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PROFESSIONAL DOCTORATES

In search of an Authentic Education

A conceptual analysis of authenticity in educational research

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Award date:
2021

Awarding institution:
Bangor University

Link to publication

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DOCTOR OF EDUCATION
BANGOR UNIVERSITY APRIL 2021

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Abstract

Since the early 1990s a significant body of literature has emerged in which the terms *authentic* and *authenticity* have been widely applied to educators and educational practices. In their attempts to promote improvements in teaching and learning through innovation based on educational research, writers have put forward a wide range of proposals for a more Authentic Education including developing the authenticity of learning tasks, assessment, pedagogy, and of both learners and teachers. Various frameworks and models have also been suggested, against which educators might measure the authenticity of their practice. A central argument of the thesis is that the current calls for authenticity in education are flawed through a lack of agreement on how these key terms authentic and authenticity should be used. This means that discussions over proposals for policy and practice based on these terms often rest on confused foundations. There is therefore a timely need to analyse the body of work relating to Authentic Education with the intention of developing coherence and consistency in the use of the term authentic in educational research. The primary method used in this analysis has been a narrative review of the literature. The process of undertaking this review revealed the need for a conceptual analysis of the various contradictions, assumptions and differing perspectives identified. Through this analysis, questions were raised about the value of attributing authenticity to any aspect of education. This led to the formulation of a controversial argument about

abandoning the use of the terms authentic and authenticity in education. A wider implication of this is a need for educators and educational researchers to question the assumptions that are often inherent in using terms that have a range of philosophical and ontological foundations in order to promote a more coherent debate about "best" educational practice.

Notes
Throughout the thesis the use of capital letters (for Authentic Learning and Moral Authenticity for example) signifies reference to terminology which appears in the body of literature, and which features as a specific named idea or concept in the thesis, despite there often being a lack of consensus on the meaning of the term.

Another decision of note is that throughout the thesis, teachers will be referred to in the plural, rather than using the pronouns him/her or he/she. This practice is becoming more prevalent in recent times and facilitates the best use of *them* and *they* as pronouns, widely recognised as a gender-neutral expression.

Declaration
I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. All other sources are acknowledged in the Reference List. This work has not been previously submitted in any substance for any degree and is not concurrently being submitted in candidature for any degree.

This thesis is being submitted with the agreement of my supervisors, Dr. Jean Ware and Dr. David Sullivan, with enormous gratitude for their advice and guidance throughout.

S Peart
04/04/2021

Chapter 1 - Introduction

At first glance, devising ways to make education more authentic would seem to be an unambiguously positive step. In line with the term's definition as an adjective, why would anyone not want education and educators to live up to the standard definition of authenticity as that which is "genuine, real and true" (Callison and Lamb, 2004)? Delve a little deeper, however, and it soon becomes clear that the terms authentic and authenticity, when applied to education, are not necessarily as clear and straightforward as they may seem.

In the literature, claims of authenticity have been made in a diverse range of educational contexts, and the term interpreted in a variety of ways. Stimulated by the discovery of contrasting definitions in educational research, of what it means to be authentic and how authenticity applies to education, this thesis will explore the concept of authenticity in education. The main focus will be further and higher education in western societies, but with reference to other contexts and levels as appropriate. The resultant, rather confused picture of what authenticity does and should mean to educators, leads to questions about the value and relevance of the term authenticity in educational research.

Examining the term's definition, as above, to be authentic in its most literal sense is taken to denote being genuine, real and true. However, terms like authentic, real and true, when philosophically and ontologically analysed, prove to be loaded with assumptions, culturally contingent and historically situated. This thesis will demonstrate that pinning down a definition of authenticity necessitates agreement about the nature of reality, truth and value. The task of applying the term authentic to education, whilst maintaining consistency becomes extremely difficult.

The term Authentic Education is used in this thesis to signify reference to the concept of authenticity when applied to education as a whole, before any specific arguments about where the authenticity may be situated arise. Interpretations of what constitutes Authentic Education tend to approach the term from two substantially different

educational and philosophical perspectives. These perspectives form two bodies of work to be introduced here, that are fundamentally in contrast with each other but connected by the term authenticity. As will become apparent, each of the two bodies of work can be further subdivided and categorised, and on occasion they overlap, contributing to the widely held perception of authentic education as an elusive concept. This claim, which is itself often based on the supposed profundity of the idea of authenticity, has given rise to the need for a detailed examination of the concept in order to ascertain its significance for educational research.

The word authentic has been applied, in much of the educational literature, to a pedagogical approach whereby learning activities and tasks promote real-life (often called real-world) applications of knowledge. Rooted in the twentieth-century pragmatic pedagogical beliefs of John Dewey (Splitter, 2009) and seen by many of its advocates as inextricably connected to concepts of Constructivism and Situated Learning, Authentic Learning has been widely proposed as an original and innovative pedagogical approach (for example, Renzulli, Gentry and Reis, 2004). Gaining momentum over the past twenty years, this concept has been manipulated, categorised and tested in the never-ending search for the ideal pedagogy, most notably by Shaffer and Resnick (1999), Herrington and Oliver (2000), Callison and Lamb (2004) and Rule (2006). In this thesis, Chapters 3 and 4 will begin a deeper analysis of Authentic Learning and of its roots in other pedagogical theories.

Another interpretation of the term authentic, as it applies to education, is reflected in the second body of literature. This explores the concept of the authenticity of teachers and students as human beings (notably, Carusetta and Cranton, 2004, 2005; Kreber et al. 2007; DeBruyckere and Kirschner, 2016). In this educational model, the term authentic is attributed to the people involved in the educational experience and to student-teacher relationships, rather than to the educational tasks or methods. It seeks to establish the authenticity of the self as an educational aim, for either, or both the teacher and the student. This body of work naturally further splits into two; work on teacher authenticity and work on Learner Authenticity as an educational aim. The philosophical underpinnings to this interpretation of authenticity will be explored,

before examining these two further strands: Teacher Authenticity and Learner Authenticity.

Investigation into the educational vocabulary commonly associated with these two interpretations clarifies the difference further; this can be summarised as follows. Utilising the Authentic Learning definition (real-life applications of knowledge) attributes the term authentic to the activities or tasks in learning, the practical features of the educational process (Bialystock, 2016). Conversely, employing the philosophical, person-centred definition proposes the authenticity as something achieved by the teacher and/or students, and is very much linked to a way of being. As will be explained later, the terms Teacher and Learner Authenticity gain favour here. These terms are employed in the majority of current education-based literature on the subject, to differentiate between Authentic Learning and authenticity as a way of being, and thus will be used here to clarify the distinction.

Carroll (2015) in his exploration of the many meanings of authenticity arrives at "two common – but very different – general interpretations of the authenticity of social or cultural objects" (p7). In this context, he is investigating the use of the term authenticity as a trend in the social and behavioural sciences in general, rather than specifically in education, but he makes a distinction which sheds further light, and a slightly different angle, on the two interpretations that have emerged at the forefront of educational research in the past twenty years. He cites these two meanings as Type Authenticity and Moral Authenticity.

Type Authenticity indicates that something can be assigned (or claimed to fit) a certain classification; the focus is concerned with whether the object of the claim of authenticity meets the criteria for inclusion in the category or genre. In this way, the authenticity of an educational task can be measured against a set of objective criteria. This resonates with the many papers that investigate learning tasks, activities and assessment methods for their suitability to be labelled authentic learning, and the writers who seek to justify a certain approach as embodying these criteria. Carroll (2015), however, also warns that the existence of the category or genre is culturally

defined. Thus, evaluations may vary by observer, and are largely dependent on audience consensus regarding the classification criteria to be used, and how they are applied. This may help to explain the semantic and ontological difficulties that education researchers face; Type Authenticity, when applied to learning, is based on an assumption that there is consensus on the underlying purpose and values of education itself.

Moral Authenticity, according to Carroll (2015), focuses on authenticity as carrying moral meaning about "the values and choices embedded in an object" (p8) – the object in question here being education. Substitution of *education* for *the object* in the paragraph below, further explains this point: "the main question concerns whether the individuals or collectives involved in the establishment and maintenance of *the object* have sincerely attempted to enact their true morals. An important secondary issue concerns whether *the object* actually embraces them" (p8). This opens up a (much more complex) dialogue on the capability of education systems to allow for action that is not socially imposed, and to truly embody the values of every individual involved. For example, the Moral Authenticity of a person rests on their ability to make value-based choices rather than accepting socially imposed values, and to take responsibility for their actions. It is worth noting here that moral, in this context, is less about morality and the ability to live by certain given rules and values, set by an authority such as the state, and more about one's character, regardless of the moral code one may follow. These ideas of both Type and Moral Authenticity form important reference points in this work and will therefore be analysed in detail.

In the context of educational research, the Authentic Learning and "way of being" interpretations have informed two contrasting bodies of literature, as mentioned above, with entirely separate fundamental assumptions about the position and role of authenticity in an educational context. For example, papers investigating real-life activities (such as Renzulli, Gentry and Reis, 2004 or Murphy, Lunn and Jones, 2007) generally assume that as Authentic Learning is the subject being discussed, making reference to the authenticity of the teacher or learner in a Moral Authenticity sense, is unnecessary. Indeed, an overwhelming majority of works in this branch of the

literature use the term Authentic Learning and adhere to the notion of Type Authenticity, thus assuming a consensus on the purpose of, and the underlying philosophical rationale for teaching and learning without needing to define them.

Concurrently, papers investigating authentic as a way of being, (such as Carusetta and Cranton, 2005 or Kreber et al., 2007) in contrast, necessarily spend time discussing the purpose of and underlying motivations for teaching and learning, as this is a critical factor in any debate about the advancement of the Moral Authenticity of the humans involved in an educational exchange. They therefore tend not to make reference to specific learning tasks or assessment methods, as these could be seen as somewhat superfluous to the bigger picture of education with Moral Authenticity as its core purpose or aim. Nonetheless, both interpretations of Authentic Education attempt to generate an equally coherent dialogue about the meaning of the term authentic in each context, and how authenticity should be integrated into an educator's practice.

In this way, the Authentic Learning approach to authenticity is about everyday practice (meeting specific learning objectives or outcomes through task design and pedagogy) and authentic as a way of being, is about the wider goals of education and the overarching motivations, purpose and aims of the people involved. Thus, it could be argued that these are two separate concepts and do not necessarily need integration; they simply share the commonality of the term authentic and the word has been applied in a fundamentally different way in each context. However, it could also be argued that the specific task objectives cannot be separated from the overarching purpose of learning, or from the motivations of the people involved, as these are inextricably linked. As will become apparent, empirical research into both of these interpretations frequently gets caught up in similar conundrums, as well as in philosophical puzzles and debates, and thus becomes a manifestly problematic undertaking.

Carroll (2015) describes authenticity as an attribution, meaning there is no substantive definition that can cover all the meanings in use; at best, one can arrive at an abstract

definition about its role in a certain social and cultural sphere. Authenticity depends upon the social constructions emerging from the identity of the person or organisation attributing it to their service (teaching) or product (tasks or educational aims), rather than specific characteristics of the service or product itself (Fine, 2004; cited in Carroll, 2015). Thus, empirical studies become untenable without all readers of that study having the same contextual approaches and experiences, and full agreement about the valued characteristics of the object being labelled authentic.

Another important dimension to the study of Authentic Education is that all interpretations carry a positive connotation of the word authentic, and authenticity assumes an allusion to a superior form of education, somehow better than other approaches. Universally, the term has been employed to justify the value of educational experiences and to make recommendations for how to make education more authentic. This issue is a recurring theme, particularly in the chapters investigating Moral Authenticity. That authenticity is a culturally defined and socially constructed attribute, begins to beg the question of whether it is a valid pursuit within education at all, having an equally ambiguous impact on studies of Authentic Learning as on studies of Moral Authenticity. This leads to the question of whether the term authentic is more of a hindrance when applied to education than a help.

Therefore, the questions this thesis aims to address (and the method used, which will be further explained in the next chapter) are:
- In what ways are the terms *authentic* and *authenticity* used in educational research? (Narrative Review)
- How clear is the meaning of these terms? (Conceptual Analysis)
- What implications does the conceptual analysis of *authentic* and *authenticity* have for the way in which these terms are used when discussing educational practice in the literature?

Chapter 2 - Methodology

This section will begin with a justification of the purpose of the thesis before outlining the approach taken to the research. It will justify the methods utilised to address the questions in the Introduction above. It will also provide clarification about the scope of the thesis and the inclusion/exclusion of certain terms and arguments.

Within educational research, terms arise from time to time that are widely appropriated and popularised by education communities. Communication about education, and recommendations for how education should be carried out, become dependent upon an assumed mutual understanding of what these terms mean when applied in education. Educators, and education researchers specifically, tend to approach some of the more value-laden and ambiguous terms from a wide range of angles, in part due to the many different subject specialisms that abound within education research (from the arts and philosophy to science and vocational skills training). Authenticity is one of example of these terms; other examples that could be similarly reflected upon are autonomy, freedom, choice and existentialism, all of which have significant philosophical underpinnings and will also feature in this work, given their close links with authenticity.

At this point in the 21st century, attributing the term authentic specifically to educators and educational practices has resulted in a significant body of literature, dating back around three decades. Therefore, it becomes appropriate to investigate and analyse the use of the term by reflecting upon this body of literature and providing guidance for future educational research. Thus, the primary purpose of this thesis is to conduct a narrative review of the literature, and undertake a detailed conceptual analysis of Authentic Education, before drawing conclusions about the future applicability of the term.

The first question of how authentic and authenticity are interpreted in educational research, necessitated a survey of the current literature and an analysis of the different ways in which the terms are attributed to various aspects of education, in

order to present the concepts of type and moral Authenticity (as described in the Introduction). The outcome of this helped determine and classify the many and varied uses of the terms authentic and authenticity in educational research. As mentioned above, the approach taken to survey the literature was that of a narrative review (Thomas, 2009). This narrative review being the first objective of the research means that there is no separate literature review because, by its nature, much of the thesis is itself a discussion of the literature. There were some specific parameters used in the literature search, which will be outlined here in order to ensure a robust justification for the resultant analysis using a conceptual and philosophical approach, which forms the main body of the thesis.

The literature search was conducted using Pro Quest (which accesses the ERIC database) and JStor, these being the largest and most widely used platforms in the field of education research. Numerous other online and hard copy sources were also included in the search using the Bangor University Library catalogue. Initial search terms included combinations of the words Authentic or Authenticity with education. Articles were scanned for relevance, firstly the titles and then the abstracts. Items of particular interest were flagged for future reference, based on whether the words Authentic or Authenticity were being attributed to an element of the educational process. As common terms and themes began to emerge, the search terms were refined to be more specific, such as Authentic Learning, Teacher Authenticity or Learner Authenticity. Additionally, as is common practice in research, citations of note in articles and books were followed up to ensure the literature review process took as broad an approach as possible.

Different interpretations thus began to emerge; authentic as applied to the learning, assessment or activities, authentic as applied to the people involved in the educational interaction, or elements of both (giving rise to the confused nature of the term). When analysing the body of literature specifically related to Authentic Learning (see Chapter 3), a further categorisation exercise revealed whether the research papers focussing on authentic learning were defining it, implementing an existing definition derived from previous research, or defining and implementing it in one study. Additional

searches also raised the issue of authentic learning being a buzzword, and a passing trend. This was further investigated in relation to publication dates for articles referring to learning as authentic, and the findings highlighted and corroborated the proposal that a sudden increase in popularity arose at the start of the 21st century, followed by a (less stark, but noticeable) decrease. Essentially, the number of articles referring to Authentic Learning trebled in the period 2004-2008, and this information will be analysed in the context of Chapter 3.

Additionally, some of these papers, that were ostensibly focussed upon Type Authenticity, included a tendency to stray into Moral Authenticity (often unconsciously) for example by stipulating that the learning should have personal meaning for the learner, a caveat to be explored in much greater depth in the main body of the thesis. Similarly, sources related to the authenticity of the people involved (grouped under the term moral authenticity) could be categorised as connected to the teacher, the learner, or both, and sometimes also crossing over to type authenticity ("true to type" as a teacher or learner), again adding to the emerging conclusions about authenticity being an ambiguous term to employ in educational research. It also became clear through deeper research into the body of literature connected with Moral Authenticity per se (not always specifically linked to education), that there were some fundamental underlying philosophical perspectives which needed to be understood if the use of the term was to be less confused in an educational context.

The findings of this review then determined the structure and approach to the rest of the thesis. Rather than being a traditional piece of empirical research, early findings from the narrative literature review about the varied and overlapping interpretations of the term authenticity in education, resulted in a conceptual analysis of authentic education using techniques from analytical and applied philosophy. Throughout the process, additional literature sources were accessed as the relevance of a particular concept became clear in relation to education. This conceptual analysis looked at both the meaning of the term authentic in an educational context and the underpinning theoretical principles behind the ideas of Type and Moral Authenticity. In each case, it was the logic of the argument that was analysed, often encountering contradictions

and philosophical conundrums that had been overlooked. This enabled conclusions to be drawn about the coherence of the concept.

It should be made clear here, that this thesis focussed on philosophical approaches to authenticity, rather than religious ones. Religious arguments, it was felt, would have opened up too many other areas for debate and/or clarification, and so the scope of the work precluded this.

Thus, the thesis was sequenced around the three main strands that emerged from the literature: Authentic Learning, Teacher Authenticity, and Learner Authenticity. Each of these bodies of literature were explored through a conceptual lens, unpicking the logical foundations of the arguments presented. Interwoven with these three concepts was the need to further explore the theoretical foundations of Authentic Learning (Chapter 4) and the philosophical foundations of Moral Authenticity (Chapter 5), as the full picture in this respect was often ignored or misinterpreted by writers on the subject of Authentic Education. This gave additional weight to the emerging argument about the ambiguity of the term, and its lack of relevance, specifically when applied to education.

The content of the penultimate chapter (Chapter 8), was very much determined by the findings of the preceding ones. In this way, the whole thesis was very much an evolving piece of research; the writing of it reflected the learning that emerged as the research progressed. At the start of the research process, Chapter 8 could equally have been anticipated to result in a model or framework for Authentic Education, had the conceptual analysis produced a more coherent identity for Authentic Education. Instead, it became clear that the implications of the research conducted and the logical conclusions drawn, warranted further exploration of an additional research question: are authentic and authenticity helpful terms to use in educational research? In this case therefore, the presentation of a theory or framework would have been counterintuitive, as the emerging hypothesis was that there is no workable, applicable basis for the use of the term authenticity in education and that empirical research using these terms, when attributed to education, does not help to clarify but serves

to confuse. Instead, case studies and examples were investigated in Chapter 8, which drew together the strands investigated, and applied them in context, before summarising the conclusions and the thesis' contribution to scholarship in Chapter 9.

Chapter 3 - Authentic Learning

Ideas presented under the banner of Authentic Learning, have come to the fore in the past 30 years. Shaffer and Resnick (1999), on noticing a dramatic rise in the use of the word authentic as applied to pedagogies, attribute the initial calls for authenticity to Wiggins (1989) as well as Newmann and Wehlage (1993). Wiggins (1989) specifically applied the term authentic to assessment, proposing that assessment should be more connected to learning; part of the learning process itself rather than an exercise designed to sort students. Newmann and Wehlage (1993) extended this use of the word authentic to propose broader educational reforms. Their essential claims were that education needed to focus on promoting disciplined habits of thinking by creating knowledge that is meaningful to students in contexts that have relevance in the world beyond school. In this way, they proposed that Authentic Learning can be achieved through curriculum design and teaching methods. They also acknowledged the work of Wiggins (1989) in advocating the role of alternative (and authentic) assessment methods in this process.

As a result of these claims, a lengthy and divergent discussion arose regarding the underlying theoretical problems and inconsistencies surrounding this concept of Authentic Learning, as well as practical issues of implementation. For example, Shaffer and Resnick (1999, p195) referred to the term authentic as "something of a buzzword" when applied to educational interventions. The subsequent influx of academic, peer-reviewed journal articles as well as articles in the educational press concerned with Authentic Learning, would seem to support their claims. Indeed, the inaugural issue of the *Journal of Authentic Learning* was published online in 2004 (Markert, 2004), with the last volume being published in June 2007.

This apparent sudden increase in appetite for the term Authentic Learning is worth exploring in more detail. The results of a search for trends in publications referring to Authentic Learning (referred to in the Methodology chapter) indicate that the term Authentic Learning enjoyed a notable rise in inclusion in published articles from 2004-2008, coinciding with the online publication of the above journal. It should be noted

that the *Journal of Authentic Learning* was not a peer-reviewed publication. However, Rule's (2006) ideas have been included in the *Implementing Authentic Learning* section of this chapter in their capacity as useful additions to the literature, as this body of work serves to help highlight the various and inconsistent ways in which the term Authentic Learning is interpreted.

