teachers and pupils. Contractualism assumes that, in a dyadic relationship, for a principle to be violated, both actors must assume the other has the mental capacity to reasonably assess the principles and be able to identify when one is violated. Thus, both actors hold mutual respect and value for each other. Although contractualism takes a more philosophical approach to respect than de Cremer's social constructivist view (2002), both describe a reciprocal dimension in relationships, suggesting that mutual respect develops over time and is a part of humanity or "human decency" (Hoban, 1977, p.232). O'Grady (2015) suggests that mutual respect can be broken down into three main concepts; autonomy, accountability and reciprocity. In this sense, autonomy is linked directly with mutual respect. O'Grady's use of Higgs et al.'s (2003) definition of autonomy to mean "the right of an individual to be free from the unwanted interference of others" (p. 244) has resonance with the term 'powerlessness'. Using Higgs et al.'s (2003) definition, an individual who lacks autonomy is unable to exert their free will due to interference from others. This indicates an overlap or link between the possible causative mechanisms of mutual respect and powerlessness. However, this definition of autonomy is not completely illustrative of how the participants in the study described their experience of powerlessness.

Whilst participants did speak about being unable to enact their agency, they frequently also used terms that described an inability to control the situation. This indicates that although there might be some link between the two, there is not enough of an overlap to merge the possible causative mechanisms together. O'Grady's (2015) accountability concept of mutual respect refers to the need to understand that actions have consequences and when applied to a pupil-teacher relationship suggests that pupils and teachers both need to understand the consequences of their actions for themselves and each other. Again, accountability tessellates well with contractualism where an individual's actions can be deemed wrong if they violate an implicit understanding; they are held accountable for their actions. Findings from the alienated pupil participants in this study echo this, as pupils were able to separate liking a teacher from respecting them, placing professional behaviours as an implicit principle of respect. Pupils had increased levels of respect for those teachers who had the most professional behaviour and were able to identify situations when mutual respect could be rebuilt if lost.

The final concept of mutual respect O'Grady (2015) suggests is reciprocity; that when an individual pays respect to another as part of a dyadic relationship, there is an anticipation that this action is indicative of how that individual would like to be treated in return. Again, the concept of reciprocal action is a fundamental principle to contractualism, suggesting it continues to be applicable to pupil-teacher relationships. Furthermore, the pupils in this study felt aware of the reciprocal dynamic of their relationships with teachers and spoke emotively when they felt mutual respect has been violated by their teachers.

8.4.1 – PCM: A Lack of Mutual Respect Between Teacher and Pupil

There is much research identifying that positive pupil-teacher relationships can be characterised by mutual respect, caring and closeness (Hughes, Gleason and Zhang, 2005; Pianta, 1999; Pianta and Stuhlman, 2004). Furthermore, it has been shown that teachers overwhelmingly believe it is a crucial aspect of the job to develop and sustain positive relationships with their pupils (Looker and Kington,

2020), but there is limited literature suggesting how teachers can begin to develop a feeling of mutual respect. Findings in chapter six suggest that pupils and teachers want to get along with each other, with many citing getting along on a personal level as important to developing positive professional relationships. Moos (1974) suggests that an important dimension of this might be associated with personality which is consistent with the findings of this study. Both teachers and pupils suggested that certain types of personality help to form positive relationships; pupils saw good personality traits as important when expressing a fondness for their teachers, and they felt this was linked to their feelings of respect for teachers in positive relationships. Goodman (2009) expands on this through the description of "respect-earned" (p.12) by teachers, suggesting that respect is not due to teachers because of their position, but earned by acknowledging the dignity of their pupils. This forms part of the implicit pupil-teacher contract.

Contractualism discusses how respect is afforded to another person by displaying value for them as a human being by giving their interests consideration (Kumar, 2010). Contractualism also refers to a principle of mutual respect as the need for each actor to fulfil their promissory obligations (Scanlon, 2003). This was an emergent property identified as a dimension of mutual respect where pupils expressed that they might respect a teacher due to their position ("respect-due"; Goodman, 2009 p.12) but this is mediated by the perception of the quality of the teacher. In other words, pupils who felt a teacher was not good at their job saw that they had not fulfilled their promised obligations and thus mutual respect was eroded. O'Grady (2015) found that when a teacher scaffolded the learning of their pupils whilst relating interpersonally with them, they were more likely to elicit feelings of respect. This demonstration of the interplay between personality and effectivity of the teacher and the establishment of mutual respect is consistent with the findings previously discussed.

Teacher justice can be described as teachers' behaviours that are perceived to be fair (Goodboy, 2011; Mameli, Caricati and Molinari, 2020). These behaviours include consistent and respectful treatment towards pupils and a lack of favouritism (Mameli, Caricati and Molinari, 2020). This agrees with Rawls'

(1958) account of justice. Rawls (1958) states that not only can justice be construed as fairness for all, but that fairness is fundamental to justice. Justice as fairness (Rawls, 1958) is described as an agreement between all participants within a practice, where all have the same restricted liberties and expectations of each other. Pupils who felt a sense of injustice perceived a degree of unfair treatment by their teachers. They felt their sanctions were disproportionately greater than their peers, so felt their liberties were restricted to a greater amount or had differing expectations placed upon them. Additionally, Jiang et al. (2018) found that the more students believed they were treated justly by their teachers, the more respected they felt, supporting Rawls' link between respect and a sense of justice. As a result, all references to justice or injustice are referring to the perceptions of fair or unfair teacher behaviours teachers; pupils' experiences of justice are largely dependent on their perceptions of teachers' decisions and judgements (Jiang et al., 2018).

The importance of teachers treating pupils fairly has been widely established in educational research (Peter and Dalbert, 2010) with wider-reaching implications indicating a link between varying levels of teacher justice and pupils' academic performance (Peter et al., 2012). This sense of justice, it is suggested, can have even further-reaching implications such as encouraging the development of pupil-teacher relationships (Jiang et al., 2018) and ultimately helping to support the formation of a positive classroom environment and identity. The findings reported in chapters five, six and seven are in line with this intersection between justice and a sense of classroom identity; pupils who felt a strong sense of injustice experienced stronger feelings of alienation. Their perceptions of unjust actions by particular teachers could have contributed to a negative pupil-teacher relationship, through a breakdown of the social contract. Scanlon's constructs of social contracts require there to be mutual respect, held on the premise that individuals' actions are justifiable (1975; 1998; 2003). A perception of unfair treatment can be seen to be unjustifiable (Rawls, 1958; 1980) which can explain the resultant lack of classroom identity or alienation. Interestingly, pupils who felt like they were treated unfairly recalled occasions when they intentionally misbehaved to antagonise the teacher. According to contractualism, this unfair treatment is a signal to the pupils that the social contract has been

breached, which can explain why pupils chose to break the contract further by intentionally misbehaving. For example, when the contract is maintained, fair and just teacher behaviour has been shown to be associated with a reduction in hostile student behaviour (Paulsel and Chory-Assad, 2005; Donat et al., 2012). This link between the identified dimensions of the implicit pupil-teacher social contract shows there is overlap between the two, which is reasonable to expect.

Participants shared similar experiences, particularly those from the closeness low, conflict high (CLCH) group. There was a consensus that once a pupil had been labelled as one who misbehaves in the teacher's eyes, this association remained with the pupil throughout their time at secondary school. These findings are consistent with the literature which identifies that boys, in particular, feel a negative reputation is difficult to shed (Hajdukova et al., 2014) and leads to unfair and unequal treatment (Hamill and Boyd, 2002; Jahnukainen, 2001). Hajdukova et al. (2014) also identified that boys who felt like they had built up a negative reputation believed their side of the story was not listened to, leading to a breakdown in trust and feeling unvalued. These findings are consistent with those shared in chapter six, where male participants felt they were being picked on and not listened to when they protested their innocence. These factors are significant in developing a sense of discontentment and alienation. The pupils in Hajdukova et al.'s study (2014) spoke about feeling anger when they witnessed their peers receiving lighter punishments for similar misdemeanours. Although the participants in Hajdukova et al.'s study were attending a special school for boys with severe social and behavioural problems, their findings still resonate with those discussed in chapter six. The participants were not at immediate risk of being removed from school due to their poor behaviour, but they were all at various stages of behaviour management systems which can ultimately lead to removal from school. There are similarities in the way participants report their feelings of injustice with those from Hadjukova et al.'s study (2014); a feeling they are ignored, a sense they will receive more severe punishments than their peers and an intense feeling of anger when they are treated unfairly.

These findings are replicated in the wider research, where pupils with social and behavioural difficulties believe their teachers are a significant factor in their disruption (Hamill and Boyd, 2002; Miller Ferguson and Moore, 2002; Rasooli et al., 2019). Rasooli et al.'s study (2019) identified that pupils tend to judge fairness using one of three conceptualisations of justice: distributive justice, procedural justice and interactional justice. They found that each of the three concepts are related to fairness, with pupils demonstrating inaction and dissent as a response to their perception of unfair incidents. As previously discussed, alienated pupils often describe their sense of injustice by comparing similar incidents and determining they were unfairly punished, or that some of their peers received a lighter reprimand if they are not labelled as disruptive. Additionally, participants in Year 10 tended to have a greater sense of injustice than those in Year 8, contributing to discourse by suggesting that indicators of future alienation might be present in the lower years of school.

8.4.2 – PCM: Negative Relationships Increase Feelings of Alienation in Pupils (Self-Fulfilling Prophecy)

Secondary school pupils typically have multiple teachers per day, yet there is limited research exploring the balance between the number of positive and negative relationships pupils have with their teachers and pupils' subsequent engagement in school. Martin and Collie (2019) found a linear relationship between increasing number of positive pupil-teacher relationships and pupil engagement in school. Furthermore, their findings suggest that the potentially detrimental effects of negative relationships can be offset by an increasing number of positive relationships. The study gave an additional dimension to an established body of research which has recognised that pupil-teacher relationships and engagement at school are associated (Ryan et al., 1994; Hamre and Pianta, 2001 and Furrer and Skinner, 2003). The uncovering of the balance between positive and negative pupil-teacher relationships and the effect on engagement presented by Martin and Collie (2019) is consistent with the findings presented in this thesis. Martin and Collie found that when pupils have additional positive relationships with teachers there are more likely to be engaged and achieve academic success.

The findings from chapters five, six and seven show that negative pupil-teacher relationships result in a lack of enjoyment of the subject which gave rise to a sense of projected academic failure. Martin and Collie (2019) also found that pupils who have positive relationships with some teachers can tolerate negative relationships for longer before resulting in a change of engagement. This phenomenon was not explored explicitly during this study, but there are some findings which seem to support this. For example, the CLCH subgroup contains four pupils who were identified as having fewer close relationships with teachers and an increased number of conflictual relationships. Martin and Collie's (2019) suggestion of the protective factor afforded by the presence of positive pupil-teacher relationships could offer an explanation for the additional associated feelings of alienation CLCH pupils had. It is possible these pupils' ability to maintain high engagement levels has been eroded by a greater number of negative teacher relationships; the positive relationships they might experience are no longer a mediating factor for their negative experiences.

Fredrickson's broaden-and-build theory (2001; 2004) suggests an alternative mechanism that might be responsible here. This theory posits that negative emotions result in an immediate biological or behavioural response as they are more closely aligned with survival. The flight or fight response is one such example, implying that negative emotions can invoke a response similar to this which could generate conflict. Furthermore, it has been shown that cortisol levels increase as adolescents progress through puberty (Koester-Weber et al., 2014). Cortisol is considered a stress hormone, suggesting that this might be one factor that might play a role in conflictual feelings between teachers and pupils. Of the CLCH group, three were in Year 10 and only one was in Year 8. Pupils in Year 10 are likely to have higher cortisol levels than those in Year 8 (Koester-Weber et al., 2014); when a negative interaction occurs, the fight or flight response to this suggested by the broaden-and-build theory could be heightened by the increased cortisol, leading to an increased perception of conflict. The broaden-and-build theory goes further, stating that the benefits of positive interactions materialise over a longer period of time as there is no fight or flight response associated with these. The findings from this study

are consistent with the findings from the literature already shared, suggesting that pupils are susceptible to variations in the ratio of positive to negative pupil-teacher relationships. The slow release of benefits from positive pupil-teacher relationships are increasingly countered by an increase in cortisol levels which could, in turn, give rise to more conflicts, pronounced negative feelings and an increased sense of alienation. As there are only four members of the CLCH group, there is not enough data to support the inclusion of the broaden-and-build theory (Fredrickson, 2001; 2004) in the final substantive theory. It does, however, raise an interesting question, and give rise to a potential area for further research.

8.4.2.1 – The Self-Fulfilling Prophecy

The findings in chapter six identified that pupils who participated in the study had already been, or were at risk of being, subject to a negative self-fulfilling prophecy. It was found that negative relationships can lead to increased feelings of alienation among pupils, but that these alienated feelings can also prevent the formation of positive relationships. Since Rosenthal and Jacobson's Pygmalion experiment (1968) suggested that pupils are more likely to perform highly when their teachers have high expectations of them, there has been a wealth of literature exploring this phenomenon (Alpert 1975; Good and Brophy, 2008; Murdock-Perriera and Sedlacek, 2018; Rubie-Davies, 2006, 2010).

The Pygmalion effect and self-fulfilling prophecy have become synonymous in literature (Murdock-Perriera and Sedlacek, 2018; Nolkemper, Aydin and Knigge, 2019) with the main body of the work generally centred around teachers' expectations of pupils' academic performance. The literature suggests that pupils know if they are considered to be achievers or not by their teachers (Weinstein, 1993; Weinstein, Marshall, Sharp and Botkin, 1987; Kuklinski and Weinstein, 2000). Furthermore, pupils appear to be able to infer teachers' expectations through subtle verbal and nonverbal cues (Babad, 1998). This has been found more recently, where Rubie-Davies (2006; 2010) found that

teacher expectations may influence students' self-perceptions. Rubie-Davies suggests this is particularly the case when teacher expectations were low. Her study (2006) measured pupil perceptions of teachers' opinions and how these changed throughout a year. She identified a decline in pupil perception of teacher opinion from those in classes taught by teachers with low expectations over the course of the year. This is contrasted with little or no change in pupil perception of teacher opinion from those in classes taught by teachers with high expectations.