Interestingly, and related to this idea of Authentic Learning as a "buzzword", of the same author's 66 peer-reviewed publications on the ERIC database, only 2 include the term authentic, and none refers to Authentic Learning, yet all are studies into the effectiveness of various teaching and learning methods and activities, and all bear significant similarities to the commonly-used approaches and characteristics described in the body of literature on Authentic Learning, despite not using the term specifically. As this thesis and narrative review develops, it will become clear that there are other similar examples which raise the question of whether the word authentic is a hindrance or a help to a description of an educational experience. The use (or absence) of the word authentic to describe an educational approach as a common adjective in everyday language, and the value to be gained from this is a question that will be further explored throughout this work, and summarised in Chapter 8.

Examining the main body of literature pertaining to Authentic Learning, authors seemingly focus on two areas of debate. Their focus is dependent on whether they seek to examine and define the underlying characteristics of Authentic Learning (such as real-world tasks, or personal meaning to the learner) or whether they accept the agreed objective criteria for an Authentic Learning experience as a starting point for their research, and proceed to justify a specific learning strategy or teaching approach against these criteria. However, what both sets of literature appear to agree on is the principle that Authentic Learning is objectively measurable. It is notable that papers published under this banner fail to analyse the philosophical assumptions behind their acceptance of authentic as a label that can be applied to a type of learning activity.

Thus, one set of literature explores the definition of Authentic Learning, unpicking and reassembling its parameters, and creating frameworks or classification systems

against which Authentic Learning might be measured. As will be seen in *Defining Authentic Learning* below, broad agreement seems to have been reached about the general characteristics of Authentic Learning. However, this consensus is primarily based upon similar underlying assumptions about ideal educational practices, rather than on agreement about the specific criteria that define Authentic Learning activities. Numerous combinations of the specific criteria against which authentic activities can be measured exist, creating some ambiguity about the essential elements of Authentic Learning. These interpretations will be further explored in this chapter.

The other set of papers focuses on the practical application of Authentic Learning activities in various educational settings. Ostensibly, these studies make claims of authenticity for pedagogies and curricula that can be shown to meet some of the essential characteristics of the above definitions. These papers start with an explicit set of objective criteria for Authentic Learning and assess specific pedagogies or tasks against them. Situating their proposed activities in contexts that meet the given essential characteristics of Authentic Learning, these authors simply aim to document or evaluate the perceived authenticity of their learning activities rather than engage in debate about how they arrived at the criteria used or about the underlying assumptions of the perspective upon which they have based their research (save for a citation for the framework adopted). One could say that, in these studies, the criteria for Authentic Learning are prescribed or assumed rather than debated; these studies will be explored in the *Implementing Authentic Learning* section of this chapter.

Thus, one of the key arguments of this thesis can be summarised: studies of Authentic Learning, whether defining it or implementing it, fail to recognise or analyse the complex philosophical assumptions bound up in the use of the word authentic to describe a learning task. This chapter and the next one will seek to examine these studies in more detail, and the alternative philosophical approaches that have been ostensibly ignored here will be explored under the banner of Moral Authenticity in Chapter 5.

Defining Authentic Learning

Returning to the key articles addressing the definition, classification and categorisation of Authentic Learning, it is clear that a certain level of agreement has been reached about the fundamental educational principles upon which Authentic Learning tasks are based. The underpinning educational beliefs and pedagogical background to these principles, largely emerging from work on cognitive apprenticeships (Collins, Brown and Newmann, 1987) and Situated Learning (Lave and Wenger, 1991), will be explored further in the next chapter. Nonetheless, despite the manifest agreement about the broad characteristics of Authentic Learning, subtle variations in the criteria arrived at by several prominent writers in the field can be identified. These can be exemplified by such well-used terms as problem-based learning, higher order thinking, real-world tasks, all of which will become prominent in this next section. These variations mean that there are still difficulties in ascertaining the precise components of an Authentic Learning task within this body of literature.

As discussed previously, Type Authenticity is based upon the premise that a set of objective criteria can be defined and agreed against which objects of that type can be assessed. Therefore, in order for Authentic Learning tasks to be evaluated or tested in some way, there must there be a framework against which a researcher can measure the success or otherwise of their intervention. The development of, and subsequent variations in this framework will now be explored, based upon the review of the literature undertaken, as described in the Methodology Chapter (2).

As mentioned above, the concept of authentic learning as a pedagogical approach or teaching strategy, appears to begin with Wiggins (1989), who takes key principles from concepts of Constructivism and Situated Learning (two concepts to be explored further in the next chapter) in his drive for authenticity. However, Wiggins first mooted the idea of authenticity in education by using the term Authentic Assessment rather than Authentic Learning, focusing on the real-world application of knowledge through assessment methods and task choice. Nonetheless, his work is significant in that the measurable criteria he proposes for authentic assessment bear overt similarities to

later concepts of authentic pedagogy and Authentic Learning activities, as the field surrounding the concept of authenticity in education grew.

Examples of these "Criteria of Authenticity" (Wiggins, 1989. p711) are somewhat descriptive in his paper, and difficult to summarise. This makes them equally difficult to use as objective criteria for assessing the authenticity of a task. It could be surmised that, through these slightly confusing descriptors, Wiggins (1989) was looking to exemplify his stance about the multifaceted nature of an authentic assessment. Despite this, certain criteria can be extracted from the narrative, specifying that authentic assessment must include "intellectual challenges" involving critical thinking, creativity and innovation, that are "representative within a given discipline" and "designed to emphasize realistic (but fair) complexity". They should make "the student judgment central in posing, tackling and clarifying problems" (p711). They require some collaboration with others and use multifaceted scoring systems.

Perhaps most interestingly, Wiggins advocates that students are given opportunities to rehearse, practice and improve the quality of the work produced, and that feedback to students is central, from as wide an audience as possible and including elements of self-assessment. This suggests that Assessment for Learning or formative assessment is inextricably woven into Wiggins' (1989) authentic assessment, and that perhaps his view of authentic assessment is actually a broader examination of pedagogy as a whole. As Shaffer and Resnick (1999, p200) explain, it "may not be possible to talk about authentic assessment without also looking at the authenticity of what is being learned." This could explain why authors within the constructivist school of thought began to utilise Wiggins' ideas, and apply them to pedagogy and learning more generally.

In 1993, Newmann and Wehlage identified five standards of authentic instruction. This represents an early attempt to set parameters for measuring the authenticity of a teaching approach or pedagogy, rather than an assessment task. The standards they proposed for authentic instruction were: (a) higher order thinking, (b) depth of knowledge, (c) connectedness to the world beyond the classroom, (d) substantive

conversation, and (e) social support for student achievement. It should be reiterated here that these parameters are advocated as criteria for evaluating the authenticity of "instruction" rather than assessment, and this brings us to one of the main difficulties with the concept of authentic learning.

Limiting authentic learning to a specific category of tasks or activities would appear to be problematic, given that learning (and pedagogy) is about so much more than task design alone, and certainly about much more than assessment. Newmann and Wehlage's (1993) standards highlight this confusion in respect of what is actually being measured or evaluated for authenticity. Whilst they claim to be measuring the extent to which learners "use their minds well" (p8), they simultaneously propose this as a framework for observing instruction, and refer, in the main, to the concept of authentic instruction. This raises an important issue about exactly what it is that is being labelled as authentic: is it the teacher, the approach, the task design (or assessment task), the achievement, the learner, or all of these? It could be argued that some of Newmann and Wehlage's (1993) five standards for authenticity will be met through task design, some by student engagement and personal meaning, and some by the approach of the teacher. The debate about where the authenticity is to be found is an important one that will be returned to throughout this study.

Newmann, Marks and Gamoran (1996) further refine this seminal attempt to define and set out the parameters of Authentic Learning, by specifying just three key criteria, for what they refer to this time as "authentic pedagogy". Firmly and explicitly rooted in a Constructivist restructuring of pedagogy (see Authentic Learning: the theoretical context, Chapter 4), they posit that authentic pedagogy must involve (a) the construction of knowledge, (b) disciplined inquiry and (c) hold value beyond school. They go on to emphasise that authentic achievement should remain the valued end-goal of all schooling, and in order for authentic achievement to be realised, all three of these criteria should be met.

They go on to expand on their, initially succinct, three criteria by further breaking them down into specific standards until authenticity is sought in a multitude of aspects

of the teaching and learning domain. In this instance, Newmann et al. (1996) consider pedagogy to be "a combination of teachers' daily instruction and their assessment tasks" (p288), and the students' response to these. The result of specifying standards for all of these factors is that the term authentic is liberally applied throughout the paper to pedagogy, instruction, academic performance, achievement, intellectual quality and assessment.

The above examples resonate with the difficulties of ascertaining exactly where the authenticity should lie when it comes to learning. By referring to authentic instruction or authentic pedagogy, it is not entirely clear whether Newmann and Wehlage (1993) and Newmann et al. (1996) are referring to the authenticity of the learning activity, the teacher, the learners, a combination, or all of these. Similarly, by referring to authentic assessment, but interweaving this with "the aims, structures, schedules and policies of schooling", Wiggins (1989, p710) appears to be advocating more of a pedagogical approach than simply an assessment task. Indeed, Reeves, Herrington and Oliver (2002) give an overview of Authentic Learning, in which they integrate assessment as one of ten essential design elements for authentic learning tasks (more on this below). The same three authors, writing the following year summarise: "Assessment is not merely summative in authentic activities but is woven seamlessly into the major task in a manner that reflects real-world evaluation processes." (Herrington et al., 2003, p63)

Proponents of Authentic Learning seem to agree that real-world tasks or value beyond the classroom, is one of the keys to achieving authentic learning. Clearly there is an issue to be explored here in terms of what constitutes the real world from an educational perspective. Petraglia (1998) proposes that the idea of Authentic Learning is fundamentally flawed in that, whatever context we (the educators) attempt to give to learning, it is only real-world if the learner also perceives it as directly relevant to their reality. As will be discussed in the next chapter on the theoretical roots of authentic learning, a fundamental tenet of constructivist theory (which many advocates of authentic learning purport to draw upon) is that learners construct their own meaning of new knowledge based on their individual prior experience and/or their

social interactions with other learners. As Gulikers et al. (2005) explain "it cannot be automatically assumed that an environment that is designed by educational developers as an authentic environment is also experienced as authentic by students" (p513).

Petraglia (1998, p53) further clarifies this point thus: "This is seen in an approach to contextualizing learning that I call pre-authentication, or the attempt to make learning materials and environments correspond to the real world prior to the learner's interaction with them." Therefore, we are "creating environments that are predetermined to reflect the real world even though constructivist theory contraindicates this". This apparent conflict with constructivism throws up yet more difficulties with pinning down the precise characteristics of authentic learning.

Additionally, Wald and Harland (2017) discuss authentic learning as pertaining to real-world corresponding tasks (or simulation) as opposed to genuinely real-world experiences. Examples of this are relatively easy to find, particularly in the context of Higher Education and technology (two themes explored in the section below: *Implementing Authentic Learning*)*. As an exemplar, Meyers and Nulty (2009) created a digital tropical island called Lys, with accompanying data sets about the distribution and variation of organisms across the island. The authors went to great lengths to provide detailed evidence of this island's topography and geography, presented by a digital rendition of the lecturer himself in situ on the island, and enhanced by a virtual tour. The ecology and environmental science students then extracted the key information from their virtual tour and lecturer's commentary, analysed the data and predicted future distributions of the flora and fauna on Lys. Likewise, a study by Diamond et al. (2011) involved computing undergraduates in the development of a prototype for a digital game, based on an extended role-play with clients from other faculties across the University.

As mentioned above, the fact that both of the examples could only be implemented through the use of digital technology is a theme that will recur in this chapter and will feature more fully in *Implementing Authentic Learning* (later in this chapter). In this

vein, one could question how real (and therefore authentic) learning to fly a helicopter using a flight simulator would be, or any training that employs a virtual digital environment to facilitate learning. Suffice it to say, these digital examples illustrate the lack of coherence in the definition of what authentic learning is, due to a slightly different perspective on what constitutes the real world. This also unwraps a greater philosophical debate about the effect that technology could have on definitions of real-world activity. As virtual reality and simulation continue to develop, becoming ever more sophisticated and integrated into real-life business and the world of work, perhaps there is the potential for these activities to be a new reality, supplanting the need for the "real" task at all.

Despite the challenges of definition described above, the basic premise of authenticity, when applied to learning, does seem to have been appropriated by the education community, borne out by several subsequent papers which draw upon (and cite) the three-part framework of Newmann et al. (1996), as well as referring specifically to the work of Wiggins (1989, 1998) to justify the authenticity of their pedagogy. Clayden et al. (1994) and Mitchell and O'Neill (1997) represent examples of this; their appropriation of an existing definition in order to investigate the authenticity of a specific educational approach or strategy, will be further explored in the next section: *Implementing Authentic Learning*.

Interestingly, Shaffer and Resnick (1999) have produced a piece that straddles both types of study (clarifying a definition as well as meeting the criteria). They begin with a review of the literature to establish four key themes, and suggest that four *kinds* of authenticity could be identified at that time: (a) learning that is personally meaningful for the learner, (b) learning that relates to the real world outside of school, (c) learning that provides an opportunity to think in the modes of a particular discipline, and (d) learning where the means of assessment reflect the learning process. They go on to propose that "Thick" Authenticity should encompass all four of these kinds of authenticity, thus proposing their own specific definition, based on the use of the term by multiple other educational researchers. Finally, they assess a specific pedagogical approach against these criteria, thus also falling into the category of literature

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discussed in the next section (*Implementing Authentic Learning*). For this reason, their work will be discussed in more detail towards the end of this chapter.

Perhaps motivated by attempts at clarity, during the first few years of the 21st century several papers focused their efforts in a far more specific way on delineating the authenticity of a task or learning activity rather than of learning or pedagogy as a whole. In this way, perhaps these authors were suggesting a way forward in providing a coherent, but philosophically narrower, account of type authenticity. For example, two subsequent attempts to define Authentic Learning are of particular interest for their slight shift in focus towards task design and their multi-faceted definitions (Reeves, Herrington and Oliver, 2002; Callinson and Lamb, 2004). Where most papers around this time set their evaluation of a proposed pedagogy against the general principles of Authentic Learning, as set out in the 1990s, these two articles make an attempt at clarity of definition, thus narrowing the field of potential pedagogies that might be deemed authentic, but pragmatically suggesting a practical framework for the design of authentic learning tasks. These are important for this argument about the challenges of definition as they represent a move towards a more prescriptive framework for task design, but in their differences, a yet broader range of interpretations of authentic learning.

Firstly, Reeves et al. (2002) developed ten components of Authentic Learning. This appears to be an extension of an earlier paper by two of the three co-authors (Herrington and Oliver, 2000) whereby nine elements of Situated Learning were identified, and in which the term authentic appeared in three of these: "authentic contexts", "authentic activities" and "authentic assessment". Reeves et al. (2002) focus more specifically on authentic activities but draw upon many of the characteristics from their first study. Their ten components of authentic activities are described as "critical characteristics", proposing that all ten have to be met for a learning activity to be deemed authentic, and likening their characteristics to a checklist.

Secondly, Callinson and Lamb (2004) proposed seven "signs" of Authentic Learning, advocating (in a rather non-committal way) thus: "Although this list is probably not exhaustive, the following are signs … of learning that can be identified as authentic." (p34). It is a limitation of this article, however, that it is not clear here whether their signs are critical characteristics (as in Reeves at al. (2002) above) or individual factors, any of which would indicate some level of authenticity. This limitation is further discussed in the second section of this chapter. Despite this, it is worth exploring what is included in these two very structured task-design frameworks, in order to demonstrate their similarities and differences. Both papers' ideas are shown in figure one below, in the order listed by the original authors.

Characteristics of Authentic Activities (Reeves, Herrington and Oliver, 2002)	Signs of Authentic Learning (Callinson and Lamb, 2004)
Real world relevance	Student-centred learning
Ill-defined tasks	Multiple resources accessed beyond school
Sustained period of time	Student acts as a scientific apprentice
Different perspectives	Student moves towards real research
Collaboration	Life-long learning beyond the assignment
Reflection	Process, product and performance assessment
Integrated across different subject areas	Instructional collaboration and interchangeable roles
Seamlessly integrated assessment	
Create polished products	
Diversity of outcome	

Fig. 1: Comparison table of Reeves et al.'s (2002) *Characteristics of Authentic Learning* with Callison and Lamb's (2004) *Signs of Authentic Learning.*

It is noticeable that the only shared vocabulary here (apart from the word authentic of course) is "real", "collaboration" and "assessment", and even these are being used in slightly different ways. For example, real-world relevance is connected by Reeves et al. (2002) to the work of "professionals in practice" (p564), but Callinson and Lamb (2004, p35) simply use the term as applied to students undertaking "real research"; Reeves et al. (2002) call for collaboration between learners, compared to "instructional

collaboration", which is "modelled by master teachers" in Callinson and Lamb's (2004, p35) article. In this way, similar constructivist principles are interpreted and expressed in quite different ways, reinforcing the sense that a single, workable definition of authentic learning is elusive.

It is also worth exploring Reeves et al.'s (2002) use of the term "ill-defined tasks" as this would appear to be a misnomer. On further investigation, the term ill-defined appears to refer to the problem-based nature of the task; identifying suitable methods for approaching the problem being part of the challenge set to students. As Saxena (2013) summarises: "By confronting students with uncertainty, ambiguity and conflicting perspectives, educators can help them mature their thinking and make them able to use problem-solving approaches effectively". Ultimately, problem-based learning (or learning through problem-solving) is a well-documented teaching approach. Like many of the parameters of authentic learning hereby described, there is nothing particularly new or innovative. Rather, it is the combination of all of these components that, Reeves et al. (2002) argue, make learning authentic.

Having proposed their definition, Reeves et al. (2002) go on to explore how a specific activity (the design of web-based courses) measures up against their criteria, and use their definition as a basis for improving the learning outcomes of that activity. Further analysis of Reeves et al.'s (2002) need to redefine authenticity before applying it to a learning task, could lead to the conclusion that this is the result of previous definitions not meeting their interpretation of the term. The same could be said of Callinson and Lamb (2004), who refine and adapt the criteria for Authentic Learning, then use it to promote the use of library media in US high schools. Thus, by redefining Authentic Learning before applying the concept to a specific task, these two papers add to the perception that Authentic Learning has no single workable definition.

Rule (2006), in the aforementioned *Journal of Authentic Learning*, reviewed forty-five articles chosen by School of Education faculty members at the State University of New York (SUNY), as representing best practice in Authentic Learning. She summarised four main themes:

1) the activity involves real-world problems that mimic the work of professionals in the discipline with presentation of findings to audiences beyond the classroom; 2) open-ended inquiry, thinking skills and metacognition are addressed; 3) students engage in discourse and social learning in a community of learners; and 4) students are empowered through choice to direct their own learning in relevant project work.

As noted earlier, whilst these ideas are interesting and present a fairly concise way of defining authentic learning, the reliability of Rule's findings can be questioned. The fact that the Journal was a transient, non-peer-reviewed publication gives her definition less credence. The method employed – that of using an inductive approach based on forty-five contributions from her colleagues at SUNY – also has well documented pitfalls, such as questions about the certainty of knowledge derived in this way. Particularly, in the fields of applied and social sciences (such as education), pre-existing theoretical ideas and assumptions are often seen to influence, and in some cases nullify, the conclusions drawn. Specifically, in this instance it is not clear whether Rule's colleagues have studied and defined authentic learning, before selecting their examples, and therefore how expert their judgment is for determining best practice in authentic learning.

Nonetheless, whilst these themes reflect the general (but rather vague) idea of Authentic Learning shared by the authors examined so far, they offer no firm conclusions. The different interpretations examined in this chapter indicate a broad acceptance of the principles of Authentic Learning, but a failure to agree on a structured set of criteria to define and measure Type Authenticity in an educational context. As discussed previously, type authenticity is based upon the premise that a set of objective criteria can be defined and agreed against which objects of that type can be assessed. As has been illustrated in this section, a broad description of authentic pedagogy has emerged, but there is no agreement about Type Authenticity, and the specific, objective criteria upon which this label is based. Therefore, there is no agreement upon the definition of authenticity as it relates to a type of learning. One possible explanation for the nebulous nature of authentic learning is that Type

Authenticity is being applied to pedagogy, when pedagogy itself is such an all-encompassing term, and often used to mean different things.

Watkins and Mortimore (1999) address the issue of pedagogy being something of a misused term for a broad range of teaching strategies and approaches. They explain how definitions of pedagogy are often full of assumptions about conceptions of teaching; the context, content, the "age and stage of learners" (p8) and purpose of the learning all having a significant impact on how pedagogy is perceived and what it includes or excludes. Unsurprisingly then, applying a similarly ill-defined term such as Authentic Learning to pedagogy, could be said to further complicate an already complex concept.