The Pygmalion effect – the phenomenon where prospects are converted into reality (Lopez, 2017) appears to have real-world consequences in the classroom. Despite much of the literature relying on knowledge of the teachers' expectations and investigating their potential mediative influences on academic performance, this body of research is still relevant to the findings in chapters five and six. Pupils were found to report that when they believed a teacher did not like, respect, or value them, this would have a mediating influence on their own behaviour, which would, in turn, reinforce the teacher's belief. The mechanism driving the behaviour and accounts shared in the findings seems to mirror the mechanism driving teacher expectations and academic performance. The self-fulfilling prophecy can be seen here. It was originally described as a false statement incorrectly believed to be true. The proclamation of the false statement can itself invoke a new behaviour which subsequently renders the initial false statement to be seen to be true (Merton, 1948). It goes some way to explaining the findings outlined earlier. Pupils spoke frequently about having blame falsely apportioned to them by some teachers, indicating that this was either an initial catalyst or has since become a catalyst in the breakdown of the relationship.

Applying Merton's definition of the self-fulfilling prophecy (1948) can explain this finding. If the false statement was that the pupil had misbehaved, this could invoke a response from the pupil which, in turn, could be interpreted as misconduct. The teacher's initial thoughts are seen to be correct, so the false statement is now regarded as true, thus initiating the start of a self-fulfilling prophecy. This also

ties in well with Scanlon's contractualism (2003); the dyadic relationship between a teacher and pupil requires a degree of reciprocal respect and value. An incident like those described by the pupils (and confirmed to be occurring by pastoral leads within the school) could signal a breach of the implicit pupil-teacher contract. It appears this is internalised by pupils as a display of lack of mutual respect, leading to feeling unvalued which can manifest itself as poor behaviour.

O'Grady (2015) adds another dimension that appears to be of importance; there are incidents that were not intended to be disrespectful, but which pupils interpret as showing a lack of mutual respect. The suggestion is that the expectation of respect (like that outlined in contractualism (Scanlon, 1975; 2003)) can itself be seen as a catalyst for disrespect in the classroom. Implicit social contracts require all parties to believe that mutual respect and value for each other is a pre-requisite (Rousseau, 1795, Scanlon, 1975; 2003), therefore, for positive pupil-teacher relationships, mutual respect is an implicit expectation. The expectancy of respect appears to be held in high regard by pupils, with O'Grady (2015) suggesting that pupils articulate respect for their teachers in relation to their educational values and not just actions. Those teachers who pupils perceive as having positive educational values foster feelings of respect whilst those who do not appear to are liable to misinterpretation of actions as an act of hostility.

Although there is not enough data to draw firm a conclusion regarding this, it calls for further research to be carried out examining the link between the Pygmalion effect and student alienation, and what causes some pupils to enter a negative, cyclical, self-fulfilling prophecy whilst others do not.

8.5 – Situating the Deeper Level PCM: Power

This section will focus on situating the theory in the extant literature surrounding the deeper level PCM of power. It will first examine literature related to the deeper level PCM of power before exploring the PCMs "pupils having a feeling of powerlessness" and, "critical incidents can exaggerate

feelings of alienation in CLCH group". This section will demonstrate how power is also an important construct of contractualism. Figure 8.5 shows the deeper level PCM of power and the integrated PCMs which comprise this.
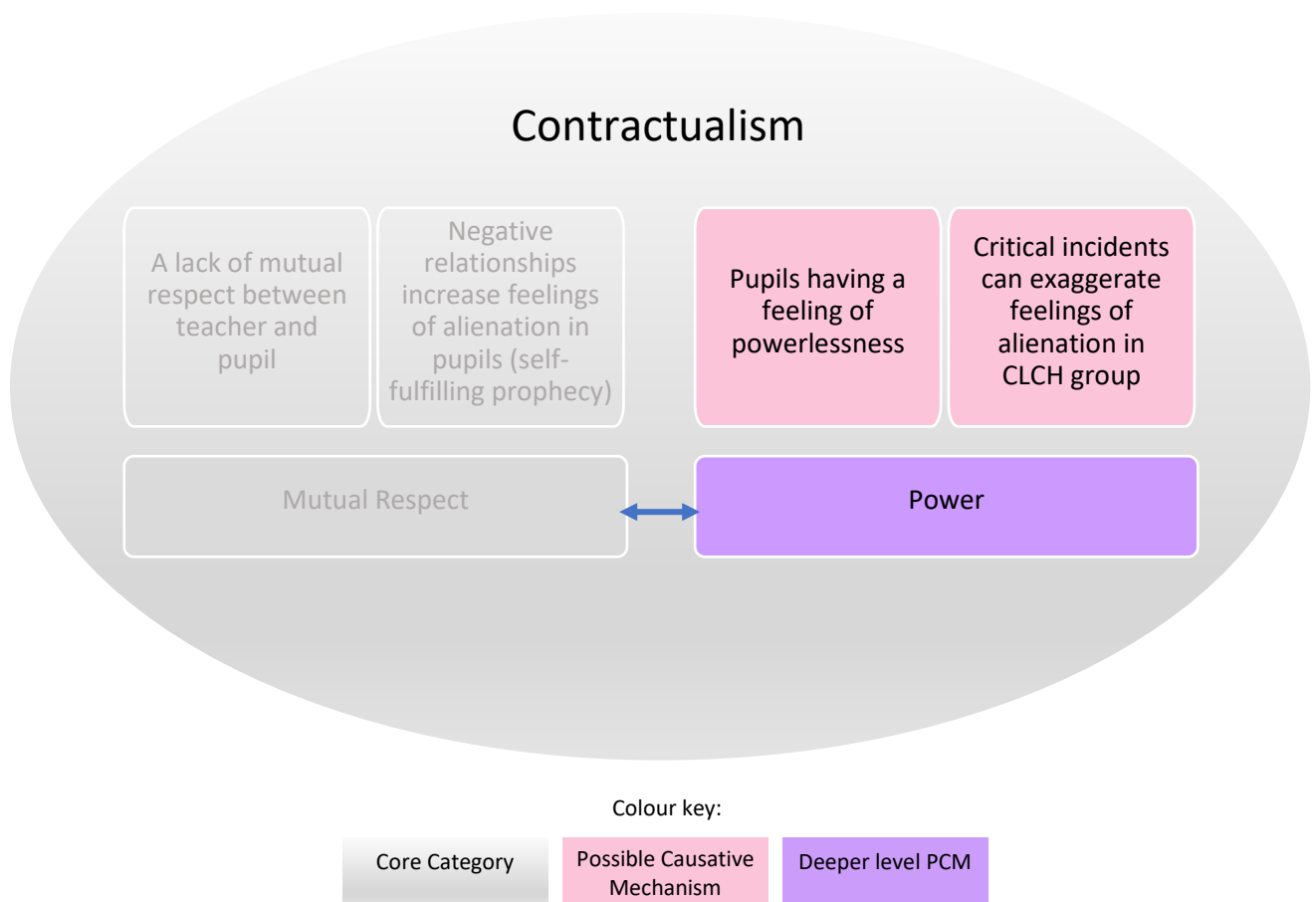
Figure 8.5 Deeper level PCM of power

Using the same format as earlier, Figure 8.5 shows the deeper level PCM of power and the integrated PCMs which comprise this. It is shown alongside the greyed out deeper level PCM of mutual respect to demonstrate how the two are related, before they are used to build the theory presented at the end of this chapter.

It has been shown that pupils' perceptions of increased teacher power are associated with negative pupil-teacher relationships and an emotional distance between pupil and teacher (Zhang et al., 2019).

Although Zhang et al.'s study is conducted on Chinese schoolchildren, who experience a very different educational culture than in the UK, their findings support Magee and Smith's (2013) proposition that an increasing power differential in dyadic relationships increases social distance. Furthermore, a link has been identified suggesting that if pupils are afforded more power through the means of dialogical interaction between teacher and pupil instead of didactic teaching, academic success increases (Wang, 2010). Participants' perceptions can be generalised by a feeling that, in negative pupil-teacher relationships, the teacher exerted their power more overtly through actions that conveyed a sense of distrust. Participants felt their teachers prevented them from doing certain things due to a belief held by teachers it would result in misbehaviour by the pupil. This can then, in turn, lead to disengagement from school (Brown et al., 2003) and further contribute to the self-fulfilling prophecy identified earlier.

Participants described a delicate power dynamic between pupils and teachers, with pupils aware of the existence of a power differential, which could have an impact on the quality of relationships. This social process has been found to be the case in literature, where it has been shown that careful navigation of the power differential can foster the development of mutual respect (O'Grady, 2015). The link between power and mutual respect is not surprising; the implicit social contract rests upon the assumption that each actor owes one another moral norms (Scanlon, 2003). This is to say that for a meaningful relationship to exist, both pupils and teachers owe each other the respect each feels they themselves are owed. Thus, when the teacher grasps power that is not due to them (in the pupils' eyes), pupils feel powerless, and the implicit social contract is broken. The power differential adds complexity to this social contract; both pupils and teachers know that teachers hold the bulk of the power in these relationships. However, it is important to note that pupil participants experience relationships with teachers where they do not feel powerless and are afforded mutual respect. This indicates that when the contract is maintained through mutual respect, positive relationships can thrive despite a power differential. Furthermore, participants are aware when they have misbehaved, and they expect to be reprimanded as a result, findings echoed by Schultz and Rubel (2011). This suggests that when pupils have broken the contract, they appeared to accept it, yet they felt that the

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response by the teacher was often disproportionate, again echoed in Schulz and Rubel's work (2011). The teacher participants who were interviewed[3] had a consensus that teachers should be able to apologise if they overstep and abuse their power; indeed, they recalled incidents when they had done this. The simple act of an apology would demonstrate value and respect for the pupil, humanising them (Scanlon, 2003; Kumar, 2010) and thus help in rebuilding the relationship by reinstating the broken implicit contract.

8.5.1 – PCM: Powerlessness

Seeman's (1959; 1975) and Mau's (1992) constructs of alienation describe the state of disconnect as being categorised into powerlessness, meaninglessness, normlessness and social estrangement. The findings in chapter six demonstrate that only powerlessness arose from interviews with pupils and teachers, indicating a sense of homogeneity in the experiences of the participants. Meaninglessness, referring to a lack of relevancy (Schultz, 2011), arose on two occasions where the participants identified they did not feel they would need the subject in future and so found its study meaningless. This was, however, overshadowed by a feeling that teachers, and pupils' relationships with teachers, had a greater impact on whether pupils enjoyed the subject. Research related to meaninglessness has been found to be associated with school non-completers (Bridgeland et al., 2006; Bridgeland, 2010; Schultz and Rubel, 2011). None of the participants in this study were non-completers, which perhaps explains why the construct of meaninglessness did not appear frequently. Another reason could be that when participants did not find a subject enjoyable, this was intersected with a feeling that it was the specific teachers who enhanced the feeling of dislike, indicating a social and emotional influence on enjoyment. This, according to Pianta (1999), is inseparable from learning.

Normlessness, referring to the belief held by students that socially disapproved behaviour is required to achieve well (Schultz, 2011) alongside social estrangement, referring to students' inability or

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[3] All teacher participants who were interviewed believed they had positive relationships with pupils, including those from the CLCH group.

unwillingness to integrate into the school (Brown et al., 2003; Schultz, 2011) were not found to be present.

As discussed in chapter two, an understanding of the term 'powerlessness' seems to have reached a consensus within the academic community. Powerlessness can be understood as a pupil's inability to exert change or their own agency (Brown and Rodriguez, 2009; Taines, 2012; Lewis et al., 2015; Anderson et al., 2016; Kumari and Kumar, 2017). Although a small literature review was conducted prior to analysis of the data, and therefore familiarity with the term 'powerlessness' existed, the term emerged from the participants without being elicited. During interviews, the word was consciously avoided yet participants, both pupils and teachers, described incidents of a power imbalance as demonstrated in the following memo:

> *The first two teachers to be interviewed (both pastoral leads) have raised the possibility of a power struggle between some teachers and pupils. When asked to expand on this, both suggested that some teachers might go on a 'power trip' to demonstrate to the class that they are in charge.*
>
> *The first two pupils to be interviewed have not mentioned the word power, but they are talking about incidents that seem to echo what the teachers have said. For example, a Year 10 boy has said that a teacher has made up or exaggerated stories about behavioural incidents and that more senior teachers believe them. This incident is an example of an abuse of power. It is worth pursuing exploring the theme of power.*

Memo 10 Reflections on power

Pupils who participated in the study expressed a desire to perform well academically but felt that teachers who tried to display power over them contributed to an expectation that they would not achieve to their best standard. This is consistent with Schulz's description of powerlessness, where it is said to materialise when a student has low expectations of achieving goals they place value on (2011). In her paper examining how school counselling programs can reduce alienation, Schultz (2011) found that when pupils are advocated for by a school counsellor, this voice can reach staff and go some way to reducing a prejudice held by teachers regarding alienated pupils' academic trajectory.