Implementing Authentic Learning

Returning to papers which focus less on the definition and more on the implementation of Authentic Learning, a whole raft of literature seeks to document elements of Authentic Learning within a specific context or chosen learning design, and thus justifies a specific approach or pedagogy as authentic.

Early examples of this include Clayden et al. (1994), who focus on the tension between authentic practices of particular academic domains and the culture of schooling (specifically, discussing the differences between how science experiments are conducted in high school and how they happen in the real world of scientists). Authenticity, they claim, rests upon making the culture of schooling more in tune with real-world practices. Secondly, Mitchell and O'Neill (1997) recommend four "Authentic" English projects for teachers to use with gifted and talented pupils, this time basing their claims of authenticity on the rationale that their tasks "have a real payoff or their products will be used." Thus the early definitions proposed in the papers by Wiggins (1989) and Newmann et al. (1996) - promoting disciplined habits of thinking by creating knowledge that is meaningful to students in contexts that have relevance in the world beyond school - appear to have been assimilated into educational recommendations at the time. Notice here that these papers are situated within science teaching and gifted and talented programmes respectively; two of the

key contextual considerations which emerge when examining an overview of some of the key papers in this field.

A sample of studies post-2000 were selected for their specific structure: an interpretation of Authentic Learning is applied to a specific learning activity and evaluated. As described in the Methodology chapter, these were identified using a keyword search for Authentic Learning within the ERIC database, and filtered by reading abstracts and ascertaining whether a specific learning strategy or pedagogy is evaluated against a definition of authentic learning. One paper (Diamond, Middleton and Mather, 2011) made use of Rule's (2006) definition; this was eliminated for the reasons specified earlier about the reliability of a non-peer-reviewed article. There were also papers that involved one or more of the seminal advocates of authentic learning as an author (such as Herrington), so these were also eliminated to reduce bias in the sample of definitions identified. Additionally, it was notable that in several cases (for example: Bolin et al., 2005; Kearney, 2012; Messengale et al., 2016) Authentic Learning appeared as a key word, but further reading ascertained that the term was not specifically defined, nor was authentic learning specifically interpreted; rather, the meaning of this was assumed. Issues surrounding the specific use of the term authentic as an everyday word meaning genuine (for example) will be brought up again in the later chapter (8), Authentic Education: Hindrance or Help?

On reviewing a sample of nine remaining articles concerned with the application of Authentic Learning principles in practice, it is interesting that seven of these studies situate their pedagogical intervention within science-based subjects and/or within Higher Education (see Figure 2). Following a synopsis of the studies, these are the two of the issues that will be discussed, along with key points pertaining to the definition used, web-based learning, and Gifted and Talented programmes. Thus figure 2 presents these studies grouped accordingly by definition used.

	Author(s)	Subject	Learning Context	Definition used
1	Lombardi (2007)	On-line learning; cross curricular	US Higher Education	Reeves et al. (2002) – ten characteristics
2	Smith, Butcher, Litvin and Frash (2015)	Travel and Tourism	US Higher education	Reeves et al. (2002) – ten characteristics
3	Riddell (2018)	English	Canada Higher Education	Reeves et al. (2002) – ten characteristics
4	Pu, Wu, Chiu and Huang (2016)	Nursing	Taiwan Vocational Education	Herrington and Oliver (2000) – nine elements of Situated Learning
5	Stein, Issacs and Andrews (2004)	Business Management	Australian Higher Education	Real-world and personally meaningful to learners
6	Murphy, Lunn and Jones (2006)	Physics	UK Secondary Education	Real-world and personally meaningful to learners
7	Renzulli, Gentry and Reis (2004)	Cross curricular	Gifted and talented (US Secondary Education)	Real-world and personally meaningful to learners
8	Westberg and Leppien (2017)	Cross curricular	Gifted and talented (US Secondary Education)	Real-world and personally meaningful to learners
9	Wald and Harland (2017)	Ecology	New Zealand Higher Education	Real-world, personally meaningful to the learner *and teacher as authentic self*

Fig. 2: An overview of papers identified and the subject/context of their implemented pedagogy, grouped by definition used.

A more detailed review of these articles reveals that, as anticipated, conflicting definitions of Authentic Learning are represented here. The main difference being that (generally) they either use a very prescriptive, ten-part definition, or they use a much broader "real world tasks that are personally meaningful to the learner" definition. The ten-part definition by Reeves et al. (2002) has been appropriated by four researchers as the basis for measuring the authenticity of their own pedagogy. One of these papers uses an earlier incarnation of this work (Herrington and Oliver, 2000) which in fact defines Situated Learning, but which the researchers erroneously refer to as nine elements of Authentic Learning. Situated learning is subtly different, holding authenticity as only a small part of the concept. This variation will be further examined in the next chapter on the theoretical context of authentic learning.

Based on the findings depicted in Figure 2, four themes have been identified as requiring more in-depth analysis. Very briefly, these are scientific enquiry, the world wide web, Gifted and Talented/Higher Education programmes and personal meaning.

The first finding that emerges from this review has been alluded to earlier, in using the example by Meyers and Nulty (2009). This theme can be summarised thus: the pedagogy best suited to Authentic Learning incorporates scientific enquiry tasks, situated predominantly within the natural and applied sciences. This can be seen in studies 1, 3, 6 and 9 (Figure 2). Lombardi (2007), in example 1, provides a plethora of examples of Authentic Learning from ecology, engineering and archaeology (utilising real data from satellite images, topography surveys, structure measurements, for example). On considering this observation further, it is suggested that this possibly ties in with the distinctive and definitive culture that pervades the natural and applied sciences, such as the clearly identifiable discipline associated with the scientific method. This can be linked to the idea of Authentic Learning including the opportunity to think in the mode of a particular discipline and to apply learning to real world issues (Shaffer and Resnick, 1999). This particular concept lends itself well to being explored in the context of one of the underlying principles of Authentic Learning, communities of practice (Lave and Wenger, 1991), which will be investigated further in the next chapter.

Secondly, it could be pertinent that the rise of authentic learning as a buzzword coincides with the wide-spread use of the internet and web-based technology in education. Some of the studies in Figure 2 (Lombardi, 2007; Pu et al., 2016; Wald and Harland, 2017), as well as the Reeves et al. (2002) article and the Shaffer and Resnick (1999) article referred to previously, all proceed to evaluate digital/web-based learning activities against their prescribed authentic learning criteria.

Although the concepts underpinning authentic learning are much older, it is apparent that many of the studies claiming authentic learning do so by incorporating significant use of the internet and online learning into their pedagogy; it seems as though authenticity can be more readily achieved if learners are able to connect on-line, and experience a virtual-real world. Lombardi (2007, p7) asserts: "Authentic Learning can rely on educational software developed to simulate typical scenarios that professionals encounter in real-world settings" and furthermore, through access to online research communities, "learners are able to gain a deeper sense of a discipline as a special "culture" shaped by specific ways of seeing and interpreting the world" (p2). These are valuable assertions, but it should be pointed out that Lombardi's study was funded by the EduCause initiative – an organisation that promotes "advancing learning through IT innovation". Nonetheless, she is certainly not the only researcher to link authentic learning to the use of digital learning platforms. Indeed, as early as 1999, Shaffer and Resnick were promoting the use of computational learning environments, which "can provide students with personal connections to their work and with ways of connecting their learning to the broader world" (p211).

Ross - Hubbell (2006) cites several examples of how technology has been used within Montessori Education to create "authentic learning environments, tasks, audiences, sources and assessments" (p16). Some of these include learning how to act and make decisions in a hurricane, to submitting plans for a new playground and using digital sensors to gather scientific data, as opposed to relying on a pre-constructed data set. Adding authenticity to the learning environment, she expounds, helps to further the Montessori mission "to create lifelong learners of both students and educators" (p20). This seems to further substantiate the view that the timeline of increasing momentum

about the idea of authentic learning appears to correlate with access to the world-wide web and use of digital technologies for learning. Perhaps the world-wide web was the catalyst whereby the idea of authentic learning gained momentum? This too would seem to correlate with research into publication trends described in the Methodology chapter (2).

Thirdly, it could be argued that two exceptions to the arguments raised above are the gifted and talented examples offered by Renzulli and Reis (2014) and Westberg and Lappien (2017). In these proposals, students are in a position to choose their own inquiry, pursue their individual interests, and conduct real research to be disseminated to a genuine community outside of school. Thus there is no specific bias towards scientific enquiry or use of digital technologies. In a similar way, there is a preponderance of studies that set their authentic tasks in (non-science and technology) Higher Education contexts, where conditions appear to mirror these gifted and talented examples. In University programmes there is (arguably) more freedom of choice, greater specialism related to individual interests as well as a range of genuine research communities. Thus, of all of the examples in Figure 2, these contexts appear to offer a plausible opportunity for the realization of an Authentic Learning task; freedom of choice and originality of tasks being key to Authentic Learning designs.

However, both of these contexts raise an important question about the accessibility and inclusivity of authentic learning tasks, as well as the issue of choice. If gifted and talented programmes, as well as Higher Education courses, seemingly have the best opportunity to implement genuine authentic tasks, the inclusivity of Authentic Learning could be called into question. Could there be a lack of application of Authentic Learning tasks, as defined here, to learners with complex or additional needs? Certainly, there do not appear to be any studies that apply these ideas in those contexts. The issue of choice is an interesting one too, for how much freedom of choice do students really have? This question links to the point raised in the Methodology chapter, about the need to analyse value-laden terms. The issue of choice represents a perennial problem in the philosophy of education and could form the basis for a thesis in its own right.

Nonetheless, freedom of choice is an important concept in relation to its role in Moral Authenticity and will therefore be exemplified in later discussions of Learner Authenticity and specifically when investigating education as social reproduction.

Fourthly, returning to the definition used for a moment, it is also notable that five papers reviewed include the notion of Authentic Learning activities being meaningful to the learner, as proposed by Newmann and Wehlege (1993). The majority of authors in represented in Figure 2 incorporate this element into their definition of Authentic Learning, hinting at the Moral Authenticity of the learner, but focusing primarily on Type Authenticity (simply defined as a real-world learning task or activity). For example, Renzulli et al. (2004, p.74) advocate "real life problems with a personal frame of reference that involves an emotional commitment within the student". Shaffer and Resnick (1999) in their meta-analysis of definitions of Authentic Learning, also identify elements of personal or Moral Authenticity as key, in addition to outlining the characteristics that describe the task. As with the majority of the studies in Figure 2, they make only passing reference to this, incorporating little or no philosophical analysis of the concept of personal meaning. This further complicates the issue of finding an objective set of criteria to measure the authenticity of a task against and, it could be argued, underpins the confusion that arises surrounding the definition of authentic learning.

Therefore, all of the authors who refer to their authentic tasks as being personally meaningful to learners, tend to extend the definition of Authentic Learning into the realms of Moral Authenticity, before applying their definition to a task. This further compounds the complexity of the issue with regard to exactly what the critical characteristics are and makes drawing conclusions about the authenticity of a specific activity or pedagogy even more elusive. Aspects of Moral Authenticity, both for the learner and the teacher, are to be discussed in much greater depth in this study (Chapters 6 and 7), but suffice it to say, limiting authentic education to lying within a specific category of tasks or activities would appear to be beset with assumptions and contradictions about exactly how authenticity should be defined in education. An example of this is the study by Wald and Harland (2017), who attempt to assign

authenticity to the learning task but find it impossible to separate the activity from its personal connection to the teacher and the learner (see Chapter 8).

Another important point to return to in relation to the implementation of Authentic Learning is this notion of critical characteristics, as highlighted above. Questions can be raised here as to whether the label Authentic Learning can be ascribed to any activity or pedagogy provided at least one aspect of the chosen criteria is met, or whether all of the parameters set out in the initial definition need to be fulfilled for the activity to be deemed authentic.

In this vein, Vos (2011) considers whether authenticity is a yes/no binary concept or whether it has an ordinal more-or-less quality. Vos (2011) argues that a definition of authenticity should be binary and refer to "unconditional originals", thus all of the characteristics that make up the criteria for Type Authenticity would be critical. That is, they must be present in order for the learning task to be deemed authentic. However, Wald and Harland (2017, p754), in justifying their simulated online learning environment, conclude: "an educational task will never be authentic as a whole; rather, it may contain authentic aspects". This represents an important difference in interpretation notable in several studies investigated in the *Defining Authentic Learning* section above and suggests that Authentic Learning could be a looser concept than that for which a definition is being sought here, perhaps part of a broader pedagogical approach. It could be proposed that attempts to implement specific, unequivocal parameters for authenticity in education raise issues of definition. This point was also explored by Shaffer and Resnick (1999) and, as indicated in the section *Defining Authentic Learning*, further analysis of their work follows.

Shaffer and Resnick (1999) proposed that the term authentic was being applied "loosely and inconsistently" (p195) to a wide range of learning activities and contexts (hence the suggestion above, that it should not be so tightly defined). They suggest that four *kinds* of authenticity could be identified in the literature at that time: (a) learning that is personally meaningful for the learner, (b) learning that relates to the real world outside of school, (c) learning that provides an opportunity to think in the

modes of a particular discipline, and (d) learning where the means of assessment reflect the learning process. Within their study they identify various authors who, by virtue of their proposed pedagogy meeting just one of these characteristics, extrapolate and claim authentic learning. Thus, any one of these various interpretations of authenticity could have been applied in a particular paper but all were purported by Shaffer and Resnick (1999) to be Authentic Learning.

Examining their meta-analysis methodology in more detail however, reveals a possible flaw in these claims. Numerous papers are cited by Shaffer and Resnick (1999) as exemplifying Authentic Learning, but further reading and investigation reveals that these papers often make only passing reference to the term authenticity and thus the quality of Shaffer and Resnick's investigative method (a search for the terms authentic and authenticity in the ERIC catalogue, followed by a random sample of 100 articles out of 2011) could be called into question. By using this terminology, but in a more general, everyday language sense, the papers' authors could simply be advocating their pedagogy as an effective means for the teaching or assessment of the subject in question, and may not necessarily be making broader claims of authenticity in the type or the moral sense. This was noted in the examples given above (Bolin et al., 2005; Kearney, 2012; Messengale et al., 2016); perhaps numerous authors on the subject have unintentionally misappropriated the word authentic, and therefore the studies appear erroneously in Shaffer and Resnick's (1999) aforementioned meta-analysis? Such issues surrounding the use of the term authentic will be brought up again in Chapter 8.

On examining Shaffer and Resnick's (1999) use of meta-analysis as a method of synthesizing a body of literature in the social sciences, Densombe (2014) advises that generally this is a difficult process to implement in a field such as education. Methods are varied and findings are less amenable to being amalgamated in the way that meta-analysis requires. Meta–analysis normally follows a systematic review and involves aggregation of the data from studies that share a methodology. It is generally utilized in health, medical and pharmaceutical research. Denscombe (2017) furthermore, emphasizes the importance of evaluating the quality of articles brought up by an initial

search during a systematic review, and of being explicit about the processes used (e.g. initial search, review of abstracts, review of methods). This seems to be in direct contrast with Shaffer and Resnick's (1999) reported method of reviewing articles (i.e. taking a random sample).

Following their ostensibly questionable extrapolation of the various interpretations of Authentic Learning in 100 articles, Shaffer and Resnick (1999) then go on to argue that these four kinds of authenticity (mentioned above) should be viewed as "interdependent and mutually supporting" (p 195). Thus, in their definition of Authentic Learning, all of these four elements must be encompassed by the activity (they term this "thick" authenticity), and in this way, they anticipate Vos's (2011) advocacy of authenticity as a binary concept. They develop this argument by testing a learning activity based on computational media (a now-dated term meaning digital technologies) against this premise and conclude that their computational learning environment meets their criteria for thick authenticity.

In this way, Shaffer and Resnick (1999) could be said to be seeking to define Authentic Learning through exemplification. This is a point brought up in the previous section as related to Rule's (2006) inductive method. Whilst inductive reasoning has its merits, particularly in the applied and social science fields, such as education, it should also be approached with caution to ensure that pre-existing theoretical ideas and assumptions do not over-ride the conclusions arrived at.

To conclude this chapter, then, this documentation of specific learning activities, to justify them as authentic, still has some currency and momentum. The underlying principle when it comes to Type Authenticity and Authentic Learning tasks is the assumption that authenticity can indeed be measured, just as Taylor (1991) proposes that in order for something to be accurately labelled as authentic, it must fit a set of objective criteria. Real-world situations, open-ended tasks and collaboration are some of the themes that reoccur throughout. Thus, proponents of authentic learning appear to have taken this constructivist and situated understanding of learning and extrapolated their particular pedagogical strategy from it, and labelling it Authentic

Learning. Examples related to gifted and talented projects, the natural sciences, and use of web-based learning abound. However, these concepts can be contested in relation to the underpinning educational philosophies associated with these themes. Despite a notable academic enthusiasm for this particular type of educational intervention, the value of such activity is assumed. Thus, the underlying assumptions about the nature of learning and the value of specific activities, require further investigation and will therefore be explored in the next chapter.

Chapter 4 - Authentic Learning: the theoretical context

The concept of Authentic Learning draws influence from several well-known teaching and learning theories. Elements of Experiential Learning, Constructivism, and Situated Learning all feature to some extent in definitions and descriptions of Authentic Learning tasks and activities. These theories will be briefly described in this section, in order to further develop an understanding of where Authentic Learning ideas come from, and to highlight the underlying assumptions made about the nature and aims of learning in the previous chapter.

Many authors refer to their Authentic Learning definitions, or their proposed Authentic Learning tasks, as having roots in Dewey's progressive educational paradigm. A synopsis of his work is therefore included here, to demonstrate the value system underpinning the ideas of many advocates of Authentic Learning. Central to Dewey's philosophy, in *Education and Experience* (1938), is the tenet that education is about the "development of curiosity, suggestion, and habits of exploring and testing" (pp 45-6). As a prolific, and multi-disciplinary author Dewey also emphasized the need to consider the social environment of the learner and the connection between education and psychology (Thomas, 2013). Resonating with the thinking of Locke and Rousseau before him, for Dewey, education should focus on knowledge and "nurture of mind" more than "covering the ground" in terms of information (p52). Crucially, he also emphasized the importance of reflective thinking as central to education: "education isn't about learning facts – it's about being sceptical and critical" (Thomas, 2013, p48).

Thus, Dewey is widely credited with the concept of teaching children to think critically, epitomized by tasks that necessitate experimental inquiry and problem solving. However, his associated thesis of learning (and learners) being situated in a particular culture, means that Dewey also considered the need for education to mirror the political (democratic) organisation of society. Thus, Dewey's view of authentic education was bound up with democracy, which he viewed as the best form of government. He held the view, along with other members of the Progressive

movement in American society, that democracy would evolve over time, necessitating that truly authentic education would therefore do likewise.

In this way, Dewey was more concerned with systems of education as a whole, particularly those for the education of children, than with specific learning activities and approaches. Given the culture and organisation of schooling, and the lower uptake of further or higher education at the time of Dewey's writing, it is perhaps unsurprising that his progressive ideas were most concerned with a more holistic approach to educating children as life-long learners and critical thinkers, in preparation for the democratic society in which they would grow.

Furthermore, having raised these ideas in a period when education had become more formalized and structured than in the time of Rousseau and Locke, Dewey was able to have a greater impact on the education system than the thinkers of the 17th and 18th Century. Policy makers began to integrate some of these ideas into concrete recommendations, and the subsequent shaping of education in the UK. For example, the Hadow Report of the inter-war years, the Plowden Report of 1967, and the dismantling of the selective system in the 1960s and 1970s, all contain echoes of Dewey's ideas (Thomas, 2013). It was not perhaps until the 1980's that Kolb (1984) began to develop these ideas into concrete learning activities, coining the well-known term Experiential Learning. This was an approach that gained great momentum and a huge following amongst educators, becoming a staple ingredient of teacher training, and especially favoured by providers of alternative education. Some examples of this will be further explored in Chapter 8, where they have been explicitly linked to the Experiential Learning principles of Summerhill School (Neill, 1960) and Unschooling (Holt, 1967).

Thus, as summarised here, Dewey's influential views on the connection between education and experience, have undoubtedly been integrated into the consciousness of many advocates of Authentic Learning, and are frequently drawn upon in the literature reviews on the subject. Indeed, several advocates of Authentic Learning tasks lay claim to Dewey's influence, but this does not mean that Dewey's ideas have

always been appropriated fully or accurately. Wald and Harland (2017, p753) for example claim that what renders Authentic Learning activities "significant and worthwhile" is Dewey's influential legacy of "dismantling the wall between education and real life" and further expound that, for Dewey, "the ultimate significance of an idea is to be found in its consequences when applied in the real world". Although Dewey (and his followers) have been criticised for an over reliance on empiricism (which appears to be exemplified here), it could also be argued, however, that some of the language Wald and Harland (2017) use is somewhat poetic and denotes a rather simplistic interpretation of Dewey's empirical analysis. For Dewey (1938), the fundamental principles of effective learning were much more complex than making activities applicable in the real world.

As a further illustration of this point, Shaffer and Resnick (1999) claim that Dewey advocates the purpose of learning activities as "intrinsically worthwhile". One would assume that, by this, they are referring to that interpretation of Authentic Learning mentioned in the previous chapter whereby tasks should be meaningful to the learner (see figure 2 for examples). However, in expanding on this, Shaffer and Resnick (1999) link Dewey's ideas to "practical projects drawn from genuine problems in the field of study" (p201). Their reference to Dewey here raises questions about their interpretation of intrinsically worthwhile, for they seem to be attributing the worth of the projects to the field of study (intrinsically worthwhile to the discipline), rather than to the learner. To expand further, they appear to be linking the authenticity of these projects to the genuineness of the problem in the field of study, rather than to a genuine meaning for the learner. Thus, it should be noted here that the use of intrinsic by Dewey (1938) was firmly attributed to the learner's motivation, as influenced by the society in which they were situated.

Shaffer and Resnick (1999) could therefore be criticised for assuming that learner motivation would align with the needs of the field of study or discipline in which the task is situated. Thus, Dewey's (and later Kolb's) ideas can realistically only be said to have had an influence on, but by no means define, Authentic Learning. Certainly, learning is not made authentic just by being experiential.

In a similar vein, Constructivism could be said to be a feature of discussions about Authentic Learning concepts but is by no means a defining principle. By drawing together the work of key theorists including Dewey, Piaget, Bruner and Vygotsky, Constructivism emerged in mainstream education during the 1980's, provoking widespread adjustment in the design of educational tasks and environments (Bates, 2016). Constructivists believe that the learning process depends upon knowledge being constructed by the learners, rather than on the passive transmission of information. Some Constructivists base their views on the social interactions between learners, and thus embrace the co-construction of knowledge, whilst others argue that the construction of knowledge is predominantly based on individual prior experience as the source of meaning. Nonetheless, all Constructivist orientations share the view that a learner's understanding of the information being taught, is profoundly influenced by their prior knowledge and their social context (Newmann et al., 1996; Bialystock, 2016).

Thus, a Constructivist learning environment would be one in which learning is dependent on the learner's meaningful engagement with the subject matter and on a social setting that exemplifies values such as trust and collaboration (Newmann et al. 1996). Similarly, Ertmer and Newby (1993) in examining the critical features of a Constructivist learning design conclude that it is critical that learning occur(s) in realistic settings and that the selected learning tasks be relevant to the students' lived experience. Referring back to the prominent definitions of Authentic Learning in the previous chapter, a direct correlation with Authentic Learning's key features - real-world and personally meaningful to the learners - is explicit.

In this way, initiatives designed to promote Authentic Learning often appear indistinguishable from the educational outcomes of Constructivism (Bialystock, 2016); many authors use, and make reference to, constructivist philosophy as a substantial foundation for their design of authentic learning environments and activities (Reeves et al. 2002). However, it has become apparent that this is not without its problems. Analysis of Authentic Learning characteristics in the previous chapter highlighted a range of conditions that could (or should) be met, in order to design an authentic task.

If these characteristics are being pre-determined by the designer of the learning task, a question arises about how much they can truly uphold personal meaning for the learner or be aligned with the learner's lived experience. Petraglia (1998) argues that the issue of pre-authentication (by the educator – explored in the previous chapter) seems to contradict the Constructivist principles that underpin Authentic Learning. These arguments about Experiential Learning being intrinsically worthwhile to the discipline, rather than to the learner, and about Constructivism necessitating pre-authentication, will re-emerge in the chapter on Learner Authenticity.

Nonetheless, as ideas about Experiential Learning and Constructivism gained momentum in mainstream education, new theories of Cognitive Apprenticeships and Situated Learning also began to emerge, further laying the foundations for Authentic Learning. Collins, Brown and Newman (1987) developed six stages of Cognitive Apprenticeship, which involved implementing the instructional techniques of modelling, coaching, scaffolding, articulation, reflection and exploration. Collaborative social interaction and the social construction of knowledge are key components in Brown, Collins and Duguid's (1989) development of Cognitive Apprenticeships to encompass Situated Cognition. In this theory teachers model their skills in real-world situations, and learning and cognition are fundamentally situated within their applied contexts. Therefore, learning is seen in terms of an individual's increasingly effective performance across situations rather than in terms of an accumulation of knowledge, since what is known is co-determined by the participants (in an education setting, the learners and the teacher) and the context.

Situated Learning, as a model of instruction, was also proposed by Brown, Collins and Duguid (1989). At its simplest, Situated Learning is learning that takes place in the same context as the one in which the knowledge is used in real life, but more fundamentally, is a social process whereby knowledge is co-constructed. Lave and Wenger (1991) introduced the concept of a "community of practice" or "legitimate peripheral participation" into Situated Learning, suggesting that such learning is situated in a specific context or discipline and embedded within a particular social and physical environment. This was mentioned in the previous chapter, for example, when

discussing the preponderance of Authentic Learning studies that are situated within the sciences and draw upon immersion in the scientific method as their authentic community of practice. However, Lave and Wenger (1991) assert that Situated Learning "is not an educational form, much less a pedagogical strategy" (p40). In this way, they intentionally avoid prescribing teaching techniques or strategies. Instead, they describe Situated Learning as a way of understanding learning, or an analytical viewpoint; a stance that some subsequent advocates of the approach prefer not to take.

For example, contrary to Lave and Wenger's intentions, Herrington and Oliver (2000), advance the work of Brown, Collins and Duguid (1989) by creating an "instructional design framework" for Situated Learning. This work pre-dates Herrington and Oliver's later work on Authentic Learning design, as discussed in Chapter 3, but the use of the term authentic is notable, particularly for its use in its undefined, implicit form, denoting that which is real. Herrington and Oliver's nine "Situated Learning design elements" (2000) are: Authentic Contexts; Authentic Activities; Expert Performances; Multiple roles and perspectives; Collaborative construction of knowledge; Reflection; Articulation; Coaching and Scaffolding; Authentic Assessment.

Interestingly, within the study, it becomes apparent that their use of the term *authentic* requires further clarification. In breaking down Authentic Contexts, Authentic Activities and Authentic Assessment, to include real-world relevance, ill-defined activities, sustained investigation and multiple indicators of learning (for example), there are clear parallels here with their later investigations into Authentic Learning per se. Indeed, the conclusion to this study reads: "the study provides a step in the quest to find the meaning of what is truly critical in pedagogy and the instructional design models that can best serve that pursuit" (Herrington and Oliver, 2000, p45). Given that these authors subsequently went on to publish several papers on authentic learning (Reeves, Herrington and Oliver, 2002; Herrington, Oliver and Reeves, 2003; Herrington, Reeves and Oliver, 2006; 2010), perhaps their Situated Learning design had a direct influence on the rise of Authentic Learning as an educational concept. It could be surmised that the fact that the word authentic began

to emerge so prominently in their definitions, gave rise to explorations of Authentic Learning as a concept in its own right, and the "coining of the phrase" so to speak. It should also be noted that this study, like most of the work by these authors, is concerned with promoting the use of technology in higher education, specifically the design of multimedia learning environments for university students; a theme that has been explored in some detail in the Authentic Learning chapter (Figure 2).

It has been argued therefore, that Authentic Learning is essentially a concept that draws upon elements of previous theories to justify and promote a specific type of learning task. The difference between Authentic Learning and the other theories examined here is that there is a relatively small body of literature on Authentic Learning, whereas Experiential Learning and Constructivism for example, have achieved widespread recognition amongst educators. Perhaps this is testament to the fact that Authentic Learning as a framework for pedagogical design, does not offer anything particularly new or original to the landscape of educational theory, but simply introduces the word Authentic in a bid to validate some already long held beliefs about effective pedagogy or "what good education should be"? This notion of effective pedagogy or good education is one that deserves further exploration.

A brief overview of this argument will be introduced here, with further analysis in the forthcoming chapters when discussing the purpose of education. By exploring the teaching and learning theories that underpin Authentic Learning, assumptions about the fundamental nature of good education are brought to the fore. One analysis of the core values behind the theories of Experiential Learning, Constructivism and Situated Learning leads to the conclusion that their claimed authenticity may be heavily influenced by prevailing social and political ideals. Alternatively, it could be argued that these theories are based on timeless, fundamental philosophical concepts of good education that supersede societal boundaries. These different theoretical approaches will underpin the conceptions of education discussed in the next three chapters on Moral, Teacher and Learner Authenticity.

Chapter 5 - Authenticity in Education: the philosophical context

Thus far, this thesis has focused on Authentic Education as it pertains to the learning task. This has been defined as Type Authenticity, whereby the label authentic is applied to an external object (in this case the educational task or approach), irrespective of any individuals involved in the experience of said task. When looking at the authenticity of the experience of education, by the teacher and the learner, the focus shifts to an internal, personal or Moral Authenticity. This chapter will introduce some key philosophical concepts surrounding authenticity in education, as well as Moral Authenticity itself, in order to give some points of reference for the following two chapters on Teacher and Learner Authenticity.

Bialystock (2016), on placing authenticity in a philosophical context, begins with the notions of truth and value. These are two of the most prominent terms used in the debate about authenticity in education, and thus this chapter will begin by exploring these concepts. Truth is also important to this discussion, being inextricably linked with the most fundamental definition of all things authentic; that which is genuine, real and true. Truth would seem to be a useful starting point for introducing essentialist and existentialist views of the self, not least because being "true to oneself" is a reoccurring theme in discussions of Moral Authenticity. In order to unpick the concept of Moral Authenticity, the truth about what defines our self-hood needs to be understood. The difference between an essentialist and an existentialist perspective on this will be explained in detail as this chapter progresses.

Value opens up two distinct discussion strands, the first about virtue ethics, in terms of what it means to live well and to strive for an authentic existence. The second discussion puts forward authenticity as a cultural construct, related to the more general point that a way of being which is particularly valued by certain cultures, may not be by others. These will be discussed separately, but consideration will also be given to how they influence each other. Thus, in this chapter, essentialism, existentialism, value ethics and authenticity as a cultural construct are the main

philosophical threads to be introduced. It should be highlighted here, that in depth analysis of these concepts inevitably opens up numerous philosophical debates, puzzles and conundrums. In this chapter, however, the arguments and perspectives will be explored as they pertain to authenticity in education and to hence to Teacher and Learner Authenticity specifically.

In the final section of this chapter, Moral Authenticity will be contextually analysed. Firstly, that section will examine the importance of establishing the underlying philosophical assumptions and difficulties that surround Moral Authenticity, and secondly the difference between morality and Moral Authenticity will be explored. Furthermore, consideration will be given to the terms *personal* versus Moral Authenticity as well as the possibility of some synthesis between Type and Moral Authenticity when it comes to education.

Truth

Discussions of authenticity in education draw upon two contrasting philosophical theories, which may be broadly characterised as essentialism and existentialism. Essentialism is an important theme in Western philosophy, reoccurring in major philosophical thought from Plato and Aristotle through to Descartes and modern feminist and gender essentialist thinkers such as Grosz (1995). Fundamentally, in relation to authenticity, the essentialist tradition is explicitly aligned with the idea of being true to a self that can be objectively defined and characterised independently of the individual.

Existentialism is another key theme in Western philosophy, proposed by Sartre, Neitzche and Heidegger, for example, who would claim that the self is defined by one's experiences and choices rather than being independently predetermined. A much-used philosophical term, existentialist thought has a range of broader and more complex arguments behind it. The ways that these arguments influence discussions of Moral Authenticity in education will be further explored in this thesis. As discussed in the Methodology chapter, existentialism (like freedom) is another often-used term in educational literature that could be subject to a detailed conceptual analysis in its

own right, so every attempt will be made here to highlight and explain the key elements of existentialism as they pertain to Authentic Education, and to avoid the somewhat surface use that is evident in some of the papers reviewed in the course of this study (e.g. Kreber and Klampfleitner, 2013).

Both terms will be further defined and explored in this section in the context of Moral Authenticity. Essentialism should not be thought of in direct opposition to existentialism for there are other aspects to both philosophies that do not contrast so readily. However, the fundamental difference in relation to their approaches to moral authenticity is a useful one.

To further clarify, an essentialist view of human existence presupposes there to be a foundation or core to what makes the self; to be authentic is to cleave to this essential self-hood. This foundation or core is something that is simply part of an individual identity, the nature part of the nature-nurture debate, so to speak. Authenticity, therefore, and to be authentically human, denotes an overlap between one's behaviour or choices and who one really is; it is a relationship of consistency between one's actions and the foundational identity of the self. For example, if one is essentially a kind person, this will be borne out in one's choices and actions. It would also follow that, if one is unaware of this foundational true self, it may be possible to act inauthentically, or make inauthentic choices. Similarly, if one does not believe in an essence of what it is to be human (such as in existentialist thought), it would not be possible to be authentic. Further analysis of these ideas will follow in the *Value* section of this chapter.

Importantly, authenticity, from an essentialist perspective, could therefore be said to share similar characteristics to the Type Authenticity proposed by Carroll (2015), and used to analyse Authentic Learning in the earlier section of this thesis. Just as Type Authenticity is to correspond with, or be identical to some epistemological benchmark, so too is the essentialist relationship between personal authenticity and truth. Whilst authenticity from an essentialist stance primarily pertains to the personal and ontological (philosophically speaking, the nature of being), rather than the

epistemology of a learning activity or task (as in Authentic Learning), there is nonetheless a set of external criteria against which authenticity can be measured and there must be a correspondence between the criteria and the nature of being in order to claim authenticity.

One of the most influential discussions of the philosophical aspects of authenticity, and one which has influenced discussions of authenticity in education, is that of Charles Taylor (1991) who further explores this concept in proposing that a set of external criteria, resulting from dialogue and agreement, must exist in order to determine what does, and does not, correspond to the true self. In this way, Taylor (1991) takes the view that the truth of selfhood has an objective and knowable core. Arriving at these external criteria through dialogue and agreement leads to a clearer recognition of the self and therefore a greater opportunity for one to act authentically (in line with one's true nature). Bialystock (2016, p4) summarises, that despite "philosophical shortcomings", the essentialist stance can be summarised thus:

> The gist is that there is a truth about who one is (an object that is a candidate for authenticity), that this truth can be discovered or accessed (the know-ability of the object), and that authenticity is the condition of fidelity to that true self (the correspondence relation).

One criticism of Taylor, however, argues that the truth about the self is therefore not simply objective, but is subject to interpretation and culturally influenced agreed norms and values. This represents just one of the philosophical puzzles that arises during any exploration of Moral Authenticity and will be returned to in the *Value* section of this chapter.

An alternative view of the self stems from the existentialist tradition. This perspective has greatly influenced educational discussions of authenticity. In the existentialist literature, selfhood is constructed through free choices, rather than a predetermined identity or individual essence that exists independently of our circumstances. Of particular interest is the notion that authenticity is sometimes seen as being closely connected with individuality. Authenticity is arrived at by rejecting the notion of a

predetermined identity and acting freely to become who you choose to be. The underlying existential assumption here is that one's identity is formed as a result of one's unique experiences and the personal meaning afforded to them, and how we react to our circumstances is a free decision for each of us (Burnham and Papandreopoulous, 2019). There are distinct similarities with the fundamental subjective tenets of Constructivism here, as explored in the previous chapter. Constructivism (as in the construction of knowledge based on personal meaning and experience) is an important facet of any discussion of authenticity in education, and will be integral to subsequent investigations into Learner Authenticity (Chapter 7) but these ideas of free choice and individualism require further analysis when linked specifically with Moral Authenticity.

To an existentialist, an authentic existence arises from an "unflinching acceptance of freedom as the fundamental characteristic of human experience" (Bialystock, 2016, p5). Thus, any degree of authenticity is arrived at through the extent to which one's self has been determined through free choice. However, an ontological acceptance of freedom brings with it a more complex philosophical puzzle about what it means to be free.

To many existentialists, it is accepted that to be authentic is not necessarily to have total freedom to pursue a separateness and independence from others, but to recognise the influence of the society in which one is situated and act in a correspondingly purposive, responsible way. To be authentic is to be free to make your own choices, but one must acknowledge the place one holds in civil society, one's unique situation and commitment to others. In this way, choices are determined by the present context, current circumstance or *situation*. Additionally, freedom is only meaningful, and informed choices can only be made if one knows what possibilities are available.

Some writers on Moral Authenticity in education refer to Heidegger as an example of a philosopher who proposes an authentic mode of being with others by emphasisng the importance of situation. His concept of Dasein (the way human beings are) is

centred upon situation and being in the world. He claims that it is not possible to understand Dasein without reference to relations with others and the world in which one exists (Burnham and Papandreopoulous, 2019). Sherman (2009) provides further analysis and application of Heidegger's Dasein to Learner Authenticity, which will be revisited and further explored in the relevant chapter (Chapter 7).

As another key example of situated existential thinking, Burnham and Papandreopoulous (2019) developed Sartre's ideas on freedom in a way that encompasses situation and the importance of others. In an attempt to summarise Sartre's contribution to the debate on freedom, they propose that according to Sartre in *Notebooks for an Ethics*, our freedom must always be situated with respect to the judgements of others. Permitting and nurturing the freedom of others must be a central part in all of our projects and whatever our authentic project of existence is, it must be a project of freedom, for ourselves and for others (Burnham and Papandreopoulous, 2019). In this way, an important concept in this discussion of authenticity in education is raised; that one cannot disentangle the authenticity of the individual from the society in which he or she exists.

To further illustrate this argument, it may be useful to consider here what inauthenticity may look like. To most existentialists, to pretend that we are wholly determined by our circumstances would be inauthentic, an abdication of responsibility (Craig, 2002). Inauthenticity is generally associated with following the crowd, an unquestioning acceptance of the values of others. This poses a question about the positive social dimension of existentialism (explored above) about whether a collective form of existence could be anything other than inauthentic. This social, collective dimension represents an important aspect of authenticity in education, which will resurface in the next two chapters.

The crux of existentialism then, is that our self becomes the sum of our actions, rather than existing as a set of predetermined objective values and attributes that influence our actions, as in essentialist literature. Furthermore, implied in existentialism is the notion that to be authentic still alludes to a kind of correspondence, but this

correspondence is between a person's actions and how they think/choose to live rather than between actions and the essentialist pre-existing selfhood.

Hence, it can be concluded that, whether one takes an essentialist or an existentialist interpretation of the self, to be authentic in this personal or moral sense, is a way of being and corresponds to a true reference point (Bialystock, 2016), whether this is objectively or subjectively understood. Essentialists would argue that a subjective (existential) notion of selfhood cannot provide a secure reference point, and thus the concept of truth in these two viewpoints is incompatible. Furthermore, despite the importance of freedom and identity in a personally authentic way of being, it would appear that this is fraught with philosophical difficulties about what it is to be free and how much of our identity is influenced by our situation. These arguments will become a key feature in the chapters on Teacher and Learner Authenticity.

Value

In addition to the ontological truth-based foundations of personal authenticity described above, some writers, such as Williams (2002) argue that there are also value-based connotations in the use of the term authentic. It would appear, from the above argument, that being true to oneself is valuable in itself. However, Williams (2002) raises an important objection to this: "If there is such a thing as the real self of an individual, what reason is there to think that it must coincide with an underlying character of honor, considerateness and compassion?" (Williams, 2002, p182). In other words, the question arising here is whether one can live authentically by a set of values that many (or most) would judge as inappropriate or misguided, such as acting entirely in one's own interests, carrying out honour killings or conducting conversion therapy to cure homosexuality, for example. Williams (2002) argues here that the individuals remain authentic in that they are being true to their own personal values, and thus raises the possibility of an authentic criminal.

Furthering this argument, Williams (2002, p44) posits that the value of authenticity is composed of the twin virtues of "Accuracy and Sincerity" as these virtues allow groups to establish "relations of trust" (Williams, 2002, p57). By this he ascertains that a

community must have a mutual, accurate understanding of the value of certain behaviours and actions. In this instance then, it is essential (and assumed) that all parties understand the value of these actions and behaviours. This reintroduces the notion of dialogue and agreement, as raised by Taylor (1991) as well as that of societal and cultural norms which will be discussed in the section on virtue ethics below. Relations of trust as one of the keys to successful communities will also form an important backdrop to discussions of Teacher Authenticity in the next chapter.

Williams' (2002) twin virtues may also be further explored in the context of both Type Authenticity (and Authentic Learning specifically) as well as Moral Authenticity in education. In this way, Williams' argument would suggest that it is possible to assess whether writers on authenticity in both educational contexts are using the term authenticity appropriately. Accuracy as a virtue denotes correspondence with an external reality. Hence, where Authentic Learning is concerned, accuracy would mean adhering to the agreed criteria for Authentic Learning, and where Moral Authenticity is concerned, coinciding with the (essentialist) truth of our selfhood. The virtue of sincerity is played out in these scenarios in terms of belief that this is the most valuable course of action to achieve these goals. In an attempt to establish the relevance of Williams' claims to this thesis, the virtues of accuracy and sincerity will be applied to both Authentic Learning and Moral Authenticity.