Participants felt that past experiences with teachers were not forgotten and that teachers held some prejudicial attitudes towards pupils based on prior incidents. The emergent properties 'past experiences being considered as still relevant' and 'teachers having prejudice against pupils' were assigned to the possible causative mechanisms 'powerlessness' and 'injustice' respectively. The overlap is explained in Memo 11:

> *Injustice and powerlessness seem to be related, but are separate items, for example:*
>
> *When 'past experiences being considered as still relevant' was coded, the description and language used by pupil participants was one of frustration at being unable to change their teachers' perceptions of them. This is definitely powerlessness - Seeman's original description of powerlessness: ''the expectancy or probability held by the individual that his own behavior cannot determine the occurrence of the outcomes, or reinforcements, he seeks'' (1959 p. 784).*
>
> *When 'teacher's having prejudice against pupils' was coded, the description and language used by pupil participants was different – they were angry. Hamill and Boyd, 2002; Miller et al., 2002; Hadjukova et al.'s, 2014; Rasooli et al., 2019 all report pupils having feelings of anger when treated unjustly. This is injustice.*
>
> *Injustice and powerlessness are linked, but separate. However, the PCM injustice is more closely aligned with mutual respect than it is powerlessness.*

Memo 11 Exploring the overlap between injustice and powerlessness

Additionally, Schultz (2011) argues that prejudice held by teachers influence pupils' academic achievements, supporting a link between the deeper level PCMs of powerlessness and mutual respect. This also supports the proposal of a contractualist mechanism in operation; if pupils perceive their teachers to be prejudiced, this could have implications on the social contract. Prejudice, as an unjustified attitude to an individual based on their membership to a social group, applies to the participants of this study. The pupils have been identified by the school as presenting difficult-to-manage behaviour, and so are members of this social group. When the pupils stated that they felt

teachers sometimes held prejudiced attitudes towards them, this was in relation to their prior bad behaviour. The perception of prejudice can be interpreted by pupils that their teachers are not treating them equally, and thus their judgements are also not equal. This is considered to be a breach of the social contract (Scanlon, 1975) which, if not repaired, can initiate the development of negative pupil-teacher relationships.

Many of the findings related to powerlessness discussed in chapters six and seven almost entirely echo findings from Schultz and Rubel's study of five alienated boys who failed to complete high school (2011). Schultz and Rubel (2011) found that their participants' engagement in school was impacted by the type and quality of relationships with adults, much like those in this study. They also found that each of their participants were able to speak about adults who they had a genuine liking of, and who they felt seemed concerned for their school progress. Participants in this study, as examined in the previous chapter, also spoke highly of at least one adult with whom they had a good relationship and who they felt were invested in them. They also spoke emotively about incidents where they felt injustice and teachers who they had negative relationships with. This, again, echoes the participants of Schultz and Rubel (2011), where alienated pupils spoke of an intense dislike of some teachers. Furthermore, those in Schultz and Rubel's study felt that school adults treated them differently due to stereotyping or racial prejudice. Although this was not found in the present study as all participants were white British, there is a similarity in the language used, implying that prejudice, whatever its origins, can lead to feelings of powerlessness and alienation. Participants' language conveyed a feeling that teachers made unfair assumptions regarding classroom misbehaviour at their expense, echoing the feelings discussed by Schultz and Rubel (2011), where participants said they felt persecuted and misrepresented by some school adults. This perception of unfair treatment, again, intersects with contractualism, where fair and equal treatment signals mutual respect, which is a pre-requisite for a functioning social contract (Scanlon, 1998; 2003; Kumar, 2010).

8.5.2 – PCM: Critical Incidents can Exaggerate Feelings of Alienation

The closeness low, conflict high (CLCH) group of pupils were identified through analysis of the Student-Teacher Relationship Scale (STRS) (Pianta, 1991). This required teachers to complete a questionnaire about their relationships with pupil participants. A subgroup of pupils was identified as having the most problematic relationships with teachers; these pupils had a closeness score lower than the mean, and a conflict score greater than the mean. Findings demonstrated that CLCH pupils independently identified an incident that they believed was the source of the negative relationship. These incidents happened early into the formation of the relationship and were seen as significant by the pupils.

The term 'critical incident' has been used in Flanagan's Critical Incident Technique (1954) indicating a significant occurrence, by Edvardsson and Roos (2001) to describe an event which stands out, by Schon (1987) as a highly charged moment that holds significance for the individual, and by Miles and Huberman (1994) as an event which is "important or crucial and/or limited to an immediate setting" (p. 113). All these definitions indicate that a critical incident holds high personal importance to an individual, is an emotional event and is not easily forgotten. Tripp (1993) adds a slightly different dimension to the definition by stating that critical incidents are "not 'things' that exist independently of an observer and are awaiting discovery like gold nuggets or desert islands, but like all data, critical incidents are created" (p. 8). Participants were often visibly frustrated when recalling critical incidents (see highlighted section on Memo 12):

- *Participant is again very honest and open.*
- *He was very relaxed and spoke at length about his experiences of relationships with teachers*
- *Participant identified some occasions which he thinks caused the breakdown of the relationship. These occasions happened really early on into the establishment of the relationship*
- *When asked to recall this, the participant spoke very emotively and seemed to be reliving it. He was visibly angry.*
- *Participant also noticed power and spoke about the differences between how different teachers display their power. This is a theme that is continuing to emerge*
- *The participant spoke about how he believes his reputation around the school has affected the way his teachers perceive him. He seemed upset about this and felt it was unfair – not given a 'clean slate'*
- *Important themes emerging seem to continue to be:*

- *Will ask questions about:*
  - *Pupils knowing they need to do well but not being able to focus*
  - *Peer influence*
  - *Teachers avoiding/ignoring pupils in class*
  - *Fair/unfair treatment*

Memo 12 Written after an interview with a Year 10 pupil

Pupils were also all aware that the incident initially started off quite minor, but quickly escalated. Over time, this event's significance has increased so that when asked to reflect on what caused the relationship to become negative, a pupil attaches the bulk of the cause to a single event. Using Tripp's language (1993), the event has been interpreted as significant and thus the critical event has been 'created'.

Participants were frustrated about the critical incidents and felt that the implications of an event were not proportionate. Their ability to recollect them in detail suggests that participants have thought about these events on numerous occasions prior to being interviewed. Halquist and Musanti (2010) proposed that actors, when rendering an event as critical, take time to explore the underlying meaning of the event, reflect on it and analyse it. It is, therefore, probable that the participants had already relived the events they recalled and potentially added more meaning to them than initially ascribed. As none of the teachers interviewed felt they had negative relationships with pupils, it was not possible to check if similar incidents were as easily recalled by teachers. It does, however, seem reasonable to assume that a contributory factor to CLCH pupils' increased sense of alienation can be attributed to their creation of critical incidents. Critical incidents appear to be able to break the implicit contract between pupils and teachers; pupils were found to report them with feelings of frustration and injustice. They believe there has been a violation in the contract, which is subsequently dwelled upon until it reaches a point of no return. CLCH pupils felt their teachers had devalued them by prioritising their own needs first. Whilst it is likely that these needs were to maintain control of the class, and not intended to be at the personal expense of the pupil, it was not received like that. Pupils in the CLCH group spoke about how the teacher does not see the situation from their perspective.

Kumar (2010) argues that part of a functional social contract requires individuals to have their personal interests to be taken into account by others:

> *For any situation, the relevant principle will spell out how other individuals are entitled, or may legitimately expect, to have their reasons figure in one's practical thinking, and how one is entitled to have one's own reasons figure in their practical thinking.*

<div align="right">Kumar (2010, p 492)</div>

By not having their interests or 'reasons' accounted for, CLCH pupils do not feel a degree of respect for their values, and so the implicit contract is broken (Scanlon, 2003).

Recently, there has been traction for using critical incidents to study education (Halquist and Musanti, 2010) but none yet have examined the finding which links critical incidents with pupil alienation and pupil-teacher relationships. Trotman, Tucker and Martin (2015), although they do not refer to critical incidents, do identify that negative behaviour can be related to transitions or key points in a pupil's time at school. There is a degree of overlap between the findings, indicating that the interaction between critical incidents, poor behaviour and pupil alienation is worth greater exploration.

8.6 – The Substantive Theory: The Implicit Pupil-Teacher Social Contract

The substantive theory advances the concept of an implicit pupil-teacher social contract as the basic social process (Glaser and Strauss, 1967), built upon the concepts of mutual respect and power. This implicit social contract states that as pupils and teachers develop a professional relationship, there is a mutual and implied understanding of social behaviours from each actor. The social contract, resting upon values of power and mutual respect, is summarised in Figure 8.6. The vertical arrow represents the emergent mechanism of critical realism, with *empirical* events emerging from the *real* substantive theory.
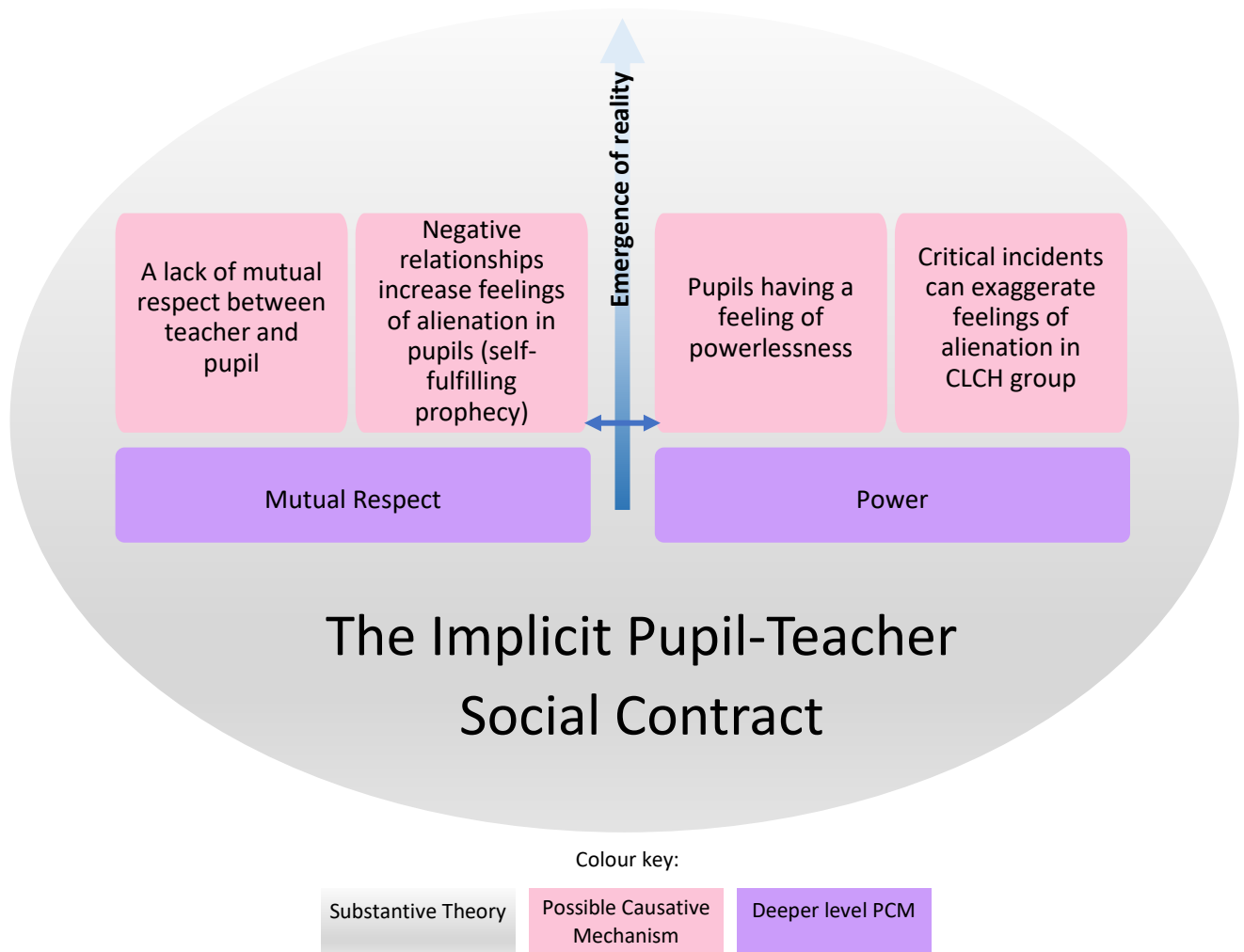
Figure 8.6 The substantive theory - The Implicit Pupil-Teacher Social Contract

Pupils and teachers exist as part of a single community in their schools, and as such have tacit or implicit social contracts (Rousseau, 1795). The social contracts rely on mutual respect (Scanlon, 1975; 2003; Kumar, 2010) between teachers and pupils and if this is not present, the pupils feel unable to enact their own agency. Negative pupil-teacher relationships can arise in secondary school pupils when they believe a teacher breached the implicit pupil-teacher social contract. These pupils are then at risk of marginalisation during lessons and of entering a cycle of negative interactions which are difficult to navigate and escape from. Pupils express a need to feel valued and respected, and when these needs are not met, pupils can enter a *demi-reality* (Bhaskar, 1978; 1986) leading to disengagement from school life.

This can present itself in two ways; a lack of mutual respect is evident between teacher and pupil, and negative relationships are present, leading to an increased sense of pupil alienation. These areas are interlinked and have a range of emergent properties which are observable and overlap the categories. When experiencing demi-reality, pupils are aware that their relationships with some teachers are negative and they are unhappy as a result. Pupils are often aware of actions they could take to begin to change their relationships and to increase a sense of achievement, but they are either unable to or choose not to do this. When the implicit pupil-teacher social contract has been breached between a teacher and a pupil, this is not replicated with the relationships the pupil has with all teachers. Such students can, and do, form positive relationships with at least some of their teachers. When they have this, students perceive any negative relationship as worse than it is in reality, through comparisons with their positive relationships. Teachers who have positive relationships with pupils are also easily able to identify where negative relationships exist. They are often able to compare with their own relationships, either with the same pupil or with similar pupils, and can identify some factors which caused the breach of the social contract. In such instances, these teachers tend to place the onus on their colleagues to change the status of the relationship, or repair the contract, and not on the pupils.

When pupils feel mutual respect is absent, they are more likely to disengage from their academic work. Although this is sometimes seen across all subjects at school, it is initially observed with the subjects taught by teachers where the social contract has broken down and negative relationships are developing. Pupils maintain a desire to perform to the best of their academic ability, have an awareness that their disengagement is likely to prevent this and yet feel unable to make the necessary changes to overcome such obstacles. The demi-reality that these pupils are experiencing is such that they are unable to make the necessary changes.