To describe learning as authentic, as in the previous chapter, carries with it positive connotations about this type of educational activity, specifically the accuracy and sincerity with which the activity adheres to the criteria for Authentic Learning tasks. This assumes, however, that the agreed criteria add value to the task by making it more authentic and the best (most effective) type of learning task. This particular question of value as it relates to curriculum and learning tasks was briefly highlighted at the end of Chapter 4 (theoretical context), and it is appropriate to revisit it here.

The core principles of Constructivism, Situated Learning and Experiential Learning (as described in the previous chapter), exemplify values such as trust and collaboration (Newmann et al., 1996) and are some of the key components in making a task

authentic. As mentioned previously, Williams (2002) also highlights relations of trust and the ability to pool information as essential for personal authenticity. In this way, Williams' account of authenticity appears to align strongly with the values and core principles described by advocates of Authentic Learning. However, an argument can also be raised about the intrinsic value that Williams assigns to these virtues and how this could be seen to contradict the relativism at the core of constructivist and Situated Learning. Williams claims that these virtues of accuracy and sincerity cannot be challenged; they are universally agreed and arrived at through reasoned argument (Rorty, 2002). This would seem to undermine one of the fundaments of Constructivism and Situated Learning; that learning is relative to the learner's unique experiences, their social and political context.

It could follow then, that the core principles of trust and collaboration, so valued in Constructivist and Situated Learning, are largely influenced by current social and political trends. For example, employment research seems to agree that globally the world of work is becoming increasingly collaborative (Frerot, 2016), and therefore education must prepare learners for this environment. Research carried out on behalf of the Association of American Colleges and Universities by Hart Research Associates (2015) indicates that solving problems with others, clear communication and an understanding of societies and countries outside the United States were the skills most valued by employers, demonstrating the current trends in collaborative business strategies. Advances in technology have played a part in this, allowing businesses to communicate more globally than ever, exemplified by the rise of global crowd-funding platforms (Hollow, 2013).

This reflects the belief explored in Chapter 4 (Authentic Learning), that the popularity of so-called Authentic Learning tasks coincides with the emergence of educational technologies and access to global communication. As highlighted previously, a notable rise in papers referring to Authentic Learning tasks occurred in the first decade of the 21st century, during an era of rapid technological development and increasing global connectivity in Western education as well as in commerce. This also places Authentic Learning firmly in the context of western culture and its associated ideals of global

citizenship, as well as capitalist principles. Cynically, one could also argue that this technological and global development had (and is still having) an underlying impact on capitalist-based social and cultural reproduction, as explored in the forthcoming Chapter 7 (Learner Authenticity). Taylor (1991), in exploring the effect of what he terms "instrumental reason" on authenticity, places technological development at the heart of capitalist society's bid for "self-determining freedom" (p101) and thus critical to an authentic way of being. As to whether technological advancement and global communication, and specifically the capitalist-serving uses of these, are in themselves desirable values that will persist, is hard to say with any certainty.

Furthermore, returning to the issue of Moral Authenticity, examination of the conclusions drawn in the truth section - that to be morally authentic is to be accurately and sincerely true to oneself - and factoring in Williams' (2002) implicit intrinsic value to be had from this, leads to the question of whether one can achieve Moral Authenticity through education (either for the teacher, the learner, or both). For an essentialist, there would logically be an ideal way of being for both teacher and learner to aspire to; for an existentialist there would be freedom to think and act as one chooses, and logically authenticity would be derived from exercising this freedom. This will become an important facet of the subsequent chapters on Teacher and Learner Authenticity, for it is necessary to ascertain what an authentic teacher would be like, as well as whether Moral Authenticity for the learner can be achieved through education, and indeed whether these are even feasible goals.

Virtue ethics

This question of what type of person one ought to become, is one of the fundamental issues that underpins virtue ethics. If we assume (from studying *Value*) that the authentic self that one is sincerely striving to be is a good person, how do we define what a good person is? Theories of virtue ethics, such as Williams', offer one important answer to this.

Originating in Ancient Greek philosophy, most theories of virtue ethics take their inspiration from Aristotle who proposed that to be virtuous is to have ideal character

traits, and therefore very much part of essentialist theories (Aristotle, 2009). Thus, virtue in this context is generally taken to denote a moral characteristic that a person needs to live well (Athanassoulis, 2019), and living well could be interpreted to mean fulfilling one's true function. The conclusion to be highlighted from this particular premise is that virtue ethics can help to explain how a teacher may strive to fulfil his or her true function, in order to be authentic. This will be an important foundation to Chapter 6 which explores Teacher Authenticity.

To expand further, in some virtue ethics theories originating in Aristotle's work (Aristotle, 2009), whilst character is a state of being or an inner disposition, it can and should be nurtured. For example, if someone is kind, they will be inclined to act kindly. In this way, the virtue is a stable and reliable disposition, but it can also be taught and developed through moral education and development. According to many proponents of virtue ethics, moral development relies on the availability of good role models and on habituation (we should perform just acts as this is the way we become just, for example). Acting virtuously requires choice and knowledge and is based on reason (Carr and Steutel, 1999), so habitual means routinely and knowingly practiced rather than unreflective action. The virtues need to be cultivated so that the exercise of them becomes habitual. To this end, moral education has a key role to play in developing Moral Authenticity, and this is where links to both Teacher and Learner Authenticity come to the fore.

Authenticity as a cultural construct

A critique of note that is particularly pertinent to previous discussions and the education context of this study, is that virtues themselves, and subsequently the character traits seen to be of value, are often noted to change over time and across cultural boundaries (as with trust and collaboration above). Any list of virtues will be relative to the culture in which it is being drawn up and agreed as result of social consensus (Carr and Steutel, 1999). Thus, if to be authentic is to uphold or live by a specific set of virtues and values, and these values are culturally dependent, this ontological authentic nature of being is a cultural construct.

This therefore reinforces the critique of Taylor's (1991) work brought up in the *Truth* section on essentialism. It could be argued that an objective set of criteria for an authentic way of being, arrived at through dialogue and agreement, will inevitably be subject to the cultural norms of the group involved in that agreement, and likely to change over time. Therefore, one can question how stable and reliable these dispositions that we are born with are. In response, Taylor (1991) proposes that the process of engaging in this dialogue and agreement is likely to result in a clearer recognition of the self and therefore a greater likelihood that one will act authentically in line with one's true self; he consistently refers to this as the *ideal* of authenticity. This will be returned to in the concluding part of this chapter.

Another example of the influence of culture on authenticity can be found in the work of Roof (2014). In this, he draws upon Nietzsche to further the argument about the power (and decline) of culture in determining how we ought to live. Nietzsche referred to the people who shared a common mass psychology as "the rabble", or "the herd", and in doing so, valued individualism above all else. He argued that the superior person who rises above this herd mentality has to reject the values of society. Although this has been considered by many writers (such as Wotling, 2016) to be an oversimplification of Neitzsche's theories, it can be surmised that Nietzsche nonetheless posits individualism as a cultural construct in that it involves non-conformity with agreed norms. As mentioned in the context of existentialism above, individualism needs to be tempered with the desire to live in a civil society. In this way, Nietzsche warned of the possibility of education functioning as a system of social control; he was sceptical of the capacity for public education to help individuals evolve beyond the bounds of traditional cultural norms.

Perhaps one of the most prominent attempts to solve this puzzle that surrounds individualism in the context of educational theory, is Rousseau's reference to man being "born free but everywhere is in chains" in *The Social Contract* (Rousseau, 2019). Where Locke before him had proposed the idea of *tabula rasa* (that the mind of a child is a "blank slate") and promoted the development of virtue by acquiring "habits of mind" that would enable sound rational and autonomous decision making,

Rousseau's view of contemporary society, and of education in particular, was that one is brought up and educated to live by the norms and values of the society one is born into. In *Emile* (ref), his most important - and vastly influential - work on education, he concludes that in almost all of the societies of his own day, these "chains", in the form of false values and bad practices, are reinforced by the education system. Such an education leads people to live largely inauthentic lives and the only way a child can remain free is to be removed from society and educated in isolation.

In other works, though, such as *The Social Contract* and, most importantly, *Considerations on the Government of Poland,* he proposes that it is possible to reform society by constructing political institutions that allow for the co-existence of free and equal citizens in a community where they themselves are sovereign and consequently live lives that are more authentic. But there is a price to be paid for this: in order to live freely and authentically in such a society, the "general will" of the community as a whole should prevail over absolute, individual freedom. Education will have a crucial role to play in such societies by ensuring the inculcation of good, healthy values and practices.

Rousseau thus raises the question of how authentic life in modern society really is, and how far education may help to overcome this inauthenticity, a question that lies at the heart of much thinking about Authentic Education. His answer demonstrates the difficulty of providing a straight-forward solution. Freedom and individuality are often inextricably (and sometimes problematically) linked to authenticity but also to the dominant values and practices of the community of which one is a member. This will be a key feature in discussions of Teacher and Learner Authenticity.

Returning to the virtues of trust and collaboration in determining authenticity (Williams, 2002), and applying the above conclusions about virtues being subject to the rise and fall of cultural norms, it could thus be argued that the value of authenticity is also subject to these cultural fluctuations. As proposed in the first chapter, Authentic Learning activities certainly appear to be a relatively new cultural trend, and their value largely came to the fore in the latter decade of the 20th century and the early

part of this one. Hence, the chapters in which Teacher and Learner Authenticity are explored must investigate whether the value placed on achieving Moral Authenticity through education is similarly culturally contingent; an expectation of modern Western culture.

Moral Authenticity

Having explored in detail the notions of truth and value in the context of authenticity in education, it is also pertinent that the term Moral Authenticity itself is further unpicked, in order to provide clarity in the subsequent studies of Teacher and Learner Authenticity.

As Bialystock (2016) explains, philosophical shortcomings, puzzles, and quagmires abound when one tries to unpick all of the underlying assumptions surrounding Moral Authenticity. For example, any claims that virtue ethics can help us understand Moral Authenticity should be treated with caution as assumptions about the truth with regard to the self, and the value of certain virtues have been made. Nonetheless, in the previous sections on truth and value, it was important to establish some of these underlying assumptions and difficulties, not least as further evidence for authenticity being a contested concept, potentially leading to divergent accounts of how to make education authentic.

Thus, whilst recognising that there are some reference points that could be subject to much greater critique than has been afforded here, in this thesis, the arguments as interpreted by writers on Teacher and Learner Authenticity are the ones to be focussed on, and these underpinning arguments help to provide a more robust critique of some of the research produced.

As an example of this, whilst not writing specifically about education, Carroll's (2015) article is one that introduces the concepts of type and Moral Authenticity as representing two different interpretations of the term authentic in the context of social science research (a category which education may be said to fall under). His explanation of the term Moral Authenticity demonstrates the contradictions that can

occur when exploring authenticity from a philosophical angle. In his paper *Emerging Trends in the Social and Behavioural Sciences*, he makes certain existentialist assumptions about our way of being, and about the value systems we hold: "A person is said to be authentic, if she is sincere, assumes responsibility for her actions, and makes explicit value-based choices concerning those actions rather than accepting socially imposed values and actions." (p8). However, closer examination of the paper highlights that on several occasions Carroll also makes reference to authenticity playing a role in various domains of modern life that are "historically situated and culturally contingent" (p4). What is taken as authentic in these situations is a social construction (an emerging trend, if you will), thus seeming to contradict his point about an authentic person rejecting socially imposed values and actions. This type of contradiction will be an important one to explore in relation to research into Teacher and Learner Authenticity.

It is also important to establish the difference between morality and the use of the word moral here. In the context of Moral Authenticity, moral takes on a much broader meaning than straightforward morality (following rules and values) or moral education. It also emphasises a more individual basis for authenticity whilst recognising the influence of community (as discussed below). The meaning of moral in this case points to how we are, one's character and way of being true to oneself, whether the self is subjectively or objectively understood. Thus, to be morally authentic is different from being a moral person. It is proposed that one can be a) moral without necessarily being morally authentic and b) morally authentic without necessarily being moral.

To expand, firstly, Bloom (1987; cited in Taylor, 1991) in *The Closing of the American Mind* writes of "the individualism of self-fulfilment", expressing that one's moral position (in this case, that of educated young Americans) is increasingly based on their own sense of what is of value, often disregarding "issues or concerns that transcend the self, be they religious, political or historical". Secondly, Williams (2002) elaborates: provided you are being accurate and sincere, your authenticity will depend on how

you determine the truth and value of your selfhood, and your analysis of your reasons and arguments for your actions (as in the authentic criminal mentioned previously).

Extending this line of enquiry towards a more communal context, Rousseau (2019; cited in Sullivan, 2020) proposes that actions are morally authentic if carried out in a just society, and in accordance with what that society would deem morally correct. He would claim that we are controlled and guided by the values of the state, defined by the communities that we live in, and as long as this society is just, actions that meet this consensus of morality are morally authentic. However, this then also raises questions about justice and what it means to live in a just society. Perhaps justice is also governed by cultural, social and political interpretations of what is just? With modern Western societies becoming more pluralistic in nature, it could be argued that there is no general consensus about values that should guide our lives, as discussed by Taylor (1991).

Hence, it should also be considered that perhaps authenticity exists independently, irrespective of how it is internalised and socially or politically contextualised. This returns us once more to the earlier dichotomy of whether the true self is objective or subjective, as in the essentialist/existentialist perspectives. These arguments provide a useful background to many of the points raised in discussions of Teacher and Learner Authenticity.

Additionally, in the process of this study, consideration is given to the use of the alternative term Personal Authenticity as an umbrella for teacher and Learner Authenticity, and as a term that contrasts with Type Authenticity. Given that the discussion in the following two chapters centres upon the people involved in educational interactions, this would seem an appropriate term to employ. However, further analysis of several articles on the subject of teacher and/or Learner Authenticity reveals that Moral Authenticity is a more regularly employed term which is applied to a person's way of being, recognising the influence of their cultural, social and political setting. To use the term Personal Authenticity could assume a certain freedom to choose the nature of your authenticity (personal to me, as in Bloom's work

mentioned above), which therefore takes a specific interpretation of the self, and is grounded in certain associated assumptions about truth and value (which is perhaps the perspective employed by Carroll above). Taylor (1991, p29) draws upon the work of Herder to give what he describes as a more modern definition of authenticity:

> Being true to myself means being true to my own originality, and that is something only I can articulate and discover. In articulating it, I am also defining myself. I am realizing a potentiality that is properly my own. This is the background understanding to the modern ideal of authenticity…

In this, although Taylor is acknowledging that authenticity can be individually articulated and discovered, he does go on to discuss the cultural and political influences on this "self-determined freedom". Throughout this work Taylor (1991) certainly recognises the significance of originality, but tempers absolute originality with arguments of the dialogical nature of human life whereby identity, and authenticity, are defined through exchanges with others, and "inescapable horizons" whereby these significant others and moral values cannot be divorced from this ideal of authenticity. This has clear implications for education, given the increasingly dialogical and collaborative directions of current educational thinking. Furthermore, Taylor (1991, p29) explores how the modern ideal of personal authenticity is flawed and could take the "most degraded, absurd or trivialized forms" if allowed to be entirely based upon individual identity. This argument serves to illustrate the point that Moral Authenticity would thus be a more appropriate term to employ than Personal Authenticity, in this context due to the influence of significant others. Also, as mentioned in the *Truth* and *Cultural construct* sections above, this reinforces the point that Taylor ascribes to the notion that there is an ideal to be defined, and in this way, adopts a more essentialist stance.

As demonstrated then, use of the term Moral Authenticity refers to a person's way of being, and in this way is usefully differentiated from Type Authenticity, but it must be acknowledged that the term may be interpreted in different ways according to one's philosophical viewpoint. Some of the most significant viewpoints have been outlined here and will be explored in relation to the specific context of education in the following

two chapters. In this way, it will begin to be apparent that some of the most prominent research into Teacher and Learner Authenticity make certain assumptions about Moral Authenticity which contradict or overlook the place of essentialist or existentialist interpretations of the term, and the importance of value. For example, Cranton and Carusetta (2004a) and Kreber et al. (2010) both break down an authentic teacher into a model of component parts or values which are very specific to a teacher. Thus, whilst emphasising the importance of teachers "becoming" authentic through critical reflection and a process of "individuation", they create confusion between what it means to be authentic as a teacher and Moral Authenticity as a human being.

Chapter 6 - Teacher Authenticity

Alongside the rise of Authentic Learning as "something of a buzzword" in education (Shaffer and Resnick, 1999, p195), authenticity as a personal goal for teachers has been widely discussed and promoted. The question of authenticity as a similar "buzzword" in the context of Teacher Authenticity will be explored here. Drawing on the findings of the previous chapter, the concept of the Moral Authenticity of the teacher as being true to themselves, can begin to be explored, and the literature pertaining to Teacher Authenticity can be examined and critiqued. As discussed in the Moral Authenticity chapter, the ideal of achieving authenticity (for an ideal is how Taylor (1991) describes it) is generally underpinned by specific philosophical assumptions about what it means to be true to oneself.

This chapter will explore the differing conceptions of Teacher Authenticity, whether the essence of an authentic teacher can be defined by the expectations and values implicit in the teaching role, whether Moral Authenticity might be achievable through teaching, and whether it should be a desirable goal for teachers. The discussion in this chapter centres around whether these two perspectives can be aligned with an essentialist or an existentialist philosophical stance on what it means to be authentic, and why it is apparently such a hot topic for teachers.

Despite the assumptions explored in the previous chapter, if Taylor's (1991) well-reasoned modern definition of authenticity is to be adopted, being true to one's own originality whilst recognising the influence of political and cultural norms are key concepts to take forward to the context of teaching and the role of the teacher. On the question of what it means to be true to one's own originality, Bialystock (2016) poses the corresponding question: "to what am I being truthful when I am being authentic?" The answers she proposes are one's own values, personality or feelings for example, which could be expressed as the core of one's personal identity. In this way, Bialystock (2016), in surveying some of the most common perspectives on Authenticity in Education, uses the existence of this core teacher identity to describe an essentialist stance on the nature of authenticity, similar to that of Taylor (1991),

but more specifically applied to teaching. This specific issue of personal versus teacher identity will be returned to later in this chapter.

Extending Bialystock's (2016) question further to being an authentic teacher, rather than simply authentic as a person (to what am I being truthful when I am being an authentic teacher?), highlights one of the key difficulties of definition that is encountered when attempting to apply an authentic way of being to a specific role or context. The answers to this question actually provide a picture of the core of what makes a good teacher, and therefore impose certain values and desirable personality traits upon teachers in their educational role. As outlined in the previous chapter, inescapable horizons exist here (Taylor, 1991), arrived at through dialogue with significant others (in the teaching context, other teachers and learners as well as wider influences of history and alternative cultures), all of which shape the teachers' values and beliefs about their identity and their role.

The importance of interactions with learners deserves closer examination here. If dialogue and shared experience with learners have a role in developing Teacher Authenticity, it could be surmised that taking a Constructivist approach and the collaborative principles embodied by this pedagogy, is being linked to being a more morally authentic teacher. This was highlighted in the previous chapter (p36) in analysing Williams' (2002) proposal on virtue ethics and what is valued in education. Thus, a common thread begins to emerge between authentic tasks and the teacher's authenticity. The next chapter will explore whether this thread also extends to Learner Authenticity in order to shed further light onto this complex term that is so open to interpretation.

With regard to the different interpretations of authenticity, Bialystock (2015) highlights that this use of authentic teacher as a term synonymous with effective teacher, is the assumption made by many authors on the subject of authenticity for the teaching professional. Some prominent papers in this body of literature will therefore be further investigated in this chapter in order to explore this notion of the authentic teacher further.

Based on the research approach described in the Methodology Chapter (2), examination and synthesis of a range of sources related to Teacher Authenticity enabled identification of some seminal works used to inform this study. Thus, examples in this chapter will focus on key papers by Cranton and Carusetta (2004a and 2004b) and comparative literature reviews by Kreber et al. (2007 and 2010); critiques of these studies being often applicable to a wider range of earlier writers on Teacher Authenticity such as Cranton (2001), Dirkx (2000), Chickering et al. (2006) and Grimmet and Neufeld (1994).

Cranton and Carusetta (2004a; 2004b) are among some of the best-known authors on Teacher Authenticity, being frequently cited in later research. In developing their model of Teacher Authenticity, their narrative leaves little doubt that investigating effective teaching (rather than Teacher Authenticity, with all of its associated complexities) is ultimately the purpose of their studies, and they are not alone in this, as will be demonstrated in this chapter. Cranton and Carusetta (2004a) propose a model for understanding the various component parts involved in making a teacher "authentic", demonstrating (as mentioned at the end of the previous chapter), an essentialist approach to Teacher Authenticity. These factors, they claim are self, others, relationships, context and critical reflection. In this way, Teacher Authenticity is proposed as being more than just an awareness of, and aligning of a teacher's practice with their own values and passions, but encompasses an understanding of students as individuals, care for students, and the teacher's ability to question and self-reflect, all situated within the context in which they teach.