This feeling of powerlessness dominates pupils' interactions with teachers. Pupils who are alienated from their learning experience a sense of injustice, where they believe teachers are treating them unfairly. This perception has arisen from a breach of the pupil-teacher social contract and is

sometimes, but not always, corroborated by other teachers. This suggests that unfair treatment can be observed by outsiders. Pupils and teachers believe that fairness and consistency is an important aspect to developing and maintaining positive relationships; when this is breached, relationships rapidly sour. Teachers are more likely to assume that disruption involves alienated pupils, as they have previously been found responsible for this. Alienated pupils are more likely to respond negatively to allegations as they feel they have been treated without the respect commanded by the implicit contract.

The pupils and teachers involved in this enter a reciprocal, downward spiral where relationships continue to deteriorate, with pupils intentionally aggravating teachers and teachers tending to assume disruption begins with those pupils. When pupils experience powerlessness, they maintain a strong sense of agency and their desire to do well is not diminished by this. They continue to want to succeed academically, although their enjoyment of the subject is often compromised. Furthermore, pupils are aware of their own bad behaviour and are willing to accept responsibility for misdemeanours, heightening a sense of injustice when disruptions are incorrectly attributed to them. Some alienated pupils enter a further subset of the demi-reality they experience; these pupils have a significantly higher degree of conflict and lower feeling of closeness with some of their teachers. Pupils in this group have extreme feelings of alienation and injustice. They often attribute their experiences with teachers to a critical incident that occurred early on in the formation of the pupil-teacher relationship, citing this as the moment their relationship became negative. These critical incidents feature heavily in pupils' understanding of their interactions with their teachers and, if not repaired early on, are very difficult to overcome.

The next chapter presents a conclusion of the grounded theory study by addressing the credibility and application of the theory as well as exploring the limitations of the study and suggesting areas for further research.

Chapter 9 – Conclusion

9.1 – Introduction

The final chapter of this thesis will evaluate the grounded theory using Glaser and Strauss' (1967) criteria for judging the credibility and application of the theory. It will then summarise how the research contributes to knowledge in the fields of pupil-teacher relationships and alienation. It will also summarise how the research design contributes to the discourse surrounding grounded theory methodology. The chapter will continue by suggesting implications for practice before concluding with the limitations of the study and recommendations for future research.

9.2 – Credibility and Application of the Theory

Glaser and Strauss (1967), discuss how credibility and rigour can be conveyed to the reader, presenting specific criteria for evaluating the grounded theory. Glaser later expanded on the four criteria to evaluate a grounded theory study; fit, work, relevance, and modifiability (Glaser, 1978; Rieger, 2019). Glaser again reasserted these criteria in a keynote speech at the Fourth Annual Qualitative Health Research Conference (1999), and again when he republished the speech (2010), suggesting these criteria have stood the test of time for classic grounded theorists. This section will discuss how these criteria have been met throughout the study.

9.2.1 – Fit

Fit refers to the process of emergence from the conceptual codes or categories of the data (Glaser 1978). For the grounded theory to 'fit', the analyst must not use preconceived codes or categories from the extant literature (Glaser, 1978; Holton, 2008).

Although literature surrounding alienation was accessed and read as part of the taught phase of the degree, the literature review process for the research proposal was a scoping review to identify gaps in the knowledge base rather than to gain a deep understanding of extant theories (Munn et al., 2018).

This meant that the knowledge base around pupil-teacher relationships and alienation was kept at a minimum and theoretical sensitivity was gained by entering "the research setting with as few predetermined ideas as possible" (Glaser, 1978 p. 2&3). It is accepted that it is unlikely for a researcher to approach the data completely without a priori assumptions, as they must be exposed to knowledge of a field by nature of their position as an academic or professional (Luckerhoff and Guillemette, 2011). The bracketing method from phenomenology was also employed to separate the analysis from prior knowledge, ensuring analysis remained open to what was actually happening (Glaser, 1978). The existential philosophy requires the researcher to suspend any judgements (Friesen, Henriksson and Saevi, 2012 p.5) and advances the use of *epoché*, or "bracketing out" (Sartre, 2003 p. 651). This technique usually requires the removal of ontological judgements, but in this application of grounded theory, it was also used to remove epistemological judgements, allowing for distance to be maintained between existing knowledge and the data. Urquhart (2013) also suggests that grounded theory researchers can bracket out extant ideas through self-awareness, and thus not impose them on the data.

The literature review for the thesis was delayed until after ethical approval had been obtained, data collection was drawing to a close and analysis had begun. This allowed for the initial conceptual categories to be coded in vivo and for emergent properties to begin to emerge without reference to the literature. When the literature review was started, only two interviews remained, and hundreds of conceptual categories had been generated. These conceptual categories had also begun to be integrated into emergent properties. Memos were written throughout the research as a means of tying together the concepts and taking a period of reflection on the research (Glaser, 2013). Memos were also used as a technique to check codes were not theoretically derived. Before theoretical comparisons were made, when codes were applied to data that were not generated using participants' own language, a memo was written to ensure the code was not influenced by pre-existing knowledge. For example, see Memo 13 below:

A participant spoke about an incident that occurred with a teacher. The participant was late to the lesson because he had been to see Mr [name]. He described the encounter with the teacher :

"I went to see Mr [name] the other day, she [the class teacher] said 'have you got a note?' I said 'No I didn't know that I needed a note.' She said 'all that I asked for is an answer....get out.'"

This was difficult to code using in vivo codes, as the participant is recalling an incident to convey an understanding of their relationship with the teacher. I felt it was still important to code this incident, and as a gut response – it feels like the pupil is conveying a feeling of a <u>lack of mutual respect</u>, that they <u>do not feel valued</u> and that they <u>feel they have been treated unfairly.</u>

I know that mutual respect, feeling valued and a consistent approach are identified in the literature as important to pupil-teacher relationships. Although I have not yet conducted my literature review, I have read literature about this during the taught phase of my EdD and through my role as a university lecturer.

*With this knowledge of the literature in mind, I have re-read the excerpt from the participant and tried to convince myself it is **not** about <u>a lack of mutual respect</u> or the <u>pupil feeling unvalued</u> or that they <u>feel they have been treated unfairly</u>. However, I am unable to find an alternative code that I believe also fits or convince myself these three are not applicable. I believe I have bracketed out my pre-existing knowledge and so the codes will be applied.*

Memo 13 Justifying a researcher-derived code

The approaches outlined above have limited the influence of pre-existing knowledge on the generation of codes and emergence of the theory, confirming the fit of the substantive theory.

9.2.2 – Work

Work refers to how well the grounded theory can explain and interpret behaviour in the substantive field, and predict future behaviour (Glaser, 1978; Holton, 2008). Pupil participants and teacher participants were included in the study, which allowed for triangulation of the data, strengthening the theory's ability to explain and interpret behaviours. The critical realist adaptations to the grounded theory methodology outlined in chapters three and four strengthened the workability of the theory. The core category, as it began to emerge, was subject to many rounds of iterative coding and integration. Possible causative mechanisms (PCMs) and deeper level PCMs added an additional step, demanding a greater level of constant comparison which helped to ensure that the grounded theory can explain and interpret the social process.

The generative mechanism and retroductive coding required the question "what must be true for this to be the case?" to be asked when applying codes and integrating categories. This further ensured that the theory was explaining and interpreting the behaviours of the participants and the social process being investigated. Each time a code was applied, a secondary code was also applied stating whether this code had arisen from the *real, actual* or *empirical* domain of critical realism (Bhaskar, 1978; 1986). These processes helped to ensure that the final theory was situated in the real, and therefore followed critical realism's generative mechanism. This mechanism will allow for the predictability of behaviours; for example, the theory can predict the behaviour of a pupil whose teacher incorrectly assumes they have misbehaved and is subsequently admonished.

9.2.3 – Relevance

A grounded theory is relevant when its conceptual grounding lies in the data, resulting in a theory focusing on a core concern or process which has emerged in the substantive area (Holton, 2008). Establishing the core category through constant comparison and integration, followed by continual data collection until saturation is reached, is crucial to ensure the theory is relevant (Holton, 2008). Developing the core category takes time, as all coded categories should have some form of explanatory power, and the core category should be central and relate meaningfully to as many other categories as possible (Holton, 2008). The research undertaken was a case study, increasing relevance to the site in which the data was gathered. Although the theory is relevant to the secondary school where data collection took place, this does not mean the theory cannot hold relevance outside of this. Flyvbjerg (2006) and Denscombe (2010) argue that case studies can be used as a means to generalise and their transferability is often underestimated, suggesting relevance for this theory can extend past the site of collection.

9.2.4 – Modifiability

Finally, modifiability relates to the ability of the theory to be continually revised as new data emerges. This requires the theory to adapt and change as new categories emerge from new data, in turn making it more relevant (Holton, 2008). The categories underwent many changes as the data collection and analytical processes continued. Conceptual categories were renamed as more data were coded to them and through constant comparison, emergent properties experienced changes in their composition of categories (see **Appendix R**). Memos were written when changes were made to document the thought process and provide a period of reflection to ensure the theory 'works'.

As the data approached saturation and theoretical comparisons were made, the grounded theory itself underwent multiple changes. These were summarised earlier in chapter eight, demonstrating how the theory has been continually modified as data has been collected and subjected to constant comparison and theoretical comparisons. This process is described as important to the grounded theory methodology; "until an analyst is an accomplished writer, one half or more of his creativity typically occurs in reworking his initial draft" (Glaser, 1978 p 135). The resulting theory describes the experiences of the participants and has been able to incorporate all voices of participants and all data by undergoing changes as new categories have emerged.

9.3 – Contribution to Research

The theory presented in this thesis provides a significant contribution to existing knowledge. Literature relating to both contractualism and pupil-teacher relationships does not exist, providing an opportunity for discourse among researchers in this field. The literature surrounding Scanlon's contractualism (1975; 1998) tends to be philosophical and not based in empirical research (Kumar, 2010; Mardellat, 2020; Rawolle, Rowlands and Blackmore, 2017). The implicit pupil-teacher social contract can be used as a platform to continue exploring the breakdown in relationships between pupils and teachers and the subsequent phenomenon of pupil alienation from a contractualist lens.

The theory also identifies that for alienated pupils, there is an interplay between power and mutual respect suggesting that other conceptualisations of alienation (meaninglessness, normlessness and social isolation) are less relevant for pupils who display unacceptable behaviour. Instead, what has been identified as most relevant for pupils is when the social contract is breached and not repaired. This is an additional concept to those in existing literature, which only states that a lack of positive relationships can lead to maladjustment and school alienation (Fenzel, 2000; Hascher, 2003; Morinaj and Hascher, 2018).

Although mutual respect has been generally accepted as an important factor in developing positive pupil-teacher relationships (Pianta, 1999; Hughes, Gleason, and Zhang, 2005; Pianta and Stuhlman, 2004; Hadjukova et al., 2014), the literature which does link relationships and alienation tends to focus on pupils with an identified need (Gallagher, 2002; Davis and Dupper, 2004; Zabloski and Milacci, 2012), or on the teacher voice (Pianta and Stuhlman, 2004; Baker, 2006; O'Connor and McCartney, 2007). The grounded theory challenges this literature, by being derived heavily from the perspective of pupils who do not have an identified medical or special educational need, thus contributing to this gap in knowledge.

The theory, which was discovered using a critical realist lens to identify the basic social process, can also be situated within the critical realist domains. This is summarised in Figure 9.1:
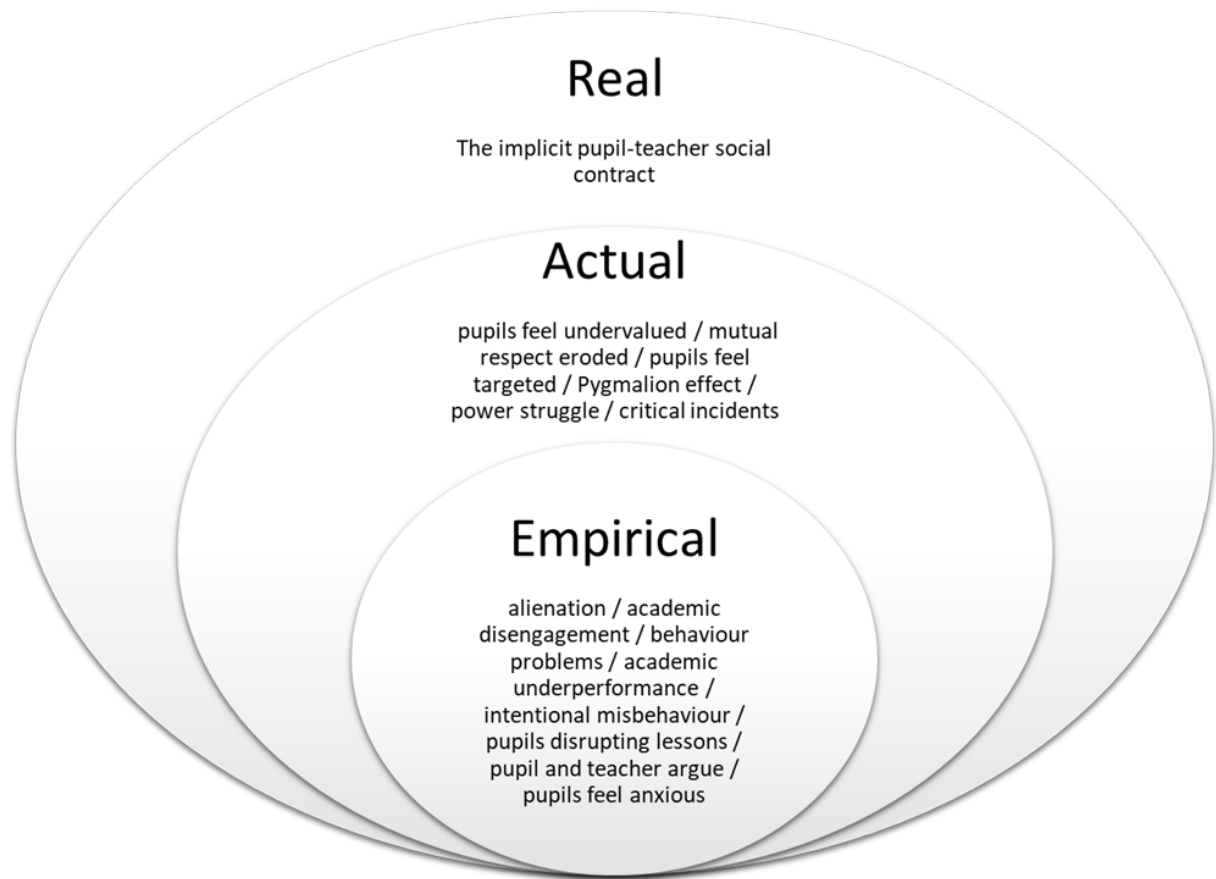
Figure 9.1 The Implicit Pupil-Teacher Social Contract situated in the critical realist philosophy

The real domain is where the substantive theory lies; it is a mechanistic structure, which generates actual events. The actual domain shows the events which have been generated by the substantive theory. The events are not necessarily all observable but are generated by the mechanisms of the pupil-teacher social contract. The empirical domain shows the observable experiences of the pupils. These experiences can be observed by outsiders, or to pupils themselves who can then verbalise and share their experiences. This model contributes to the gap in literature examining pupil-teacher relationships and alienation of pupils, by providing a mechanism detailing the social process of how pupil behaviours and actions can emerge from a breach in the implicit contract.

9.4 – Addressing the Research Aims

The implicit pupil-teacher social contact is a substantive theory, grounded in data and situated within literature which answers the research question and addresses the research aims identified in chapter three. The research question, "What *real* mechanisms exist which lead to pupils experiencing alienation from school?" has been achieved through the discovery of the implicit-pupil teacher social contract. Figure 9.1, showing how this resides in the critical realist domains of reality, demonstrates that the substantive theory is a *real* mechanism and shows the generative mechanisms driving the social process. The supporting research aims have also been achieved. The first research aim, "to explore the intersection between pupil-teacher relationships and pupil alienation from schools" is demonstrated by examining the deeper level PCMs. Power and mutual respect deeper level PCMs were discovered through exploration of pupil and teacher perspectives on relationships at school. The pupil participants had inclusion criteria, ensuring they were experiencing alienation from school to varying degrees. Selecting participants through theoretical sampling ensured only participants who would provide meaningful data to explore the phenomenon were included.

Achievement of the second research aim "to understand pupil and teacher perceptions of the mechanisms and barriers for forming positive pupil-teacher relationships" can be shown through the examination of the conceptual categories and emergent properties. These were developed by exploring pupil and teacher perspectives on relationships. Participants spoke freely, in a safe environment, about positive and negative relationships, giving detail on why they believed different relationships had varying degrees of positive and negative aspects.

The construction of the research design provides evidence for the achievement of the third research aim, "to give voice to pupils' perceptions of their experiences of alienation and pupil-teacher relationships". Pupil voices were listened to and used in the generation of the theory. Pupils were asked broad questions and given the time and opportunity to talk at length about their experiences

of relationships at school. Teacher participants provided a different perspective, whilst verifying the experiences of pupil participants.

Achievement of the final research aim "to fulfil the emancipatory nature of the critical realist grounded theory methodology" can be confirmed by the discovery of the grounded theory. The substantive theory was used to develop a series of recommended strategies for the professional development of trainee teachers, early career teachers and those who are struggling to form and maintain positive pupil-teacher relationships. These have been shared with the senior leaders of the school where data were collected and subsequently with the staff.

This shows how the care taken in the research design allowed for the research question and aims to be addressed. The substantive theory has emerged from a thorough exploration of the relationships between teachers and pupils who are alienated from school. It has identified that the quality of pupil-teacher relationships plays an integral part in pupil alienation. Emerging from this is the implicit social contract which, when breached, begins a process where relationships are eroded, or not formed, resulting in pupils experiencing alienation. The mechanisms and barriers for forming positive pupil-teacher relationships have been identified and categorised throughout chapters five, six and seven, culminating in the discovery of two deeper level possible causative mechanisms.

These mechanisms of 'mutual respect' and 'power' were found to be *real* (Bhaskar, 1978) mechanisms that resulted in a variety of *empirical* behaviours observed during data collection. Relationships between pupils and teachers were found to be complicated and rested upon an implicit social contract. The contract is rooted in mutual respect and rests upon elements of trust and value that each actor places on the other. The power differential in the relationship means that when a pupil believes the teacher has violated the terms of the contract, the consequences are greater than when the teacher believes the pupil has breached it.

9.5 – Professional Contribution

The professional implications of the theory have relevance for the site of the case study, and potentially further. The senior leadership team at the secondary school where data were collected can use the theory to inform the professional development of their staff. At the time the data was collected, a newly appointed deputy head was tasked with reforming the behaviour management policy, which was considered to be an ongoing task. The senior leadership team hoped that the findings presented in this thesis could provide a research-informed approach to behaviour management. By understanding the pupil perspective on pupil-teacher relationships, the leadership team would be able to plan professional development for staff and write a behaviour policy which empowers students in an attempt to reduce alienation and increase pupil attainment.

Beyond this, multi-academy trusts and educational policymakers who are interested in driving forward an inclusion agenda, by enabling as many pupils as possible to remain engaged in their learning could benefit from this research. Understanding the implicit contract and potential implications a critical incident can have on a pupil's academic trajectory, multi-organisational or national initiatives could be put in place which can reduce pupil alienation from schools.

There are also implications for the field of initial teacher education. Trainee teachers, by definition, are new to the profession and face a steep learning curve, frequently citing behaviour management as a fear and ongoing area for development (Bromfield, 2006). The findings can help trainee teachers to quickly establish positive pupil-teacher relationships, enhancing the experience of both pupils and teachers. This would also apply when trainee teachers enter the profession as early career teachers and can be used to inform professional development opportunities for all early career teachers.

A summary of strategies for trainee and early career teachers to be included in their professional development are below:

Strategies identified from this study, and already previously identified in extant literature. It is likely teachers will already be familiar with these:

- Make behaviour expectations explicit.
- Do not label pupils according to previous or expected behaviour.
- Show a social and emotional interest in your pupils – demonstrate that you value and respect them.

Strategies identified from this study, and which are directly linked to the theoretical model discovered in this study. It is likely teachers will not already be familiar with these:

- Be aware of non-verbal cues that could signal low expectations of pupils.
- Be aware of actions that could signal a breach in the implicit social contract.
- If a pupil is presenting with difficult behaviour, take time to reflect on this and ask the following questions:
  - Are your actions implying low academic expectations?
  - Are your actions implying low behavioural expectations?
  - Do you assume disruption starts with certain pupils?
  - Has there been an incident that a pupil might have deemed critical?
  - Have you attempted to repair the breached contract? – This could be an apology or an explanation of your actions.

9.6 – Contribution to Grounded Theory Discourse

The grounded theory methodology presented in this thesis contributes to an emerging discussion applying critical realism to grounded theory methodology. There is still a paucity of literature on the subject and three cases are presented to illustrate how the grounded theory used in this thesis provides a valuable addition to the methodological debate.

Firstly, the literature agrees that the mode of reasoning for critical realist grounded theory should be retroduction (Blaikie, 2007; Oliver 2012; Belfrage and Hauf 2017; Hoddy, 2019; Bunt, 2018), but retroductive coding, like that described in chapters three and four, only exists in a book chapter published as a result of this study. Hoddy's (2018) framework is most similar but falls short of proposing a mechanism for retroductive coding. He uses Corbin and Strauss's axial coding (2008) techniques to employ retroductive reasoning. The methodology in this thesis, instead, advances a critical realist approach to classic grounded theory and provides a mechanism for retroductive coding

to take place. This occurs after open coding and includes methods such as coding for the critical realist domain of reality alongside all codes to focus the researcher on the emergent nature of critical realism.

Secondly, the sole use of classic grounded theory also challenges the small volume of literature that exists on this topic. Classic grounded theory is not used solely in the extant literature, with researchers preferring to use a blend of approaches to make their argument (Oliver, 2012; Belfrage and Hauf, 2017; Hoddy, 2018; Bunt, 2018). Furthermore, only Hoddy (2018) uses critical realist grounded theory for empirical research, whilst the others are discussion pieces presenting their case. As the methodology required a lot of development and did not exist already in the literature, a book chapter was written outlining the approach, which was accepted and published (Looker, Vickers and Kington, 2021). The peer review and publishing process indicates that this approach has potential and has already begun its contribution to discourse. Furthermore, Glaser was approached with a copy of the book chapter and he was keen to read it. A positive response was received from Prof. Alvita, the editor of Glaser's journal 'The Grounded Theory Review'. Prof Alvita commented that the approach was very interesting and confirmed that Glaser would allow for a critical realist approach to grounded theory (see **Appendix S**).

The third contribution to research design centres on educational research. As described above, the critical realist grounded theory discussion is fledgling and, as such, there has been a lack of empirical research conducted using this methodology. The methodology in chapter three proposes a usable framework for academics to undertake research in schools. It is argued that critical realist grounded theory is particularly of interest to those wishing to explore open social structures, like schools (Scott, 2014). Furthermore, the normative intent of critical realism and its generative mechanism enables research to be conducted where there is an emancipatory objective, like much of the research in education. A paper submitted to the British Educational Research Association (BERA) outlining how the critical realist grounded theory methodology is suited for educational research was accepted and presented at the 2021 annual conference in September as part of BERA's research methodology

special interest group. This further demonstrates the contribution this thesis makes to grounded theory discourse.

9.7 – Reflections

The strengths in this study lie in the methodological rigour maintained throughout the process, resulting in a grounded theory that is fit for purpose, works, has resonance and is modifiable. However, there are some limitations of the study, which are outlined below.

Firstly, although classic grounded theory requires the researcher to approach the data with a tabula rasa, and attempts were made to do this, it could not be done wholly. The EdD process, involving a taught phase, required literature to be accessed before the move to the thesis stage. This was a necessary step, which allowed for the production and justification of research questions and ensured there was a gap in knowledge. Steps were taken to address this which included conducting a scoping review, rather than a critical literature review, delaying the literature review of the thesis until the majority of data had been collected and conceptual categories had been coded, and writing memos throughout to ensure pre-existing knowledge was bracketed out during data analysis as much as possible. I believe these steps were successful, but the possibility of being clouded by this knowledge cannot be completely ruled out.

Secondly, there may have been a bias when recruiting teacher participants; it is likely that only teachers who believed they had positive pupil-teacher relationships agreed to participate in interviews. There were many teachers who completed the Student-Teacher Relationship Scale, identifying negative pupil-teacher relationships, but who did not consent to interviews. This meant that the pupil participant perspectives on stories could not be verified by the teachers involved in the incidents. Although young people have been shown to act as reliable witnesses (Tucker, 2011; Trotman, Martyn and Tucker, 2012), the study would have benefitted from hearing the perspectives of teachers who have negative relationships with pupils.

Thirdly, the diversity of the participants was lacking. All teacher participants were white British females, and ten out of twelve student participants were white British boys; the other two were white British girls. The lack of ethnic diversity was representative of the school, but the gender differences were not. However, boys are overrepresented in the literature around alienated school children (Grecu, Hascher and Hadjar, 2019) and research indicates they are more at risk of academic disparity than girls (Schultz and Rubel, 2011). This suggests the lack of gender diversity might not be as large a limitation as originally thought. The lack of ethnic diversity, although representative of the school, still presents a problem. However, Schultz and Rubel's (2011) study, which included boys from white, Latino and African-American backgrounds found that they all experienced alienation in a similar way. It is possible, therefore, that this lack of diversity does not prevent the findings and grounded theory from being applicable in a broader, more diverse context.

Finally, the number of Student-Teacher Relationship Scale questionnaires which were returned could have been greater. There were 55 questionnaires returned for 12 pupils, giving a mean of 4.6 questionnaires returned per pupil. Although the data gathered did allow for descriptive statistics to be used to analyse the data, and it has been argued that a t-test can be used for extremely small sample sizes (as low as n=4) (De Winter, 2013), a greater sample size would have been preferable.

9.8 – Recommendations for Future Research

One of the limitations of the study was the potential selection bias, where teachers who agreed to interviews were only those who perceived themselves as having positive relationships with pupils, including those who were participants. This restricted the ability for the exploration of the varying accounts of the same incident from both a teacher and pupil perspective. This would be an interesting avenue for further research and provide an opportunity to explore how each actor recalls incidents. The data gathered from this inquiry would be an opportunity to challenge the voices of pupil participants and could potentially change the substance of the implicit pupil-teacher social contract to be more balanced between teachers' and pupils' voices.

The phenomenon of critical incidents arose through data analysis; however, this was not identified in the literature review or whilst data collection was ongoing. Further research could be conducted using a critical incident technique (Flanagan, 1954; Tripp, 1993; Bott and Tourish, 2016) to explore these incidents in greater detail. This would provide additional information on how many critical incidents pupils have experienced, address why they are deemed critical, and provide suggestions for professional practice regarding how to mitigate against the potentially damaging outcomes.

Finally, the development of the implicit pupil-teacher social contract theory could be extended and developed further by conducting more research involving a wider selection of participants from a broader range of backgrounds and schools across the United Kingdom and internationally. This could take the form of comparative analysis to "compare conceptual units of a theory" (Glaser, 1978 p.150). Glaser's use of the term *comparative analysis* refers to the generation of a theory as opposed to its other use which describes the verification of a hypothesis. As discussed earlier, the theory is modifiable. Whilst this is a crucial aspect of a classic grounded theory, it also means that grounded theories only ever receive partial closure (Giske and Artinian, 2007) as all grounded theories have potential for further development (Glaser, 1978). Employing extensive use of the comparative analysis techniques outlined by Glaser (1978) the theory could continue to be modified and be moved from a substantive theory to a formal theory, confirming the fit, workability, relevance and modifiability of the substantive theory.