However, they also highlight the importance of the journey to authenticity, which they describe in rather poetic language as a journey of transformation and individuation. "For educators, separating from the collective of humanity means distinguishing one's own beliefs about teaching from the common rhetoric of how to teach" (p290). However, this conclusion seems to contain contradictions: on the one hand claiming that the teachers' values and passions must be contextually situated, whilst on the

other claiming that a teachers' values and passions can be independent of cultural and political influences.

Likewise, Kreber et al. (2010) propose six dimensions of Teacher Authenticity including being sincere, care for the subject and students, being true to oneself (as they put it, in both the "individuation" sense and the "critical social theory" sense), constructing an identity and "becoming" through critical reflection (p385). As Bialystock (2015) explains in her critique of the research into Teacher Authenticity, claims about what it means to be a good teacher seem to have become confused with claims about authenticity, with the virtues described being primarily virtues that make good teachers. Therefore, one must take care to distinguish between Moral Authenticity and an authentic teacher. This is the crux of the argument used by Bialystock (2015) to critique the current research into Teacher Authenticity and will be further examined here.

Aristotle (2009) explains Moral Authenticity in relation to the development of certain virtues, whereby a good person's true values will be honesty, courage etc. He also says that because people are different, they have different skills that they should develop; doing so is also part of what make us good people. So, to use his example, someone who is a gifted flute player should practice that skill and doing so will mean that person is fulfilling their true function. This, however, does not mean that being a good flautist (or teacher) and being a good person is the same thing; one might be an honest and courageous person but tone deaf or incapable of communicating to students. However, if the flautist has this skill but does not cultivate it, that makes them a bad person because they are not developing their true potential. The same would apply to a gifted teacher not fulfilling their true function.

Thus, an authentic teacher would be one who is fully utilising their gift as a talented educator. To further unpick this argument, particularly that of becoming an authentic teacher, Bialystock (2015) calls upon specific education-related examples such as those who either reluctantly (at first) go into teaching, or falsify qualifications in order to become teachers, but in both cases turn out to be gifted educators (i.e. find their vocation). Does this make them authentic as people, as well as authentic teachers? It

could be argued that they did not begin as authentic teachers but through teaching, found authenticity. However, this idea of the transformative power of teaching in specifically developing Moral Authenticity is problematic and will be raised again later in this section.

Returning to Williams' (2002) twin virtues of accuracy and sincerity, Kreber et al. (2010) include this in their "formal dimensions" of authentic teaching and Cranton and Carusetta (2004a) in the "self" part of their model; the notion of being genuine, candid and honest in the role. What you teach, they claim, should be aligned with what you believe, but it must be considered whether this extends to beliefs that may be controversial or even dangerous. Once more, Bialystock (2015) provides an example: she cites the case of Koogstra convicted in Canada of hate speech for teaching anti-Semitic values and holocaust denial. Whether or not Koogstra did this very effectively is not stated, but it could be argued that there was certainly honest and sincere alignment with his personal beliefs. There is clearly a case for Williams' virtues of accuracy and sincerity needing to be inextricably tied to the other virtues of a good person, as in Aristotle's virtue ethics discussed previously. This is why Rousseau maintains in *Emile* that the good teacher must take both himself and his student out of society – to avoid corruption and thus inauthenticity in Emile's values and behaviour. It also explains his view of the need for the government to keep a close watch on teachers in *Considerations on the Government of Poland* (as discussed in the previous chapter).

Moreover, and at least equally importantly, Aristotle (2009) says that because we live in communities, we have obligations – and also take on obligations – as a member of this community. So, if one accepts the role of teacher, one is socially as well as morally obliged to strive to become the most valued teacher possible. In this way, being an authentic teacher involves conforming to what the community requires of a teacher (or what teachers must do if they are fulfilling their obligations as members of that community). However, it must be acknowledged that Aristotle was writing against the backdrop of the Greek *polis*, which was a relatively small and homogeneous community. In the present day, conforming to what the community requires of the

teacher is much more problematic: the notion of community can be seen to vary across time and place and teachers may identify with numerous communities, based upon a pluralistic view of society and identity such as that discussed by Sen (2006). This plurality of communities could mean for example, that the teacher may not conform to the expectations of the wider community (aka society) in their approach, but base their pedagogy on a specific community of teaching and learning experts (such as followers of Holt (1967) or A.S. Neill (1960) - see Chapter 8 for further analysis of these communities in relation to authenticity) or identify more with their subject specialist *community of practice* as discussed in relation to Situated Learning in Chapter 4 and in relation to apprenticeships in Chapter 8.

Thus, conforming to community expectations in an Aristotelian sense, raises questions about how community is defined and the democratic control of teaching. In this vein, the idea of a community of teachers is problematic: some values are shared, e.g. about the welfare of children and young people, but even here there could be different communities of opinion and, as in the Koogstra example above, there may be many other issues over which teachers completely disagree. Thus, teachers in England may find themselves (for example) teaching aspects of the National Curriculum that do not align with their private political views, such as citizenship and entrepreneurship.

The balance, and possible tension, between the teacher's private beliefs and their public use of reason to put across certain ideals and values, thus fulfilling their role as a good (authentic) teacher, is a complex one. Kant (1991), in his work *What is Enlightenment?* established the public use of reason as a key component in politics and henceforth particularly in higher education. This public use of reason creates an obligation for the teacher to teach what the curriculum requires, but to privately have the right to publish their disagreement with any aspects of it (where there is a free form of government that permits this). Kant places emphasis here on what one ought to do according to moral law, rather than on whether these actions are authentic or not. It should be noted here that the German University system of Kant's time was significantly more politically directed and influenced than the current Higher Education institutions in the modern West (Clarke, 1997). Nonetheless, this concept of the

public/private persona does serve to introduce the difficulties that could be faced by the teacher seeking Moral Authenticity from a teaching role.

Striving for authenticity of the self in teaching (rather than being an authentic teacher) means the teacher being genuine real and true to themself. This view of Moral Authenticity, however, is sometimes regarded as difficult to align with the modern profession of teaching, particularly in the compulsory sector. For example, Thomas (2013) explores what he refers to as the impossibility of being entirely true to oneself and acting freely in a profession that is subject to many restrictions and impositions. Utilising several examples of educational initiatives which failed to have the proposed impact on educational attainment in schools, Thomas (2013, p 43) refers to governments as immobilizing teachers, "disconnecting them from their experience and their intelligence as professionals – substituting a set of routines and procedures for professional understanding and acumen."

As an authoritative introduction on the subject of educational theory, Thomas' (2013) arguments could be described as somewhat rhetorical, representing a particular point of view that is not necessarily the only perspective. Nonetheless, extending Thomas' argument further, these prescribed routines and procedures can perhaps be seen most clearly under the guise of the Professional Standards for Teachers (Education and Training Foundation, 2014) and the Teachers' Standards in England (DfE, 2011). In these standards, much emphasis is given to outlining the professional values and attributes of the teacher, and the practices they will derive from these. Examples of these include: "value and promote social and cultural diversity, equality of opportunity and inclusion; promote the benefits of technology and support learners in its use", among others (ETF, 2014). These professional standards would appear to have a limiting effect on developing one's unique identity as a teacher, and thus achieving Moral Authenticity.

Even with this argument in view, perhaps asking for Moral Authenticity through teaching is seeking a utopian ideal; something which a person might strive for their whole life, representing a more holistic, or whole being approach to one's authenticity

as a teacher. The existentialist approach to Moral Authenticity will be explored later in this section, but firstly, examples of a more essentialist stance will be discussed. As introduced above, abiding by professional values and norms is much more straightforward than seeking Moral Authenticity, and could be said to provide a more essentialist perspective on what it means to be an authentic teacher. If professional standards and values are taken to represent the essence of what it means to be a teacher, it could be argued that practicing and evaluating these will help develop authenticity as a teacher but this does not necessitate that a person becomes a more morally authentic person too.

Kreber et al. (2007) in their review of conceptions of authenticity in teaching, propose that having an authentic identity as a teacher is a moral ideal that is subject to what matters in the current context/environment. For this argument they use Taylor's (1991) term "horizons of significance" against which teachers define themselves in constructing their authentic identity. This therefore would seem to demonstrate an objective and measurable set of predetermined criteria which make up this identity, and that as a teacher they do not have to create an entirely original identity that is theirs and theirs alone, but that they base their beliefs about themselves on substantial core values (the aforementioned professional values).

Similarly, Grimmet and Neufeld (1994) applied Taylor's definition of authenticity specifically to teachers. They concluded that being professional as a teacher necessitated possession of an authentic identity, and authentic motivation "to do what is necessary and of value, not just for the organization, nor just for oneself, but ultimately in the important interests of learners" (p5). These examples are useful in advancing the concept of the authentic teacher by prescribing core values and objective criteria against which authenticity can be measured. In this way, Teacher Authenticity is presented as perhaps more of a variant of the Type Authenticity afforded to Authentic Learning tasks, than having much to do with being morally authentic. As will become clear, the literature reviewed herein often fails to differentiate between one's authenticity as a teacher and one's Moral Authenticity as a human being, which this thesis proposes are different things.

A key value in both sets of teachers' standards mentioned previously, as well as in some of the more prominent literature on Teacher Authenticity (Cranton and Carusetta, 2004; Kreber et al., 2007; Chickering, Dalton and Stamm, 2006) is that of reflection and evaluation. Kreber et al. (2007) discuss the importance of critical reflection in shaping attitudes and practice leading to "a transformation in collective or normative notions of what the institution or department ought to value with regards to teaching and learning" (p34). In the truth section of the previous chapter, however, the social and collective dimension of Moral Authenticity was explored.

From an existentialist perspective, the difficulties of justifying that values arrived at by a collective can contribute to the development of one's Moral Authenticity have been documented in the previous chapter. It could be concluded, therefore, that standards of professionalism, being arrived at collectively, are important in becoming an authentic teacher, but not necessarily a factor in developing Moral Authenticity. Instead, they represent a more essentialist stance; the boundaries necessary to facilitate a common purpose and direction for education and the inescapable horizons embedded in a community and a group that shares these values.

To return to Taylor's (1991) term "horizons of significance" briefly, political directives aligned with institutional policy and organisational culture all exert a heavy influence on a teacher's horizons of significance (the things that stand to be authenticated), and in a democracy at least, are seen as a collective set of values, despite the difficulties of agreeing on these collective values in modern times. As Thomas (2013) asserts, political ideologies pose a particularly challenging environment for a morally authentic and free existence, and Donovan (2019) goes further in expressing that political ideologies have created "relations of distrust" in the tertiary education sector, characterised by self-interest and risk aversion. As discussed in the previous chapter, trust and collaboration make up two highly valued components of modern, culturally contingent authenticity. Therefore, the proposal here is that it is the aims and purpose of the education sector that is the cultural contingency (and essential core) of Teacher Authenticity; an authentic teacher is one who aligns him or herself with these, but that does not mean they are morally authentic, simply effective teachers when judged

by teaching's collective norms and values. This is another dimension that renders Teacher Authenticity as a different construct from Moral Authenticity.

Turning to an existential approach to Moral Authenticity, this perspective can be identified within the same body of literature as discussed above in relation to an essentialist stance. This could indicate that accurately delineating a specific philosophical stance or approach to the meaning of authenticity is what is lacking here. As discussed earlier in this chapter, Cranton and Carusetta (2004) propose that developing authenticity is a crucial transformative process in one's progress as a teacher; something to be nurtured as one's career develops, and a process of "becoming". This is an argument that has been reflected in some studies, specifically with reference to the existentialist thought of Heidegger, examined below. Again, here they are referring to achieving authenticity in terms of their five parameters: self, others, relationships, context and critical reflection. It could be argued, however, that this definition of Teacher Authenticity is another example of authentic being synonymous with effective, in a more essentialist sense. Effective teachers are not necessarily more morally authentic than less experienced, or less successful teachers, they may simply have developed all of the necessary prescribed skills and are more able to influence the context in which they teach. In this way, it could be argued that a teacher could be authentic (effective), by outwardly aligning their practice with collective norms and values, and achieving the desired results, but in truth not actually care very much about their teaching and students.

Before examining links to Heidegger's philosophy in more detail, an argument of note here too, is the idea that in Western cultures, teachers are much freer to indulge in critical reflection and to explore the various forms and ideas of authenticity as they apply to them. As a result of living in this more liberal society, limitations with regard to achieving individual, Moral Authenticity and being true to oneself through teaching come to the fore. In a sense, teachers have much greater opportunity to examine their motivations, values and attitudes to their role, in relation to their personal beliefs about what it means to be themselves, but perhaps this only serves to blur the boundaries between being an authentic person and being an authentic teacher.

Furthermore, reflections such as this could even expose those pondering their teaching in the light of their personal or Moral Authenticity to a sense of existential angst akin to that described by Sartre (1992) in *Being and Nothingness.*

Simultaneously, an interesting question of whether it is possible NOT to be true to oneself arises. As Bialystock (2016, p16) puts it: "If I perceive myself to be deceitful with respect to some aspect of myself, is that deceit not also part of who I am?" Thus, even if teachers are aware of themselves playing a role, performing as a teacher, or conforming to the values and standards of the context they are in, and the impositions they face, they are still being authentic. Perhaps it is a question of awareness; is it that the enlightened, critically reflective teachers who know and can articulate what, why and how they are teaching, are the authentic ones, rather than those who are being themselves at all times?

This argument does seem to align more closely with the concept of teachers achieving Moral Authenticity as opposed to a teacher-Type Authenticity. As noted previously, several key texts in the discussion of Moral Authenticity in education draw upon Heidegger's notions of *Dasein* and *Care*. *Dasein*, as briefly introduced in the previous chapter, can be described for the purposes of this thesis as a way of being in the world, which includes "a clear and focused listening to and heeding of one's unique capabilities and potential" (Sherman, 2009, p4). Sherman's (2009) work integrates *Dasein* into the work of the teacher in a similar way to Bialystock (2015), when she gives the examples cited earlier in this chapter about teachers finding their vocation and thus achieving something more akin to Moral Authenticity than Type Authenticity as a teacher. Similarly, Kreber et al. (2007) in their comparative review of the literature, identify numerous links to Heidegger, and summarise the *Dasein*-related ones under the heading Taking Responsibility for One's Possibilities. Concluding statements such as "choosing authenticity over everydayness would mean being fully open to one's own (arguably limited) possibilities as a teacher" (p33), give a flavour of how Heidegger's *Dasein* is applied in the literature on Teacher Authenticity.

It is also often Heidegger's term *care* that is utilised to epitomise an authentic approach to teaching. Palmer (1998) and Ashton (2010) express the relationship with Heidegger's notion of care thus: we take care about our own lives and about others; therefore, as teachers we take care of our teaching and our students. Similarly, Jarvis (cited in Kreber et al. 2007, p29) draws upon the philosophical explorations of Heidegger, to argue that "authentic action is to be found when individuals freely act in such a way that they try to foster the growth and development of each other's being" (p29). Thus, in these examples, the Moral Authenticity of the teacher is to be found in his or her approach to the students.

One paper in which an existentialist approach to Teacher Authenticity is explicitly outlined, is an investigation by Kreber and Klampfleitner (2013) into lecturers' and students' personal conceptions of authenticity in teaching. The authors analysed their subjects' responses to a *repertory grid interview* (see Kreber and Klampfleitner, 2013, p467 for more detail) against three perspectives on authenticity; existential, critical and communitarian. They describe their existential perspective thus (p466):

> Academics who engage in teaching authentically have a genuine interest in their own development and regularly question the assumptions underlying their personal teaching practice as well as the larger context in which teaching takes place. They avoid complacency in their professional lives and are willing to challenge themselves. They also avoid compliance by openly contesting institutional practices or larger policy initiatives they do not agree with.

As Bialystock (2016) observes, when it came to the existential properties of authenticity "these features were the least prominent in subjects' descriptions of Teacher Authenticity" (p21). In the main, lecturers and students alike focused more on effective teaching, specifically utilising Constructivist pedagogy.

Thus, an existentialist approach to authenticity, when applied to teaching, seems to be inextricably linked with the idea of freely developing one's true potential and a refusal to be determined by passivity and conformity. Moreover, this often also evokes claims of the teacher's identity overflowing into all aspects of their life and contributing

to their sense of self. Kreber (2010) expresses such a view: "I want teaching to be an important aspect of what I *do* because it is part of who I *am*. It is part of my identity" (p23). However, it could be argued that the very existence of teacher identity, and of this being reflected in one's true self, contradicts the core of an existentialist approach. For an existentialist, being or becoming a teacher produces an internal contradiction in the form of adopting a role, for which there is necessarily a persistent identity and set of shared values (such as the professional standards described in discussion of Thomas earlier), when no such identity should exist.

Interestingly, Cranton and Carusetta (2004a) claim to have little in the way of background knowledge with regard to authenticity as a philosophical concept, citing a few key proponents (such as Taylor), but ultimately finding "scattered and unsatisfying references to authenticity" (p277). Cranton and Carusetta (2004a) then conduct hands-on research into "how authenticity develops in teaching" using grounded theory to extrapolate a theoretical model from anecdotal evidence based on a sample of twenty-two faculty members from their university. This approach bears remarkable similarity to Rule's (2004) work on defining Authentic Learning, as outlined in Chapter 3 (Authentic Learning). Two key issues arise with these studies, firstly that of an ill-defined and often ambiguous philosophical approach to what it means to be authentic, and secondly the sample being drawn from a population who profess a deep interest in teaching, and are therefore more likely to conflate Teacher Authenticity with Moral Authenticity (more on this below). Despite being the authors of papers upon which subsequent research draws as empirical-based theory, certain questions around the validity of these models must be raised.

This difficulty with what it means to be an authentic teacher is further compounded by studies such as DeBruyckere and Kirshner (2016) who gather thoughts from learners on what it means for teachers to be authentic. Unfortunately, the authors' approach of defining authenticity to their (secondary school age) subjects as "being real" somewhat compounds the notion that authenticity is often an ill-defined, and misused term. Attributes such as expertise and passion result from their qualitative analysis. Compare this to studies on effective teaching, and of what students deem to

make a good teacher, and the same results emerge (Wachtel, 1998). Luddecke (2016, p512) agrees: "the distinction between criteria for Teacher Authenticity and teacher effectiveness remains unclear." As well as the likelihood that the results will be culturally contingent (reflecting what students happen to like at the moment), this serves to highlight the point that use of the term authentic is perhaps not the best fit for these studies.

Hence authors on the topic of Teacher Authenticity become ever more entangled in complex philosophical problems, creating a myriad of contradictions and difficulties where Moral Authenticity is concerned. This chapter has provided several examples of how the teaching-related literature on Moral Authenticity often partially adopts a philosophical treatise to justify a "moral" angle for Teacher Authenticity. This could be said of studies into Teacher Authenticity who refer to Heidegger, Taylor, who is frequently cited, as well as Dewey, and even Aristotle without clarification of exactly what is meant by authenticity in the teaching context.

Buchmann (1993, p147) offers a possible response to these attempts to align the teaching role with being an authentic person, in advocating for the authenticity to be assigned to the role (in a Type Authenticity sense), rather than the individual: "…*teacher* is a role word. Roles … are parts people play in society and do not describe individuals." Thus, to follow this line of argument, a teacher's authenticity depends upon their being true to the ideal form of a teacher and has little to do with their sense of self. As mentioned, this idea links to Carroll's (2015) notion of Type Authenticity; that something can be labelled authentic if it is true to the ideal and original form of that thing. It would be impossible, therefore, to confer *Type Authenticity* onto an individual, as this would involve the assumption that there is only one type of person. This is where *Moral Authenticity* is used in an attempt to address the generally held belief that teaching is more than just a role and allows for different skills from different people.

Most authors on the subject of Teacher Authenticity claim a much stronger philosophical link between their role and their personal identity (Kreber, 2010). They

would argue that Type Authenticity cannot be applied to the teaching role, as being a teacher is such a multi-faceted and situated role. This being the case, it can therefore be argued that the teaching role can be fulfilled effectively by a multitude of types of people, with varied skills and personality traits. The authenticity of the teacher thus depends upon their freedom to exercise their individuality, rather than conforming to a role. Tisdell (2003), for example, views Teacher Authenticity as "having a sense that one is operating from a sense of self that is defined by oneself as opposed to being defined by other people's expectations" (p. 32). However, as explored above, the reality of achieving this in a teaching role could be questioned.