9.9 – Concluding Remarks

This study has offered contributions to two distinct research areas. Firstly, it developed and employed a unique approach to grounded theory methodology, taking critical realism as its philosophical underpinning. This provided a rationale and framework for future research in education where there is an emancipatory objective and affords the opportunity for a theory to be developed which can offer practical strategies to address observed inequalities. Secondly, it has discovered a substantive theory, presented as the implicit pupil-teacher social contract, grounded in the data from pupil and teacher

participants. This theory has discovered that mutual respect and power are central to the pupil-teacher social contract and that when pupils perceive it to have been breached by a teacher, they are more likely to experience alienation. Mutual respect was found to be of greater importance than the extant research has identified. Although it has previously been accepted as an important aspect of pupil-teacher relationships, it was not until this study that its significance relating to the implicit social contract has been identified.

The substantive theory proposes that positive relationships are characterised by the respect pupils and teachers hold for one another. It states that in positive relationships, pupils and teachers will only act in a way that they believe can be justified to each other. When the relationships are negative, this level of respect is absent, and so pupils are more likely to feel greater degrees of alienation. Furthermore, pupils who are identified as having more conflictual and less close relationships with their teachers experience a greater degree of alienation than their peers. The balance of power was found to be of equal importance to maintaining the social contract as mutual respect. When pupils feel powerless, they maintain a high degree of academic agency yet experience circumstances where they feel unable to enact this. Critical incidents were found to be an important aspect of the power differential between pupils and teachers. Pupils who experience negative relationships with their teachers often cited an incident early on in their relationship that they believed was the catalyst or initial cause of their poor relationship. Pupils had focused on these incidents and rendered them critical, as they were able to recall them in detail long after the event had passed.

This thesis has used the substantive theory and experiences shared by pupils and teachers to develop a series of strategies which are useful for teachers, trainee teachers and senior leadership teams. The strategies range from those which call for a strengthening of approaches already commonly shared with teachers to methods that require teachers to take time to reflect on their relationships with their pupils. This requires teachers to identify if any of their actions have signalled a breach of the implicit contract and afford them the opportunity to begin to repair it.

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Appendices

Appendix A - Literature Searches

Searching for the full title of the thesis: 23 results, none are relevant.

Searching for full title without "grounded theory": 34 results – only 1 is relevant

Subsequent search strategy:

Search 1	
	"pupil*" OR "children" OR "student*" OR "learner*"
AND	"alienation" OR "isolation" OR "helplessness" OR "powerlessness" OR "meaninglessness" OR "social inclusion" OR "engagement in learning" OR "social inclusivity" OR "empowered*"
AND	"teacher-student relationship*" OR "teacher-pupil relationship" OR "teacher*" OR "relationship*" OR "rapport"
Limiters	Full text, Peer-reviewed, 2009-current, academic journals and books, education, English language
Results	60,646

Search 2	
	"pupil*" OR "student*" OR "learner*"
AND	"alienation" OR "isolation" OR"social inclusion" OR "engagement in learning"
AND	"teacher-student relationship*" OR "teacher-pupil relationship" OR "teacher*" OR "relationship*"
Limiters	Full text, Peer-reviewed, 2009-current, academic journals and books, education, English language
Results	44,331

Search 3	
	"pupil*" OR "student*" OR "learner*"
AND	"alienation" OR "isolation" OR "social inclusion" OR "engagement in learning"
AND	"teacher-student relationship*" OR "teacher-pupil relationship" OR "teacher*" OR "relationship*"
AND	"school" OR "learning" or "classroom"
Limiters	Full text, Peer-reviewed, 2009-current, academic journals and books, education, English language
Results	37,643

From first three searches, top, most relevant, articles read, and search strategy was tweaked based on initial reading:

- Learner didn't seem relevant
- Isolation and social inclusion changed to social isolation – based on initial reading
- Engagement in learning changed to estrangement
- Teacher and relationship removed as bring back too many results
- Classroom bringing back irrelevant results too
-

Search 4	
	"pupil*" OR "student*"
AND	"alienation" OR " social isolation" OR "estrangement"
AND	"teacher-student relationship*" OR "teacher-pupil relationship"
AND	"school" OR "learning"
Limiters	Full text, Peer-reviewed, 2009-current, academic journals and books, education, English language Abstracts only
Results	700
Included	47 included initially. After reading, ==28 relevant==

Now some relevant literature has been identified, one article (Hascher and Hadjar, 2018) make suggestions for searches. These were used for search 5:

Search 5	
	"school alienation"
OR	"student alienation"
Limiters	Full text, Peer-reviewed, 2009-current, academic journals and books, education, English language Abstracts only
Results	251
Included	==Additional 5== (others found in previous search)

This was compared against articles already included in the lit review, and additional ones added (5).

Excluding articles which relate to:
- Subject specific teaching (e.g. teaching of grammar)
- Primary school
- Online learning
- Postgraduate learning
- SEND specific
- Teacher centric
- Peer relationships
- Biology articles – science papers

Additional searches to ensure all articles included.

Estrangement/social isolation not searched for additionally, as these terms were included in the original search.

Search 6	
	"powerlessness"
AND	"alienation"
AND	"School"
Limiters	Full text, Peer-reviewed, 2009-current, academic journals and books, education, English language Abstracts only
Exclusion Criteria	Focussed on marginal groups of students only Teacher alienation
Results	319
Included	19 additional included initially. After reading, 15 relevant

Search 7	
	"meaninglessness"
AND	"alienation"
AND	"School"
Limiters	Full text, Peer-reviewed, 2009-current, academic journals and books, education, English language Abstracts only
Exclusion Criteria	Focussed on marginal groups of students only Teacher alienation
Results	86
Included	4 additional included initially. After reading, 3 relevant

Search 8	
	"normlessness"
AND	"alienation"
AND	"School"
Limiters	Full text, Peer-reviewed, 2009-current, academic journals and books, education, English language Abstracts only
Exclusion Criteria	Focussed on marginal groups of students only Teacher alienation
Results	32
Included	0 additional

Some additional literature was also included. This was identified from various sources:

- Reading from the taught phase of the degree
- Reference lists of articles already included
- Pre-existing knowledge acquired through membership of a research group and writing a book chapter for publication

University
of Worcester

HUMANITIES, ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (HASSREC)
CONFIRMATION OF APPROVAL

30 January 2018

PROJECT TITLE: A grounded theory case study exploring the link between pupil-teacher
                     relationships and pupil alienation from the secondary classroom.

REC CODE: HCA17180030-R

Dear Ben,

Thank you for your application for full review ethical approval to the Humanities, Arts & Social
Sciences Research Ethics Committee on the 4 January 2018 and subsequent revised application
received on the 25 January 2018.

Your application has been reviewed in accordance with the University of Worcester Ethics Policy and
in compliance with the Standard Operating Procedures for proportionate ethical review.

The outcome of the review is that the Committee is now happy to grant this project ethical approval
to proceed.

Your research must be undertaken as set out in the approved application for the approval to be valid.
You must review your answers to the checklist on an ongoing basis and resubmit for approval where
you intend to deviate from the approved research. Any major deviation from the approved application
will require a new application for approval.

As part of the University Ethic Policy, the University Research Committees audit of a random sample
of approved research. You may be required to complete a questionnaire about your research.

Yours sincerely,

Deputy Chair of the Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HASSREC)
Ethics@worc.ac.uk

█

Ben Looker
Science Tutor,
University of Worcester,
Henwick Grove,
Worcester
WR2 6AJ

27 February 2018

Dear Mr Looker

Thank you for our meeting today in which we discussed your proposal to engage in Doctoral research into the alienation from learning of secondary school students, using █ as a research centre, the work being based on grounded theory. The whole premise of the research is of huge relevance to us as a school and to secondary education in England generally, and as such is a fantastic opportunity for the school.

I would like to express my thanks for your approach to us with this offer, and to formally record our willingness and enthusiasm for you to engage in this research at the school. Having engaged in Masters Dissertation study with the University of Worcester's Institute of Education, also through secondary school-based research, I am fully cognisant of both the ethical and practical challenges you will face in conducting this research. I will do everything I can to support you in this work and to ensure you are able to conduct meaningful research, and look forward to our strengthening partnership with the University.

Yours sincerely

█

Head Teacher

Research

Ben Looker – University of Worcester

A case study exploring the link between student-teacher relationships and student integration the secondary school.

Exploring the link between student-teacher relationships and student interaction with learning

Mechanisms which can lead to students and teachers forming effective relationships

How student perceive barriers to engaging with school

If I participate, how will it look?
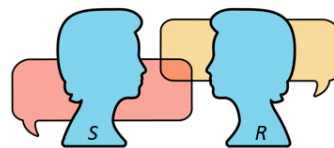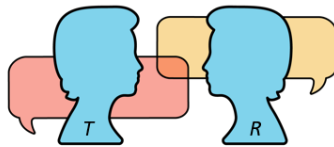
Ethical Considerations

<u>Participant Information Sheet - Staff</u>

Title of Project:

A grounded theory case study exploring the link between pupil-teacher relationships and pupil integration in the secondary school.

Who am I?

My name is Ben Looker and I am a lecturer at the University of Worcester who trains science teachers. I am completing a doctorate in education whilst working at the university.

Invitation

I would like to invite you to take part in a research project. Before you decide whether to take part it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read this carefully and ask the researcher if you have any questions. You will have at least 2 days to decide if you want to take part.

What is the purpose of the study?

This study aims to investigate the importance of pupil-teacher relationships and the role they play in advancing the learning and interaction of pupils in a school. It has the following research aims:

- To explore links between pupil-teacher relationships and pupil integration in schools
- To understand the mechanisms which can lead to pupils and teachers forming effective relationships
- The understand how pupils perceive barriers to engaging with learning in a school setting

What would taking part involve?

If you agree to take part you will be asked to be involved in one or more of the following activities:

Complete a questionnaire about the relationship between you and some pupils who you teach.

Take part in an interview where you will be asked questions by the researcher around the topic highlighted above. The interview may take up to 60 minutes of your time. The research will be carried out at your school or another appropriate site and data will be audio recorded.

Have a lesson observed by the researcher. The lesson observation focus is on pupil/teacher relationships.

Agreeing to take part does not mean you agree to all of these activities; it is up to your discretion.

Do I have to take part?

No. It is up to you to decide whether or not you want to take part in this study. Taking part in one activity does not mean that you would have to take part in any follow up activities. Please take your time to decide; I will wait for at least 2 days before asking for your decision. You can decide not to take part or to withdraw from the study at any point, up to 14 days after all data has been collected. If you wish to have your data withdrawn, please contact the researcher with your participant

number and your data will not be used. If you do decide to take part you will be asked to sign a consent form.

Are there any disadvantages or risks to taking part?

<u>What are the possible risks of taking part?</u>

Some individuals may find it distressing to talk about their past and present experiences. If this happens, you will have the option to discontinue the interview if you wish. An opportunity to debrief will be given at the end of your interview, and if necessary, you may be signposted to appropriate services for further support.

<u>What are the possible benefits of taking part?</u>

This is an opportunity that could be personally rewarding and enjoyable as you will be able to talk about your area of practice and share your professional experiences. It is hoped that the findings from this research will help us to understand more about how pupil-teacher relationships are formed and how they contribute to effective participation of pupils in school life.

Will the information I give stay confidential?

Everything you say/report is confidential unless you say something which indicates that you or someone else is at risk of harm. I would discuss this with you before telling anyone else. The information you give will be used for an EdD thesis and possibly be used for other research output. It will not be possible to identify you from any other dissemination activities. Personal identifiable information (e.g. name and contact details) will be securely stored and kept until the project ends where it will then be securely disposed of. The research data (e.g. interview transcripts) will be securely stored.

What will happen to the results of the research study?

This research is being carried out as part of doctoral research at the University of Worcester. The findings of this study will be reported as part of my thesis and may also be published in academic journals or at conferences.

If you wish to receive a summary of the research findings please contact the researcher.

Who is organising the research?

This research has been approved by the University of Worcester Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HASSREC).

What happens next?

Please keep this information sheet. If you do decide to take part, please contact the researcher using the details below.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information

If you decide to take part or you have any questions, concerns or complaints about this study please contact one of the research team using the details below.

Researcher
Ben Looker
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Lead Supervisor
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University of Worcester
Bredon Building 011
St Johns Campus
Worcester
WR2 6AJ
a.kington@worc.ac.uk

If you would like to speak to an independent person who is not a member of the research team, please contact Louise Heath at the University of Worcester, using the following details:

Louise Heath
Secretary to the HASSREC
Graduate Research School
University of Worcester
Henwick Grove
Worcester
WR2 6AJ
01905 85 5240
l.heath@worc.ac.uk

University of Worcester

Title of Project:

A grounded theory case study exploring the link between pupil-teacher relationships and pupil integration in the secondary school.

Who am I?

My name is Ben Looker and I am a lecturer at the University of Worcester who trains science teachers. I am completing a doctorate in education whilst working at the university.

Invitation

I would like to invite your child to take part in a research project. Before you decide whether to give consent for them to take part it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read this carefully and ask the researcher if you have any questions. Please talk to your child about whether they would like to take part. You will have at least 2 days to decide if you wish to give consent.

What is the purpose of the study?

This study aims to investigate the importance of pupil-teacher relationships and the role they play in advancing the learning and interaction of pupils in a school. It has the following research aims:

- To explore links between pupil-teacher relationships and pupil integration in schools
- To understand the mechanisms which can lead to pupils and teachers forming effective relationships
- The understand how pupils perceive barriers to engaging with learning in a school setting

What would taking part involve?

If you agree to take part your child will be asked to be involved in one or more of the following activities:

Take part in an interview where they will be asked questions by the researcher around the topic highlighted above. The interview may take up to 60 minutes of their time. The research will be carried out at school and will be audio recorded.

Have a lesson observed by the researcher. The lesson observation focus is on pupil/teacher relationships.

Agreeing to take part does not mean you agree to all activities; it is your child's decision.

Do I have to give consent?

No. It is up to you to decide whether or not you want to give consent. If your child takes part in one activity, it does not mean that they would have to take part in any follow up activities. Please take your time to decide; I will wait for at least 2 days before asking for your decision. You¸ or your child can decide not to take part or to withdraw from the study at any point up to 14 days after all data is collected. If you wish to have data withdrawn, please contact the researcher with your child's

participant number and the data will not be used. If you do decide to give consent you will be asked to sign a consent form. Your child will also be asked to sign a consent form.

Are there any disadvantages or risks to taking part?

<u>What are the possible risks of taking part?</u>

Some individuals may find it distressing to talk about their past and present experiences. If this happens, your child will have the option to discontinue the interview. An opportunity to debrief will be given at the end of the interview, and if necessary, they may be signposted to appropriate services for further support.

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This is an opportunity that could be personally rewarding and enjoyable as your child will be able to talk about their experiences. It is hoped that the findings from this research will help us to understand more about how pupil-teacher relationships are formed and how they contribute to effective participation of pupils in school life.

Will the information I give stay confidential?

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Thank you for taking the time to read this information

If you decide to give consent for your child to part or you have any questions, concerns or complaints about this study please contact one of the research team using the details below.

Researcher	Lead Supervisor
Ben Looker	Professor Alison Kington
University of Worcester	University of Worcester
Binyon Building 1139	Bredon Building 011
St Johns Campus	St Johns Campus
Worcester	Worcester
WR2 6AJ	WR2 6AJ
b.looker@worc.ac.uk	a.kington@worc.ac.uk

If you would like to speak to an independent person who is not a member of the research team, please contact Louise Heath at the University of Worcester, using the following details:

Louise Heath
Secretary to the HASSREC
Graduate Research School
University of Worcester
Henwick Grove
Worcester
WR2 6AJ
01905 85 5240
l.heath@worc.ac.uk

University of Worcester

Title of Project:

A study exploring the link between pupil-teacher relationships and progress at school.

Who am I?

My name is Ben Looker and I am a lecturer at the University of Worcester who trains science teachers. I am completing a doctorate in education whilst working at the university.

Invitation

I would like to invite you to take part in a research project. Before you decide whether to take part it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read this carefully and ask the researcher if you have any questions. You will have at least 2 days to decide if you want to take part.

What is the purpose of the study?

This study aims to investigate the importance of pupil-teacher relationships. It wants to find out how the professional relationships help pupils to learn and interact in school. It has the following aims:

- To explore links between pupil-teacher relationships and pupil integration in schools
- To understand the mechanisms which can lead to pupils and teachers forming effective relationships
- The understand how pupils perceive barriers to engaging with learning in a school setting

What would taking part involve?

If you agree to take part you will be interviewed where you will be asked questions by the researcher around the topic highlighted above. The interview may take up to 60 minutes of your time. The interview will be carried out at your school and will be audio recorded.

It is possible you might be asked if a lesson you are in could be observed or if you would take part in a follow up interview. You do not have to do this; it is your decision.

Do I have to take part?

No. It is up to you to decide whether or not you want to take part in this study. Taking part in the first interview does not mean that you would have to take part in any follow up activities.

Please take your time to decide; I will wait for at least 2 days before asking for your decision. You can decide not to take part or to withdraw from the study. You have up to 14 days after all data has been collected to withdraw from the study.

If you wish to have your data taken out of the study, please contact the researcher with your participant number and your data will not be used. If you do decide to take part you will be asked to sign a consent form.

Are there any disadvantages or risks to taking part?

<u>What are the possible risks of taking part?</u>

Some people may find it hard to talk about their past and present experiences. If this happens, you will have the option to stop the interview if you wish. An opportunity to debrief will be given at the end of your interview. If you feel like you need support, contact details for appropriate services will be available.

<u>What are the possible benefits of taking part?</u>

This is an opportunity that could be personally rewarding and enjoyable. You will be able to talk about your experiences at school. It is hoped that the findings from this research will help us to understand more about how pupil-teacher relationships are formed and how they contribute to effective learning.

Will the information I give stay confidential?

Everything you say/report is confidential unless you tell say something which indicates that you or someone else is at risk of harm. I would discuss this with you before telling anyone else. The information you give will be used for an EdD thesis and possibly be used for other research output. It will not be possible to identify you from any output. You name and contact details will be securely stored and kept until the project ends where it will then be securely disposed of. The research data (e.g. interview transcripts) will be securely stored.

What will happen to the results of the research study?

This research is being carried out as part of doctoral research at the University of Worcester. The findings of this study will be reported as part of my thesis and may also be published in academic journals or at conferences.

If you wish to receive a summary of the research findings please contact the researcher.

Who is organising the research?

This research has been approved by the University of Worcester Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HASSREC).

What happens next?

Please keep this information sheet. If you do decide to take part, please contact the researcher using the details below.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information

If you decide to take part or you have any questions, concerns or complaints about this study please contact one of the research team using the details below.

Research Student
Ben Looker
University of Worcester
Binyon Building 1139
St Johns Campus
Worcester
WR2 6AJ
b.looker@worc.ac.uk

Lead Supervisor
Professor Alison Kington
University of Worcester
Bredon Building 011
St Johns Campus
Worcester
WR2 6AJ
a.kington@worc.ac.uk

If you would like to speak to an independent person who is not a member of the research team, please contact Louise Heath at the University of Worcester, using the following details:

Louise Heath
Secretary to the HASSREC
Graduate Research School
University of Worcester
Henwick Grove
Worcester
WR2 6AJ
01905 85 5240
l.heath@worc.ac.uk

Informed Consent Form - Staff

University of Worcester

Project title: A grounded theory case study exploring the link between pupil-teacher relationships and pupil integration in the secondary school.

Researcher: Benjamin Looker

I, the undersigned, confirm that (please initial boxes as appropriate):

1.	I have read and understood the information about the project, as provided in the Information Sheet dated _____.	
2.	I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about the project and my participation.	
3.	I voluntarily agree to participate in the project.	
4.	I understand I have the right to withdraw from the research without the need to give reasons and that I will not be penalised for withdrawing nor will I be questioned on why I have withdrawn. I have up to 14 days after the data collection period has ended to withdraw.	
5.	The procedures regarding confidentiality have been clearly explained (e.g. use of names, pseudonyms, anonymisation of data, etc.) to me.	
6.	If applicable, separate terms of consent for interviews, audio, video or other forms of data collection have been explained and provided to me.	
7.	The use of the data in research, publications, sharing and archiving has been explained to me.	
8.	I understand that other researchers will have access to this data only if they agree to preserve the confidentiality of the data and if they agree to the terms I have specified in this form.	
9.	I know my name will not be used in this project.	
10.	The data management and disposal plan has been made clear to me	
11.	I, along with the Researcher, agree to sign and date this informed consent form.	

Participant:

_____   _____   _____
Name of Participant   Signature   Date

Researcher:

_____   _____   _____
Name of Researcher   Signature   Date

University
of Worcester

Project title: A study exploring the link between pupil-teacher relationships and progress at school.

Researcher: Benjamin Looker

I, the undersigned, confirm that (please initial boxes as appropriate):

1.	I have read and understood the information about the project, as provided in the Information Sheet dated _____.	
2.	I have had the chance to ask questions about the project and how my child can be involved.	
3.	I agree to allow my child to make the decision to take part in the project.	
4.	I understand I have the right to withdraw my consent from the research without having to give reasons. I know that I will not be questioned on why I have withdrawn consent. I have up to 14 days after the data collection period has ended to withdraw my consent.	
5.	The term 'confidentiality' has been clearly explained (e.g. use of pseudonyms, anonymising the data, etc.) to me.	
6.	Terms of consent for audio-recorded interviews and other forms of data collection have been explained and provided to me.	
7.	How the data might be used in research and publications has been explained to me. It has also been explained how the data might be shared and stored.	
8.	I understand that some other researchers will have access to this data. I know that this will only happen if they agree to keep the data confidential and to all the terms specified in this form.	
9.	I know neither my name, nor my child's name will be used in this project.	
10.	The data management and disposal plan has been made clear to me	
11.	I agree to sign and date this informed consent form. I know the researcher is also agreeing to sign and date this form too.	

Parent:

_____   _____   _____
Name of Parent   Signature   Date

_____
Name of Pupil

Researcher:

_____   _____   _____
Name of Researcher   Signature   Date

Project title: A study exploring the link between pupil-teacher relationships and progress at school.

Researcher: Benjamin Looker

I, the undersigned, confirm that (please initial boxes as appropriate):

1.	I have read and understood the information about the project, as provided in the Information Sheet dated _____.	
2.	I have had the chance to ask questions about the project and how I can be involved.	
3.	It is fully my decision take part in the project. (I volunteer).	
4.	I understand I have the right to withdraw from the research without having to give reasons. I know that I will not be in trouble for withdrawing and I will not be questioned on why I have withdrawn. I have up to 14 days after all data is collected to withdraw.	
5.	The term 'confidentiality' has been clearly explained (e.g. use of pseudonyms, anonymising the data, etc.) to me.	
6.	Terms of consent for audio-recorded interviews and other forms of data collection have been explained and provided to me.	
7.	How the data might be used in research and publications has been explained to me. It has also been explained how the data might be shared and stored.	
8.	I understand that some other researchers will have access to this data. I know that this will only happen if they agree to keep the data confidential and to all the terms specified in this form.	
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11.	I agree to sign and date this informed consent form. I know the researcher is also agreeing to sign and date this form too.	

Participant:

_____   _____   _____
Name of Participant   Signature   Date

Researcher:

_____   _____   _____
Name of Researcher   Signature   Date

Research

Ben Looker – University of Worcester

Intro (slide 1 & 2)

Ben from Worcester University will be doing some research – specifically looking to see if there is a link between good relationships with teachers and how students join in at school.

Exploring the link between student-teacher relationships and how students join in at secondary school.

Exploring how student-teacher relationships impact learning in the classroom

Looking at the ways students and teachers form effective relationships

The barriers students face when engaging with learning

Three areas

The three areas which the research will look at are: classroom, how students and teachers build working relationships and any barriers children face to beginning to learn.

If I participate, how will it look?
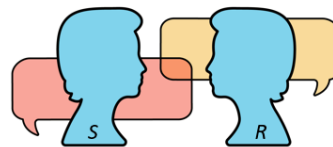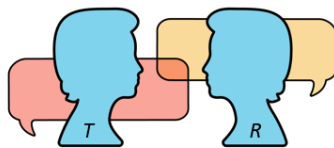
How will participating look?

- Anyone participating will have to give their consent – they cannot be forced to participate. Parents will have to give consent too.

- There will be interviews with the researchers, possibly some lesson observations (the researcher will also be interviewing teachers)

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations

- All data is stored securely. Everything is anonymous, students will be referred to by a participant number.
- No questions will be asked which intend to cause harm or damage to students – all interviews are recorded for the safety of researcher and participants.
- Everything is confidential – the researcher cannot tell anyone else what you have said, unless something is shared which is a child protection issue.

STUDENT-TEACHER RELATIONSHIP SCALE – SHORT FORM

Robert C. Pianta

Original Text

Child: _____ Teacher:_____
Grade:_____

Please reflect on the degree to which each of the following statements currently applies to your relationship with this child. Using the scale below, circle the appropriate number for each item.

Definitely does not apply 1	Not really 2	Neutral, not sure 3	Applies somewhat 4	Definitely applies 5

1.	I share an affectionate, warm relationship with this child.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	This child and I always seem to be struggling with each other.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	If upset, this child will seek comfort from me.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	This child is uncomfortable with physical affection or touch from me.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	This child values his/her relationship with me.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	When I praise this child, he/she beams with pride.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	This child spontaneously shares information about himself/herself.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	This child easily becomes angry with me.	1	2	3	4	5
9.	It is easy to be in tune with what this child is feeling.	1	2	3	4	5
10.	This child remains angry or is resistant after being disciplined.	1	2	3	4	5
11.	Dealing with this child drains my energy	1	2	3	4	5
12.	When this child is in a bad mood, I know we're in for a long and difficult day.	1	2	3	4	5
13.	This child's feelings toward me can be unpredictable or can change suddenly.	1	2	3	4	5
14.	This child is sneaky or manipulative with me.	1	2	3	4	5
15.	This child openly shares his/her feelings and experiences with me.	1	2	3	4	5

STUDENT-TEACHER RELATIONSHIP SCALE – SHORT FORM

Robert C. Pianta

> Modified Text (all changes are in red)

Child: _____ Teacher:_____

Grade:_____

Please reflect on the degree to which each of the following statements currently applies to your relationship with this child. Using the scale below, circle the appropriate number for each item.

Definitely does not apply 1	Not really 2	Neutral, not sure 3	Applies somewhat 4	Definitely applies 5

I share an affectionate, warm relationship with this child. *this refers to a professional relationship	1	2	3	4	5
This child and I always seem to be struggling with each other.	1	2	3	4	5
If upset, this child will seek comfort from me.	1	2	3	4	5
This child is uncomfortable with physical contact from me	1	2	3	4	5
This child values his/her professional relationship with me.	1	2	3	4	5
When I praise this child, he/she beams with pride.	1	2	3	4	5
This child spontaneously shares information about himself/herself.	1	2	3	4	5
This child easily becomes angry with me.	1	2	3	4	5
It is easy to be in tune with what this child is feeling.	1	2	3	4	5
This child remains angry or is resistant after being disciplined.	1	2	3	4	5
Dealing with this child drains my energy	1	2	3	4	5
When this child is in a bad mood, I know we're in for a long and difficult lesson.	1	2	3	4	5
This child's feelings toward me can be unpredictable or can change suddenly.	1	2	3	4	5
This child is sneaky or manipulative with me.	1	2	3	4	5
This child openly shares his/her feelings and experiences with me.	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix I - Example of Onlinesurveys.ac.uk STRS administration

Interview Prompts

Interviews will be participant led, to ensure the data collected is relevant. They are open interviews, with no pre-devised questions to allow us to have a conversation about student/teacher relationships and student integration in school life. Some prompts are listed below to help keep the interview within the scope of the research questions.