It is worth noting here too, that the majority of the literature on Teacher Authenticity, and certainly all of that reviewed by Kreber et al. (2007), is situated wholly in the context of higher education. In the light of the various conceptions of Teacher Authenticity found in the literature, a possible explanation for this represents a key critique of the overarching concept of Teacher Authenticity. Firstly, it might be argued that it is only lecturers and professors in the field of education that have access to adequate opportunities to write for peer-reviewed publication and the time to attempt to theorise about the philosophical significance of the teaching role. Additionally, the findings of these philosophical investigations can be more easily explored and applied in context due to the authors proximity to other faculties within higher education, in which to study and test their findings.

Culturally, Higher Education lecturers in Western democracies have greater influence and freedom over the what, why and how of their teaching, being less subject to external curriculum and policy measures than is the case in schools and Further Education, and more able to collaborate with their learners and colleagues to develop their curriculum content and approach. The combination of these two factors makes for a noticeable gap in the literature, with very few studies investigating Teacher Authenticity in the compulsory sector. It could also be argued that this freedom to explore the subject of authenticity with education faculties also makes for far more complexity in Teacher Authenticity than the term warrants or requires, and entangles teaching with Moral Authenticity in a way that only serves to confuse the issue.

An associated question arising here is that of why personal (moral) authenticity should matter more for teachers than others. Bialystock (2016) proposes her solution that "few other professions tend to generate such strong identity claims", and that teaching "invokes the self in a particular way". She seems to claim that this characteristic is unique to teaching, although examples such as social work, nursing or any crafts-person spring to mind as claims to the contrary. Similarly, this drive to achieve authenticity in education could be viewed as an extension of Taylor's modern ideal; an expectation of present-day, western culture. In the value section of the previous chapter, the cultural contingency of the term authentic was ascertained, leading to this consideration of whether striving for Moral Authenticity through education is specific to the current time and place of higher education (and teacher educators specifically), and indicates an arguably misplaced sense of entitlement from those who publish on the subject.

It could be argued that the authors of these studies are actually straying away from the essence of authenticity and rendering an authentic teacher as an on-trend term that is essentially contradictory. On the one hand, as Buchmann (1993) argued, the authenticity can only be in the role of the teacher (the expectations and practices), rather than in the person, but on the other hand, Moral Authenticity can only be of the self, irrespective of the person's profession. From this second perspective, it follows that personal or Moral Authenticity would be one consideration (the part nominated by Cranton and Carusetta (2004) as self) in the whole picture of effective (rather than authentic) teaching. The other four components that they identify (others, relationships, reflection and context) are actually skills contributing to competence, which teachers can develop over time and (particularly in the case of context) can be externally influenced.

Thus, one of the fundamental problems with calling something authentic (in this case, a teacher) is that it leads to the conclusion that the Moral Authenticity of the person (who happens to be a teacher) can be advanced by striving to be as effective in their chosen role as possible, much like Aristotle's assertion that a good person strives to cultivate their skills. However, there are also persuasive arguments for viewing

authenticity as a concept relating solely to the self and to a way of being in a more general sense, independent of the role in society one holds.

In conclusion, regardless of the philosophical angle that is explicitly or implicitly applied, claims of the transformative power of teaching having an impact on the Moral Authenticity of the teacher are often confused with claims of Type Authenticity; the findings only relate to the person as a teacher, and not as a way of being in a more general sense. The models and frameworks that have been derived from a range of underpinning philosophical perspectives do not appear to correlate with and are not a reliable predictor of the Moral Authenticity of the person. Teacher Authenticity as a unique type of authenticity as employed in models/frameworks by Kreber et al. (2007) and Cranton and Carusetta (2004a), for example, are actually descriptors of effective teaching. "All the traits and habits attributed to authentic teachers on these accounts may be described in other, often less nebulous, terms" (Bialystock, 2015, p8).

Attempts to align Teacher Authenticity and Moral Authenticity in the literature tend to do so with scant regard for the complex philosophical foundations of Moral Authenticity, but rather with a view to expressing what makes for effective teaching. This leads to the question of whether *Learner Authenticity*, to be explored in the next chapter, poses a similar conundrum. When analysing whether education influences the authenticity of the learner, is it their authenticity and identity as a learner that is desirable or their individual Moral Authenticity? The answers here will be inevitably bound up in the aims and purpose of education.

Chapter 7 - Learner Authenticity

Thus far, two perspectives on authenticity in education have been examined; Authentic Learning, whereby Type Authenticity is bestowed upon particular learning activities and tasks, and Teacher Authenticity, whereby Moral Authenticity is (arguably) developed through the act of being and becoming an educator. The third strand of authenticity as applied to education is authenticity as an educational aim; the possibilities of, and contradictions in, developing the authenticity of the learner through formal education. A similar conundrum as that arising in the previous chapter on Teacher Authenticity may well apply here too: whether it is actually the Moral Authenticity of the learners that education can influence, or simply their Type Authenticity as learners.

The argument that follows begins by exploring the fundamental nature of education and its purpose. Unsurprisingly, in contrast to the literature concerning Teacher Authenticity and Authentic Learning, studies discussing the nature and purpose of education (although not necessarily the authenticity of this purpose) constitute a much broader and chronologically more far-reaching body of work. In this chapter, a brief synopsis of some of these arguments, as they pertain to Learner Authenticity, will be reviewed.

Telos is an Aristotelean concept, whereby the nature and purpose of social institutions need to be defined in order to ascribe an essence to them and hence determine what virtues they should honour and reward. For the purposes of this chapter, it represents a useful way of expressing the nature, purpose and aims of an educational paradigm. Sandel (2009) provides a useful discussion of this concept, drawing upon Aristotle's theory of justice to explain the importance of telos to social institutions, a prime example being formal education. "For Aristotle, justice is a matter of fit. To allocate rights is to look for the telos of social institutions, and to fit persons to the roles that suit them, the roles that enable them to realize their nature" (p198). Thus, in one interpretation of Learner Authenticity, education plays a vital part in enabling students to realise their true nature and find their true function. Additionally, returning to the

issue of Teacher Authenticity momentarily, this also illustrates the sense of purpose described by those educators who feel that fulfilling their true function as teachers brings them closer to Moral Authenticity (see Chapter 6). It should also be noted that, as established earlier in this thesis (see Chapters 1 and 5), the use of the word moral in the context of Moral Authenticity for teachers and learners, has the potential to be misleading. When applied to the authenticity of a person*, moral* takes a much broader meaning than the colloquial use of morality as following rules and/or living by certain values. Rather, it denotes a person's way of being, recognising the influence of their cultural, social and political setting.

Therefore, the crux of the argument here reinforces the difference between type and Moral Authenticity and links Learner Authenticity closely to the telos of the education on offer. Hence, if the true function of the teacher (and thus the purpose of education) is to impart particular knowledge, skills and behaviours to learners, the learners' (Type) authenticity will depend upon their ability and willingness to internalise and master what is being taught. However, if the true function of the teacher is to enable learners to be their authentic selves (to find personal meaning and autonomy in their learning experiences), there is both a different telos of education at play and a different (Moral) authenticity under scrutiny.

There are two particular perspectives of interest here for their contrasting teleological aims for formal education, and their contribution to the subsequently varied interpretations of what it means to be an authentic learner. This chapter will initially outline the well-documented perspective of education as social and cultural reproduction, and this will be followed by a discourse on education for individual liberty and the paradoxes that emerge here. These two ideologies for formal education will highlight some important contradictions about what we mean by education for authenticity. As will be discussed, learners can find authenticity in either scenario, depending on how the authenticity being sought is defined. Therefore, authenticity as an educational aim is proposed as problematic due to the ideal of authenticity being so ill-defined.

In a similar vein to the work on Teacher Authenticity, Learner Authenticity will first be explored as Type Authenticity. In the Type Authenticity scenario, the learners' authenticity is defined and measured by how they fulfil their role as a learner, and their role in society. Alternatively, educating learners for Moral Authenticity can be approached from a perspective of education for choice, freedom and autonomy, not to follow a particular moral code, but to develop one's self-awareness and sense of personal responsibility. Inevitably, both of these teleological purposes of education have their supporters and their critics. Further to this, authenticity as an educational aim (in both teleological perspectives) will also be analysed in the context of participation in Authentic Learning, as described in Chapter 3. The main argument arising here concerns whether Learner Authenticity is a product of participating in Authentic Learning, and indivisible from this pedagogic approach, as many proponents of Authentic Learning would claim. A key feature of Authentic Learning that seems to be a best-fit for developing Learner Authenticity is activity that has personal meaning for the learner. This chapter will attempt to unravel some of the complexities in this argument in order to further establish authenticity as a contested concept in education.

Education for social reproduction

The philosophical justification for education reinforcing the values and norms of society has its roots in Plato (2007). In *The Republic*, Plato sets out his vision of a just society, made up of three distinct groups of people: the philosopher rulers, the auxiliaries, and the workers. The purpose of education for the auxiliaries is to achieve the necessary skills and learning to protect the state. Those who excel as auxiliaries are selected to become philosopher rulers and undertake further rigorous higher education to enable them to understand the *forms* or universal moral principles (*The Republic* 504d-511e) and how to govern in order to preserve this just society. For the remainder of the population, education serves to develop the skills best suited to their intellectual ability and character, allowing them to happily spend their lives working in a trade without questioning the status quo. Thus, Plato (2007) stresses the importance of education for maintaining a stable and ordered society, avoiding political unrest by

ensuring that individual members of society are not motivated to strive for personal autonomy (Sullivan, 2020).

This concept of education as social reproduction is extensively analysed by Friere (1970) who contrasts the essence of education as the practice of freedom, promoting and developing critical political and self-awareness, with an authoritarian teacher-pupil model of education, used as an instrument of oppression. He terms this latter perspective "the banking concept of education" (p53) in which teachers impart knowledge to the students who unquestioningly receive the information and become a better fit for society, thus strengthening societal norms and values. This theme of social reproduction has persisted and has been applied widely in contemporary Western educational theory and practice.

Subsequent social reproduction theories of education can be characterised by educators such as Bernstein (1975), Bowles and Gintis (1976) and Illich (1973); all cited in Giddens and Sutton (2021) who, based on changes in work patterns, particularly associated with 1970s society, put forward a view of the current education system as a means of reproducing class–based culture and teaching the skills needed to perform roles in increasingly specialised occupations. Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) went on to synthesise these theories by introducing the concept of cultural reproduction, whereby education focuses upon the learning of common values and social norms, and therefore serves to reinforce class divisions.

Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) identified elements of an issue referred to as social exclusion in modern society. One such element was that of the current education system being founded upon the principle of cultural reproduction. Although writing in the 1970s, there is evidence to suggest that Bourdieu and Passeron's principles persist in the present day. Robinson (2010) makes some intriguing points about the structure of the current formal education system, which serves to perpetuate social inequalities and inhibit individual creativity. Although Robinson does not explicitly use the word telos, he demonstrates how elements of this culturally and socially reproductive telos persist in the current educational paradigm. In examining social exclusion further,

Thomas (2013) draws upon the work of sociologist Bernstein (1975) to explain how the culture and language of school can often be alienating to working class children, as it is not something that they experience at home. In particular, analysis of the culture and language that is implicit in an Authentic Learning approach to education (as described in Chapters 3 and 4) highlights key concepts such as collaboration, real world research, student-centred learning and personal meaning for the learner as vital components in effective educational activities. Arguably, these are not necessarily the definition of effective education held across all cultural groups in our pluralistic society; many may favour a more didactic, instructional approach. This would therefore imply that some children and young people will be a better fit for mainstream educational institutions than others, and thus more likely to succeed academically as authentic learners.

More recently, the government mandate to include the teaching of British Values as core part of the curriculum in all education settings in England (Department for Education, 2014) provides another contemporary illustration of education as cultural reproduction. Bialystock (2016) links this reproductive telos for formal education to forced inauthenticity, proposing that organised schooling "takes as it starting point the mandate to influence children in particular directions and produce some degree of conformity and standardization across individuals" (p25). This, she argues is "troubling" for authenticity as it betrays the essentialist notion of developing the true self (p25). She goes on to explore the paradox of moral education (Peters, 1966) which will be further examined within the discussion of education for individual liberty below.

Returning to the dominant current beliefs about effective pedagogy such as those in the most recent education inspection framework in England (Ofsted, 2019), it is clear that Constructivist, Situated and Experiential educational approaches have a significant influence on the culture and language of contemporary formal education. Indeed, as explored in Chapter 4, these are also the key theories that underpin the structures that characterise Authentic Learning. The common thread that runs through Experiential Learning, Constructivism, and Situated Learning appears to be a rejection

of educational practices that advocate the didactic transfer of facts and knowledge from teacher to student and the assumption that effective learning is bound up in the contextualised, constructivist principles, making meaning of knowledge, as described in Chapter 4.

Nonetheless, it is possible to argue that even when applying these key principles, education can still hold the telos of social and cultural reproduction. To illustrate how social reproduction may be inherent in Constructivist pedagogy, Petraglia's (1998) issue of pre-authentication comes to the fore. As described in Chapter 3 (Authentic Learning), by setting the framework in which teaching and learning takes place, one is forced to consider whether it is ever possible not to influence the way learners perceive and make sense of their new knowledge. Constructivists and advocates of real-world authenticity in teaching and learning may deny that this is the case, but the proposal here is that authenticity for the learners relies wholly on the learner's ability to relate to and work within the social and cultural framework in which the learning is presented to them. In this way, the only authenticity available to the learner is a form of Type Authenticity, wrapped up in conforming with the culture and language of formal education and thus not accessible to all learners.

The perspective examined here would seem to indicate that developing the Moral Authenticity of learners is not feasible as an educational aim when the telos of education is social reproduction. Rather, learners develop a different type of authenticity, based upon meeting the expectations and culture of the educational system and wider societal norms. Learners developing their Type Authenticity as learners is arguably still Authentic Education, but this serves to highlight the developing argument in this thesis that the way this term is (or is not) interpreted and defined affects the sense of the overall debate and leads to questions about whether Authentic Education is a useful term.

This chapter will now consider an alternative to education for social reproduction, given that it has been ascertained that Moral Authenticity would be an unlikely outcome in this scenario. A telos for education promoting individual liberty may offer

opportunities for learners to develop Moral Authenticity in the sense of having the freedom to explore their sense of self and personal responsibility. Consideration is also given to how learning that has personal meaning for the learner can influence their authenticity.

Education for individual liberty

Alternatives to the ideas discussed above, of educating learners to be a good fit for society, are liberal theories of education such as those of Rousseau, Kant and JS Mill. These liberal theories of education emphasise the development of the freedom and autonomy of the individual, and as in Friere's (1970) work, are often contrasted with the education as social reproduction theories outlined above. However, Rousseau's ideas about education for individual liberty were tempered by the constraints of living in civil society, and thus prove somewhat problematic when it comes to the freedom implicit in Moral Authenticity. This has been discussed at some length in the introduction to Moral Authenticity (Chapter 5) and thus will not be repeated here. This section will explore how Kant and Mill developed the idea of education for individual liberty and freedom, due to the combined influence of these theories upon contemporary discussions of freedom. Subsequently, conclusions will emerge about how this telos of education for individual liberty may or may not develop the Moral Authenticity of the learner.

It has previously been made clear that Moral Authenticity is not the same as morality in the narrow conventional sense of following externally imposed rules and abiding by certain values. Instead, the term is used more generally to define authenticity in the sense of a way of being (see Moral Authenticity, Chapter 5). Despite this, there remain some intriguing links between moral education and authenticity. Kant's purpose for education emphasises an interesting pedagogy that initially involves the catechistic memorisation of moral problems and responses (Suprenant, 2010), which would appear to contradict his claimed focus upon individual autonomy. However, according to Suprenant's (2010) view of Kant's theory, this practice served to establish a foundation of respect for moral law, resulting in autonomous moral action. As Louden (2011) explains, subsequent development of critical thinking and self-knowledge

allows the learner to manipulate these laws, translating them into autonomous actions. Further, Roth and Formosa (2019, p1304) express Kant's core aim of education as "moral perfection that is the final destiny of the human race" and importantly, establish this moral perfection as a product of self-knowledge and awareness. Thus, instead of focussing on the various ways in which human beings are being perfected for certain socially desired ends in specific societies, Kant emphasises our individual responsibility to develop our morality, and our resultant actions, by knowing ourselves and acknowledging our imperfections (Grenberg, 2019). Being described as the "final destiny of the human race", raises the possibility that Kant's moral perfection is synonymous with Moral Authenticity.

For J.S. Mill, individual liberty should be extended to all members of society capable of self-government. Furthermore, the power of authority is only to be used to prevent harm to others and to society at large (Mill, 1997). In *On Liberty* Mill explains his view of the education system as enabling children to become economically self-supporting and therefore not a burden on others (Ryan, 2011). Mill saw education as both concerned with individual self-development as well as having important political and social implications. In this way, Ryan (2011, p654) expresses how Mill was "obsessed by the impact of society's educational level on the functioning of social, economic and political institutions, and equally obsessed by the educational impact of those institutions on the people who lived under them." Throughout his work, Mill's leading principle was human development. As a prominent liberal therefore, Mill placed the telos of education, in both a narrow formal sense as well as the wider lifelong learning sense, as essential to enabling individuals to effectively self-govern (act and live as they wish) whilst also becoming full participants in representative democracy to bring about necessary reform and social change. In this instance therefore, it is proposed that perhaps JS Mill's ideal existence is also synonymous with achieving Moral Authenticity.

Many philosophers have put forward their version of ideal society and in doing so, it could be reasonably argued, are also putting forward their version of authentic existence for the members of that society. However, this is not to say that the role of

education in these social and political ideologies necessarily has the learners' Moral Authenticity as its underlying purpose; in some, education's key purpose is social reproduction (as in the previous section). The point being made though is that Rousseau, Kant and Mill, in theorising about how society should be organised, put forward a specific purpose for education within that society. This is therefore their individual philosophical view of society and consequently their version of authentic existence. Thus, it becomes clear that different interpretations of authenticity arise according to the writer's ideology, and authentic existence becomes defined by the parameters of the ideal society being proposed. As highlighted in the Moral Authenticity chapter, this seems to further the argument that authenticity cannot exist independently of how it is internalised by the end user, so to speak. As Taylor (1991) implies, perhaps authenticity is an essentially selfish concept; what is authentic to me is mine alone to define and thus achieve, my personal authenticity. Additionally, authenticity can be selfish in the sense that a community may define authenticity in such a way as to exclude non-members. Certain forms of nationalism do this, often using the education system to reinforce their ideas. Hence, further arguments are proposed for what makes authenticity an elusive concept.

Much like the later exponents of liberal education, such as Dewey (discussed at some length in Chapter 4), the above theories of education for individual liberty can be seen to take some influence from Plato's Socrates when it comes to learning. A Socratic telos for education is based around debate and teaching students to argue well; skills that serve to promote a lifetime of learning. These ideas were also fundamental to the rise of metacognition, a term generally attributed to Flavell (1979), whereby the emphasis for education is on learning how to learn, rather than on learning facts and thus setting students up for a lifetime of learning and development as human beings. Metacognition as a telos for education will be discussed here, as another possible solution to the problem of how learners might achieve Moral Authenticity.

Rooted in the thinking of Locke and Mill, the basic premise for advocates of metacognition is that equipping learners with what are often referred to as Personal Learning and Thinking Skills (QCA, 2007), to enable them to learn throughout their

lives would allow them to reach their full potential and thus become their authentic selves. Several researchers into the effect of learning interventions cite metacognitive awareness as a key factor in driving learning and raising achievement (Hattie, Biggs and Purdie, 1996; Claxton, 2008; Hacker, Dunlosky and Graesser, 2009). Many would argue that in the current fast-moving world of work, technological developments will mean that learning vocational or technical skills, and their application in specific contexts, will become quickly out dated; the real world requires learners to be able to learn new things quickly and adapt to an ever-changing environment. Learner Authenticity is therefore to be found in developing and cultivating transferable thought processes and self-awareness in the sense of how best to learn. Riddell (2018) corroborates this by proposing Authentic Education as synonymous with metacognition.

Critics of metacognition pose an interesting conundrum about the nature of these so-called authentic educational practices. They would argue that by discrediting the ability to recall stand-alone information, the transfer of knowledge across contextual boundaries becomes impossible (Sfard, 1998). Thus, unless the learner has a sound grasp of the underlying facts and principles that their knowledge is based on, they will find it difficult to transfer this knowledge into unfamiliar contexts. This may be especially true if a learner lacks the ability to assimilate the basic principles, such as those with complex additional needs. Brown, Roediger and McDaniel (2014) refute and re-model the notion that knowledge should be applied to a range of contexts in order to embed its transferability. Instead, they advocate mastering strategies for learning to recall standalone information (retrieval) and concurrently learning what to do with this knowledge in order to apply it and make it meaningful (their definition of metacognition).

Interestingly, Aristotle also highlights the importance of education in forming "habits of mind", which better enable the learner to fit their role in society by developing the relevant and necessary virtues (see Sandel, 2009). This clearly resonates with the telos of education for social reproduction and thus an intriguing paradox takes shape when it comes to authenticity. The question of how (or indeed whether) we can

educate learners to be their authentic selves, without imposing our own ideologies, values and virtues (our own version of authenticity) upon them is one that has been the subject of much scrutiny, not least by Peters (1981).