1. Have you read the participant information sheet?
2. Do you have any questions, or would you like anything clarified?
3. Have you read and signed the informed consent sheet?
4. Do you have a copy to keep for yourself?
5. Just to remind you that all responses are confidential and anonymous – do you understand what that means?
6. The only time a response will not be confidential is if you say something which raises a concern that you or someone else is at risk of harm. Do you understand that?
7. If you wish to withdraw from the research you can email me (my email address is at the bottom of the participant information sheet) with your participant ID and your data will not be used. You have 14 days after all data is collected to choose to withdraw.

- Professional relationships with teachers
    - Feelings
    - What makes them effective or not
- Examples of positive and negative relationships?

Is anything stopping you from forming professional relationships?

Interview Prompts

Interviews will be participant led, to ensure the data collected is relevant. They are open interviews, with no pre-devised questions to allow us to have a conversation about student/teacher relationships and student integration in school life. Some prompts are listed below to help keep the interview within the scope of the research questions.

1. Have you read the participant information sheet?
2. Do you have any questions, or would you like anything clarified?
3. Have you read and signed the informed consent sheet?
4. Do you have a copy to keep for yourself?
5. Just to remind you that all responses are confidential and anonymous – do you understand what that means?
6. The only time a response will not be confidential is if you say something which raises a concern that you or someone else is at risk of harm. Do you understand that?
7. If you wish to withdraw from the research you can email me (my email address is at the bottom of the participant information sheet) with your participant ID and your data will not be used. You have 14 days after all data is collected to choose to withdraw.

- Barriers to learning?
- Is there a difference between liking and respecting a teacher?
- Power
- Teachers you have good and bad relationships with
- Do you ever feel treated unfairly?
- Does a teacher have to be a good teacher for you to have a good relationship with them?

Possible Causative Mechanism 2 – *Pupils feeling a sense of injustice*	
Emergent Property	**Conceptual Category (initial code)**
A sense of fairness is important	Behaviour recorded on SIMS Being sent to hotspot Discrimination Feeling girls are favoured Firm and Fair Parent agrees with punishment Pupil feels targeted Pupil perceives teacher discriminating against students who are not good at subject Putting incidents in perspective Reprimand – fair Staff not giving sanction Teacher sanctioning using own fair system Treats pupils differently Warning
Pupils feeling a sense of injustice	Injustice Injustice positive Justice - re-establishing One sided Pupil feels annoyed by teacher Pupil thinks teacher is linking sibling behaviour to their own Pupils not targeted by all teachers equally Sanction - unfair Sanctions - fair Targeted Teacher aware pupils feel targeted Teacher ignoring pupil Teacher misses student needing help Unfair
Pupils perceive teacher as being prejudiced	Assumptions - pupil perceive teacher making unfair assumptions Cards are marked (pupil) Fresh start - not Hate - pupil perceive teacher hates them Plea or desperate to not be labelled Pupil perceive teacher holing a grudge Pupil perception - inferring teacher feels negative towards them Reputation - pupil perceive past reputation is not forgotten Teacher never liked pupil Teacher not like pupil Teacher presumes pupil is misbehaving Teacher thinks we are naughty

Past experiences with teacher expressed as still relevant	Negative past experience with teacher
	Positive experience with teacher

Possible Causative Mechanism 3 – Pupils having a feeling of powerlessness	
Emergent Property	**Conceptual Category (initial code)**
An enjoyment or lack of enjoyment of subject	Dislike subject Likes subject Subject specific
Past experiences with teacher expressed as still relevant	Negative past experience with teacher Positive experience with teacher
Pupil Self Awareness (own bad behaviour)	Avoiding lesson Aware of own responsibilities Awareness of how to change Awareness of own bad behaviour Defying instructions Peer interactions causing disruption Distracted Peer influence Peer on peer Pupil blaming self Pupil purposefully antagonising teacher pupils find loopholes to disrupt
Pupils agency; pupils express desire to want to do well	Agency - exhibit in lessons Agency - succeed desire to do well Emergent Property - Academic progress Academic achievement Didn't feel like I was learning feeling of success Learning progress Intentions - pupil intends to do well Future ambitions Pupil need to respond Pupil not allowed to respond teacher preventing progress Wants to do well. Teacher preventing Negative self-belief in subject Pupil - negative sense of self Pupil feels resigned to not perform well in subject Self-fulfilling prophecy Teachers responsibility to stop self-fulfilling prophecy Wants to do well at school
Teachers display power	Losing break time Power play Power trip Seeman Definition - Powerlessness SLT not abusing power Teacher - intimidating pupil teacher acting superior teacher control

	teacher showing aggression
	teacher thinks they are in charge of school
	teacher threatening pupil

Possible Causative Mechanism 4 – Negative relationships increase feelings of alienation in pupils (self-fulfilling prophecy)	
Emergent Property	**Conceptual Category (initial code)**
A feeling that relationships are not good	Bad relationship with teacher Control class using relationship Lack of relationship Not connecting with pupil Not enough time to rebuild relationships Personality clash Pupils express they dislike a teacher Can't stand teacher Never liked teacher Pre-conceived idea of teacher (negative) Pupils view explanations (of teacher) as poor Relationships continue to develop over time Responsibility to repair Staff following protocol but not repairing relationship after an incident Teacher creates barriers which prevent learning Barriers Boring Teacher demeanour seen negatively Teacher is feared by pupils Teacher personality seen as a negative influence Teacher seen to be moody Teacher seen to be old fashioned Teacher seen to be patronising Higher conflict - higher variation in scores Perception of conflict
Dimensions of trust between pupil and teacher	Pupil thinks teacher overreacts Teacher exaggerating behaviour to SLT Teacher favouritism Teacher is perceived as mean Teacher is too strict Teacher lying Teacher not believing pupil Teacher seen to be too strict Teacher shouts Trust
Negative teacher attitude to pupil (pupil perception)	Manner Negative manner Positive Manner Mood Rude Shouting Teacher negatively impacting subject enjoyment Teacher selective ignoring

Pupil has negative feelings toward teacher	Pupil feeling angry towards teacher Pupil feels frustrated Pupil feels uncomfortable Pupil horrified at prospect of teacher teaching them Pupil perceive teacher as a witch Pupils feeling anxious (due to teacher) Teacher more important than subject (pupil perception)

Possible Causative Mechanism 5 – A lack of mutual respect between teacher and pupil	
Emergent Property	**Conceptual Category (initial code)**
Pupils express they like a teacher	Likes teacher Pupil feel guilty if unfairly disrespected teacher Pupil not like teacher Works for the teacher Relaxed atmosphere Safe learning environment Subject and teacher intersection Teacher should set an example
Pupils have a perception about the quality of teacher	Pupil feels teacher is weak (at behaviour management) Pupil sees teacher stop misbehaviour easily Pupil thinks teacher not good at job Pupils perceive as being good at job Style of teaching Teacher - pupil perceives they feel intimidated Teacher given pupil a chance
Respect as an important dimension of relationships	Like vs respect Mutual respect Pupil challenging disrespectful teacher Pupil dislikes teacher Pupil feels teacher has no respect for them Reciprocal respect Respect Respect - earn it Respect - lose it Teacher still trying

Possible Causative Mechanism 1 – *Pupils feeling valued can lead to positive relationships being formed*	
Emergent Property	**Conceptual Category (initial code)**
A feeling that relationships are good	Building relationships
	Closeness varies equally
	Connect with teacher
	Eye contact to build relationships
	Fresh start
	Good relationship with teacher
	Identify with pupils
	Interactions outside classroom
	Nice
	Perception of closeness
	Physical proximity to build relationships
	Pupil switched off in lesson - maintains good relationship
	Rebuilding relationship after incident
	Teacher talking through sanctions
	Relationships - step by step
	Relationships continue to develop over time
	Repairing relationship
	Dialogue between teacher and pupil after incident
	Show interest in pupil - to build relationship
	Talking to pupils
	Teacher finding positives
	Teacher perceived to have a good personality
	Teacher seen as fun and interesting
	Teacher seen to be approachable
	Teacher uses humour
	Teachers see relationships in positive light
	Year 8 and 10 relationships seen as the same
Varying perceptions of relationships between pupils and teacher can affect how valued pupils feel	Actively seeking positives
	Avoid confrontation
	Care - not caring
	Confidence
	Does not know pupils well
	Does not shout unless needed
	Does not get away with stuff
	Feeling valued
	Get on with pupils
	Having manners
	Individualising approaches to pupil
	Kind
	Listening to the pupils
	Not feeling valued
	Polite
	Praise
	Pupil given chances

	Pupil perceives teacher as helping
	Pupils given second chance or opportunity to prove themselves
	Pupils want to feel valued
	Some teachers would have given up on pupil
	Teacher given pupil second chance
	Teacher - caring
	Teacher accepting fault when appropriate
	Teacher apology
	Teacher championing pupil
	Teacher helping pupil
	Teacher helps pupil
	Teacher makes time for pupil
	Teacher recognising pupil
	Teachers perceive praise as important
	Thoughtful (pupil perceive teacher as)
	Valued - not feeling it
	Valuing pupils
	Perception of conflict
	Higher conflict, higher variation in scores
Teacher demonstrates consistency	Acting
	Boundaries
	Calm
	Control class
	Expectations (teacher)
	Seating plan
	Strict
Interacting with pupils on a personal level	Engaging on a personal level
	Engaging with students

Hierarchy Chart for PCM 'Pupils having a feeling of powerlessness'
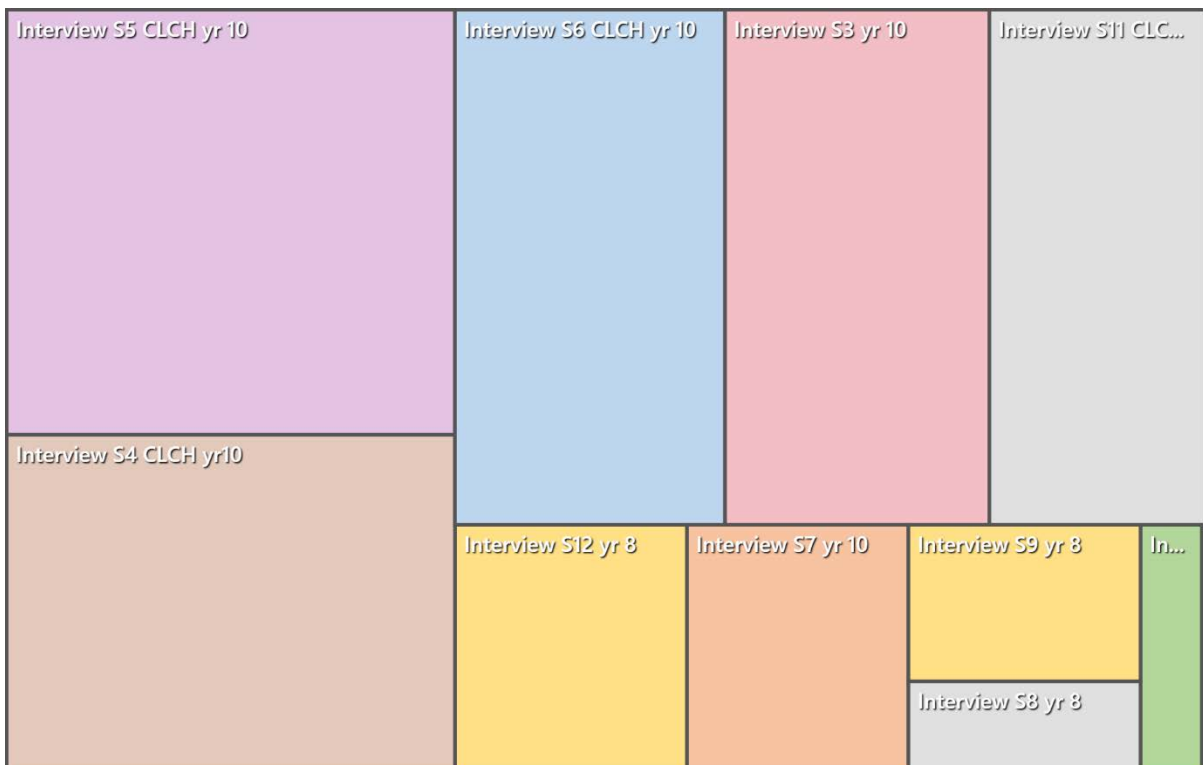
Hierarchy Chart for PCM 'Pupils feeling a sense of injustice'

Possible Causative Mechanism 6 – Critical incidents can exaggerate feelings of alienation in Closeness Low Conflict High (CLCH) group	
Emergent Property	**Conceptual Category (initial code)**
CLCH group have extreme feelings	CLCH – critical incidents (high) CLCH – desire to do well (high) CLCH – feelings of injustice (high) CLCH – feelings of powerlessness (high) CLCH – high awareness of behaviour CLCH – high awareness of responsibilities CLCH – low knowledge of how to change CLCH group High conflict, low closeness
Critical incidents	An early lesson Major event critical incident - positive Teach gets fed up with persistent questions Fed up

- Emergent Property "Pupil's perspective on learning taking place" was compared to Emergent property "Academic progress".
- It was decided that "Academic progress" encompassed "pupil's perspective on learning taking place".
- Emergent Property "Pupil's perspective on learning taking place" was integrated into Emergent property "Academic progress".
- So conceptual categories "Learning" and "Didn't feel like I was learning" were moved to Emergent property "Academic progress".

[External] - Re: Grounded Theory Manuscript

NA   **Nathaniel, Alvita**

To   Ben Looker   09/04/2021

ⓘ You replied to this message on 10/04/2021 20:26.
Click here to download pictures. To help protect your privacy, Outlook prevented automatic download of some pictures in this message.

Action Items   ➕ Get more add-ins

Hello Ben,

Your paper is very interesting. I appreciate its scholarly tone. Indeed, Glaser allows for any one of variety of philosophical positions, including critical realism. In fact, a previous editor of the Grounded Theory Review, Judith Holton, (who has written a book on classic grounded theory) identifies herself as a critical realist. Please tell me a bit about the book you will be contributing to and exactly how you would like for me to respond to the chapter.

Alvita

Alvita Nathaniel, PhD
Professor Emerita
Editor, Grounded Theory Review

Confidentiality Notice: This email message, including any attachments, is for the sole use of the intended