Although criticised for not actually tackling much that is paradoxical (Haydon, 2009), the detail of Peters' (1981) *Paradox of Moral Education* appears to claim that, in order to develop intelligent rationality, children should be educated using habituation as a central pedagogical theme: children "can and must enter the palace of Reason through the courtyard of Habit and Tradition" (Peters, 1981, p. 52). This resonates strongly with the work of Kant, described above, but leads to Peters identifying his aforementioned *Paradox*. Peters' chief concern would appear to be that a child's formative years are spent assimilating certain habits of mind, which would render their developing rationality a social and cultural construction. Thus, what is paradoxical about this idea, is the notion that to educate a learner to critically and independently evaluate moral principles and actions, and therefore to think freely and autonomously about how they choose live, one will inevitably impose certain values and moral principles on the learner in the process.

Thus, a liberal education as described by the early pioneers of this theory, proves to perhaps offer greater opportunity for the realisation of Learner Authenticity, as compared to an education for social reproduction. However, it has been highlighted that two interlinked problems arise here too. The first is that of authentic existence being subject to the political ideology and personal values of the writer proposing the educational framework that will promote this authenticity and the second being the imposition of values and moral principles by the educators themselves. Thus, if education is designed by anyone (be this at state or classroom-level) its capacity for developing Learner Authenticity becomes significantly reduced. Despite this, some liberal education leaders offer possible (and often radical) solutions to the problem of the perceived ideological coercion presented by the dominant formal education structures. In Chapter 8 some specific examples of these, such as Neill (1960) and Holt (1967) will be examined. This current chapter however, undoubtedly raises the

question of whether the education as received by the learner, can (or should) be value-free.

In order to further illustrate how Learner Authenticity raises complex ideology-based issues for education, the problem of developing the Moral Authenticity of the learner within the specific and diverse teleological educational settings discussed in this chapter can be linked to previous discussions of Moral Authenticity from an existential or essentialist perspective, for neither perspective leads to a satisfactory conclusion. If the aim for education is that the learner constructs their own Moral Authenticity in an existential sense, the learner would need total autonomy in order for their authenticity to be genuine; otherwise it is a product of their environment and context, and of those who influence this. Likewise, if the educational aim is that the learner finds their Moral Authenticity in an essentialist sense, the learner would need to develop an awareness of what this authenticity is, and what it means to them, and therefore their authenticity will be a product of their environment and context, and of those who influence it. In neither scenario, as well as in the contrasting teleological settings above, can the ideology of the education designer/facilitator be entirely removed from education.

Nonetheless, perhaps if it is accepted that learners are inevitably a product of their environment, context, and those who influence them, a form of Learner Authenticity can still be achieved within these boundaries, albeit a largely essentialist one. Bialystock (2016) highlights that Learner Authenticity as an educational aim is often an assumed outcome of developing Authentic Learning tasks and Teacher Authenticity, rather than an explicit aim in itself. Bonnett and Cuypers (2003, p340) describe Learner Authenticity as a "fundamental consideration that sets the contours of much that could truly count as educational activity", interpreted by Bialystock (2016, p22) as "a meta-aim through which other aims can be understood". Specifically, it is often taken for granted that a key aspect of Authentic Learning interventions or activities will develop the learners' authenticity is that of learners finding personal meaning in their learning; this being one of the "motivational elements" in developing autonomy in later behaviours and choices (Haji and Cuypers, 2008, p3).

Examining the limited body of literature that posits authenticity specifically as an educational aim (as opposed to social reproduction or individual liberty), it is striking that a large majority of the proponents of this are situated in Higher Education, and their examples are more closely linked to the use of Authentic Learning activities (as in Chapter 3) than to developing the Moral Authenticity of the learners.

This, in turn, also raises an important question about how much more freedom, and thus opportunity to develop Moral Authenticity, is inherent in higher education as opposed to in compulsory education. It could be argued that the curricula of Higher Education programmes are more flexible and open to accommodate individuality and critical thinking, thus more likely to engender personal authenticity than compulsory education. Returning briefly to the mention of social exclusion in the section on education for social and cultural reproduction earlier, it could also be argued here that Higher Education is only truly accessible to those who have already subscribed to the dominant hegemony during their compulsory education, who can speak the language, as it were. This latter argument would then also apply to those who rise to positions of determining current educational policy and directives, thus the cycle of social reproduction and the paradox of education for individual liberty re-emerges.

Learner Authenticity and Authentic Learning

Whilst some studies into Authentic Learning integrate personal meaning for the learners into their authentic learning structures (Stein et al., 2004; Murphy et al., 2006; Renzulli and Reis, 2014; Westberg and Lappien, 2017; Wald and Harland, 2017), as mentioned above, there is a scarcity of educational research that focuses specifically on promoting Learner Authenticity. Instead, the educational literature focuses on the authenticity of the learning (or the teacher) by way of the teaching and the tasks, rather than proposing the Moral Authenticity of the learner as the outcome. Perhaps this is due to the complexity of designing a study that would truly assess whether a young learner goes on to live an authentic life, given the aforementioned difficulties in defining and measuring Moral Authenticity. Nonetheless, personal meaning for the learners is perhaps the one aspect of Authentic Learning that could be said to have relevance to the learners' Moral Authenticity, and as such

it is often an implied outcome of Authentic Learning in the literature. Thus, personal meaning will be further examined in the light of educating learners for Moral Authenticity.

Shaffer and Resnick (1999) highlight the problematic tendency for research into Authentic Learning to assimilate many and varied meanings of authentic, in order to create the kind of authenticity that meets the needs of the writer(s). In attempting to include outcomes related to Learner Authenticity in their definition, many writers specify the need for learning to be personally meaningful for the learner (as in the examples in figure 2). They also highlight one of the key difficulties of constructing a coherent pedagogy or curriculum "that every student will regard as personally meaningful" (p201), and this will be further borne out in the examples explored below. In this way, it will be demonstrated that the inclusion of personal meaning for the learner within an ostensibly neutral account of the authenticity of a learning activity, smuggles in moral and political assumptions about the nature and reach of the learning task and is particularly challenging to achieve in a way which would promote Moral Authenticity.

The inclusion of personal meaning for the learner undoubtedly proves to be a challenging aspect to include for those situating Authentic Learning within a specific pedagogy or learning activity, not least as a result of the constraints of curriculum design but also given the difficulties of providing meaning for a diverse group of learners, each with their own motivations and experiences. Looking at studies that focus on a particular learning task illustrates this challenge, in that the activity is usually set within a particular curriculum, with pre-determined learning outcomes; this makes personal meaning particularly challenging to achieve. Two such examples from figure two have been further analysed here, as their learning design was intentionally created to provide personal meaning for the learners in their research.

Murphy et al. (2006) studied the impact of an Authentic multimedia resource on students' engagement with physics. The study is interesting in that positive outcomes for girls exceeded those for boys, but begs the question of what the outcomes of

physics education are or should be. Given that the context for this study is the mainstream secondary science curriculum, do learners at this stage necessarily know (or have the choice about) whether physics, and the multimedia resource, is personally meaningful? It has often been argued that girls are more mature than boys, and able to see the bigger picture at this stage, thus they may have been able to relate more easily to the real world of science and if they had scientific aspirations, may therefore find personal meaning in the activities. However, the lack of freedom of choice in curriculum design for schools, and in subjects studied for learners, is also a consideration when it comes to personal meaning.

Wald and Harland (2017) describe a framework for student research investigations in Ecology, claiming an authentic learning experience and personal meaning for their learners in that the whole (higher education) curriculum is based around real research projects for which students take ownership, instilling confidence and responsibility and contributing to a community of practice. Wald and Harland (2017) provide some useful analysis of the parameters of real-world activity, as explored in Chapters 3 and 4, but they themselves conclude, "the existential and meaning attributes require further inquiry" (p763).

As a less subject-specific example, Ashton (2010) proposes that learning is authentic if the learner confers authenticity upon it. In this case, a learner achieving authenticity from their education thus depends on what the learner wants to get from it and their motivation to study. Choosing a specific path of study does not necessarily mean that the learners immersing themselves in it is bringing them closer to being their authentic selves. If they have not invested much personal thought or ownership into their subject choice (often the case in compulsory education), learners are less likely to find personal meaning and develop their authenticity as learners. Hence, the discussed difficulties of implementing personal meaning for the learner in a coherent and consistent way, means that Moral Authenticity is unlikely to be an outcome of participation in Authentic Learning tasks.

Thus, a key area for further investigation arises from this examination of some of the literature pertaining to personally meaningful Authentic Learning tasks. With the given curriculum constraints, and the diverse nature of any cohort of learners, learners would be unlikely to derive personal meaning (and thus personal, or moral, authenticity) from learning designed around prescribed outcomes which they have not personally chosen. They may have chosen the course of study, but there is a certain amount of pre-authentication (Petraglia, 1998) at work here, as described in Chapter 3. In order to genuinely develop Learner Authenticity then, education structures would need to facilitate freedom of choice and autonomy as discussed in relation to some of the liberal educators to be further examined in Chapter 8.

Analysis of the literature undertaken in this thesis has also highlighted another interesting angle related to these examples; one that has proven much less prevalent in the literature. As indicated in Chapter 3, examples of Authentic Learning being implemented in practice seem to be heavily dominated by science-based subjects. This avenue for consideration, therefore, is that of some subject areas bringing up more ethical problems for learners to explore and therefore greater opportunity to think freely about the values they hold and how they choose to live (thus having greater likelihood of influencing their Moral Authenticity). It should be acknowledged that ethical problems can be posed within any subject area, but as an example, if one compares Pure Maths with Medicine, and then Law with Art or Literature, a continuum appears in terms of how inherent and how explicit ethical issues may be to any study of those areas. In a factual, science-based subject such as Mathematics there is likely to be less opportunity (although that is not to say no opportunity) to explore one's values and beliefs and one's sense of self than in Art, say. In the interpretation of Learner Authenticity explored in the Education for Individual Liberty section above, spending time in one's programme of education developing critical thinking and self-awareness is more likely to result in finding personal meaning and a more authentic existence.

Several advocates of this personally meaningful telos for education, particularly in Higher Education, can be found. Plante (1986) directly criticised claims of educational

authenticity in highly vocational or technical programmes as sewing "designer labels on shoddy goods" (p8). In an impassioned plea to return to a challenging liberal arts curriculum, she proposes that the current educational trend, specifically in US Higher Education, of creating real-world vocational courses that answer the needs of local employers (socially and culturally reproductive education), has led to a decline in the value of liberal arts subjects where learners may simply pursue "programs of study that prepare all who seek an enriched intellectual and cultural life the opportunity to live one" (p9). This enriched life, she claims, should be the goal of authentic Higher Education, rather than meeting local employment targets.

Mezirow (1991) put forward his Transformative Learning theory whereby dilemmas and problems are posed to learners, who are encouraged to use critical reflection, questioning and dialogue with peers to challenge their underlying assumptions and beliefs about the world and thus reassess their frames of reference, perspectives and the meaning of their experiences. Whilst not explicitly using the term authenticity, Mezirow (1991) believed that bringing about this form of change in understanding of the self, one's belief systems and one's lifestyle should be the goal of adult education. Likewise, Baxter Magolda (2001) proposes a new framework for Higher Education to enable students to find an "internally-authored" sense of identity and make meaning of their lives, through the reshaping of curriculum and the university community. More explicitly, Chickering, Dalton and Stamm (2015) equate authenticity in Higher Education with enabling learners to find purpose, meaning and spiritual growth through their course of study. Likewise Schumacher College (2016) offers adults the opportunity of "liberating their deepest authenticity" through participation in a short course entitled *Authentic Celebration: The Path to Collective Wisdom*.

In these examples, the underpinning value and purpose (or telos) of education is to be found in its intrinsic worth to the learner. Personal meaning is to be sought, not through participation in authentic real-world learning tasks but through engaging in a liberal education that encompasses the freedom to explore one's self and one's values. As discussed in the Value section of the Moral Authenticity chapter (5), in these instances, Authentic Education would be intrinsically worthwhile to the learner,

hastening their own authentic existence. However, as one unpicks the various telos for formal education, it becomes clear that this freedom and autonomy is fraught with difficulty, not least because any pre-determined curricula or educational outcomes (whether compulsory or otherwise) are inevitably socially and culturally value-based and therefore pre-authenticated.

To illustrate the extreme end of argument against the plausibility of freedom and autonomy in education, Claxton (2008) and Robinson (2010) hold up stark images of formal compulsory education being devoid of personal meaning and freedom. These contemporary writers paint a dismal picture of current educational policy in the Western world, whereby the educational emphasis is on abstract concepts taught to conform to a national curriculum, and standardized testing. Robinson (2010, 2013) refers to the culture of education in the US as "death valley" that works against creativity and does not allow the minds of children to flourish, but instead teaches them to conform and Claxton (2008) makes claims of schooling doing "more harm than good". Perhaps the reality of formal education is not as draconian as the images they create, but many would agree that there is some truth in these arguments. They also represent a substantial issue for education, further discussion of which falls outside of the scope of this thesis. A factor that should also be restated here though, is the finding that most frequent calls for Authentic Education are to be found in the post-compulsory (Higher Education) sector which is often presented in a different light from schools when it comes to freedom and autonomy.

For the purposes of this work, however, they are useful examples to illustrate the opposing view and subsequent implausibility of developing any sense of authentic existence from formal education. If students struggle to transfer stand-alone information into other aspects of their education, or into life beyond the classroom, the best they can hope to achieve is a good set of test results and the associated levels of conformity to expectation.

Thus, despite the seemingly logical conclusion that personally meaningful learning with the freedom to explore one's self and one's values, will be more likely to result

in learners achieving Moral Authenticity, it could be argued that any authenticity achieved through formal education (whether compulsory or higher) is actually Type Authenticity; nothing more than the learner assimilating or conforming to the telos of the given education. No matter whether the aim is to recall facts, apply them in real life situations, learn how to learn or live an enriched life, in all of these cases Learner Authenticity is manifest by achieving the pre-determined outcomes of the educational design, thus developing the authenticity of learners as learners. Thus, from an Essentialist perspective, whether the learner is authentic qua learner depends upon the purpose and aims of the education they are undertaking. Taking a more existentialist perspective highlights the paradoxes and complexities that surround the concepts of choice and freedom in formal education.

In exploring a range of educational aims, from social and cultural reproduction, to individual liberty, autonomy and personal meaning, it becomes clear that Learner Authenticity, depending on what kind of authenticity is sought, could be feasibly be found in any of these contexts. Learner Authenticity, like Teacher Authenticity and Authentic Learning is beset with coherency and consistency issues when it comes to an attempt to ensure that all who explore it in academia understand it in the same way.

Specifically, in relation to authenticity in education, the foremost problem of definition arising is proposed thus. This chapter and the last have explored Moral Authenticity as it relates to the teachers and learners involved in an educational experience, and was initially proposed as entirely separate from Type Authenticity, which relates to the educational task or activity. Investigations in these last two chapters, however, have suggested a re-evaluation of this fundamental tenet, in that people (teachers and learners) can be authentic to type as well as personally/morally authentic. With this in mind, the next chapter will turn to the slippery task of trying to summarise the place of authenticity in education.

Chapter 8 - Authentic Education: Hindrance or help?

In this chapter, attention will turn to the final research question, briefly outlined in the last part of the introduction. Prompted by the implications of the conceptual analysis followed in this study, it has become apparent that the use of the term authentic might actually be hindering studies in education, particularly the furthering of evidence-based educational strategies and approaches. Rather than adding value to the current debate about learning theories and approaches, prominent use of the term authentic only serves to confuse and raises the question of whether a label of authenticity actually represents more of a hindrance than a help.

The concerns raised so far about the complexities and contradictions involved in Authentic Education (often unacknowledged in the literature) means that this thesis will intentionally build no framework or model for educational authenticity and thus test no educational scenario, pedagogy or intervention for their degree of authenticity; this would only serve to contradict the emerging conclusions. Instead, this chapter will provide further illustration that developing a model for Authentic Education leads many researchers to make unfounded claims about the place and value of authenticity in education. The purpose of this chapter is therefore to examine some case studies which illustrate how the difficulties of definition and application preclude the possibility of achieving authenticity in or through education.

This study so far has identified and analysed a range of ways that authenticity has been interpreted and defined in the literature, since its rise as an education-related term in the latter part of the last century. Terms which are most prevalent in the educational literature appear to divide studies of an Authentic Education into three main strands: Authentic Learning, Teacher Authenticity and Learner Authenticity. Given the complex relationships exposed between these three in the preceding chapters, it is not surprising that confusion is often exacerbated by attempts to integrate them into a single approach or strategy. A similar problem arises when interchangeably referring to Type and Moral Authenticity as a broad-brush concept of Authenticity, whereas the distinction between the two needs to be kept clearly in view.

By drawing on a few specific case studies that combine more than one of the three strands of authenticity into a framework or model for education, further evidence of the problematic nature of the concept of authenticity in education will be provided. These examples are Schaffer and Resnick's (1999) *Thick Authenticity*, Wald and Harland's (2017) framework for authenticity and Luddecke's (2016) philosophically-rooted educational authenticity.

As a result of these conflicting and often messy interpretations and integrations, this chapter will then consider whether a narrower definition of Authentic Education might be a more valid route to pursue in academic debate. The use of the word *messy* here was chosen to reflect the mix of thought around the term authenticity, messy reflects that given definitions of authenticity in education are often at odds with other interpretations, or they combine different interpretations which would be better remaining separate. Thus, this chapter will introduce some further semantic and ontological considerations surrounding the use of the term authentic. Such issues will be set against a backdrop of educational ideas and theories that make no claims of authenticity and yet display many of the characteristics of authenticity described in the literature. These illustrations will help to strengthen the conclusions drawn.

Case studies of messy interpretations

Early in the literature, Shaffer and Resnick (1999) analyse the concept of Authentic Education, claiming that previous work has been too narrow in its interpretation of the term and calling for a "Thick view of authenticity", based on four key criteria, which they have extrapolated from the literature. These are "(a) learning that is personally meaningful for the learner, (b) learning that relates to the real-world outside of school, (c) learning that provides an opportunity to think in the modes of a particular discipline, and (d) learning where the means of assessment reflect the learning process" (p195). Thus it would seem that their study begins to recognise the multi-faceted nature of the term. However, it could be argued that their "Thick" view still only incorporates factors of Type Authenticity, and thus propounds the notion that there is consensus about the purpose and values of education. The authors do attempt

to encompass Moral Authenticity into one of their criteria (a), which they term "personal authenticity", but without conviction as will be explained below.

In unpicking the notion of personal authenticity, Shaffer and Resnick (1999) present six conflicting interpretations of the authentic self, taken from "the literature on psychology and philosophy" (p201). In identifying these six different interpretations of the authentic self, rather than providing clarity, Shaffer and Resnick (1999) demonstrate the lack of consensus surrounding the term personal authenticity, and thus go on to exemplify the difficulties arising when integrating the philosophical interpretation of authenticity (Moral Authenticity) with authentic activities. They go on to characterise their "personal authenticity" criteria as "activities that are personally meaningful for the learner" (p203), indicating that they are in fact referring to the activities rather than to the authenticity of the teacher or the learner. They conclude that it may be difficult to construct a coherent curriculum that every student will regard as personally meaningful, and the reality of their focus being Type Authenticity is borne out by the fact that they proceed to justify a specific pedagogy (the use of "computational media") as meeting their four thickly authentic criteria.

Another framework reviewed in Chapter 3, Wald and Harland (2017), incorporates real-world tasks, authenticity for the teacher and personal meaning for the learner in their definition of Authentic Learning, thus acknowledging each of the three stands presented in this study and illustrating one of the broadest interpretations of authenticity in education found in the literature. Whilst Wald and Harland (2017, p752) begin with a familiar discourse on authenticity: "the meaning…is not fully explained and thus remains elusive", they go on to create a framework incorporating the "core values" (p758) of authenticity as they see them within their particular context. In this way, they attempt to encompass several different interpretations of authenticity into their framework, in order to justify designing a research-based curriculum in a Higher Education setting.

Wald and Harland (2017) put forward Splitter's (2009) position that authenticity is rooted in a task's "degree of meaning, fulfilment or worthiness". Splitter (2009) argues

that the school community is authentic in its own right, therefore the real-world nature of tasks is less important than their degree of meaning to the learners and the skill which with they are facilitated by the teacher, and thus the authenticity is to be found in the people, not the task. However, despite their manifest agreement with Splitter on this point, Wald and Harland (2017) go on to create a framework that attempts to capture both real-world tasks and a "degree of meaning" for both the teacher and the learner. Interestingly, Splitter (2009; cited in Wald and Harland, 2017) also claims that all assertions of authenticity are based on subjective value judgments about idealised practices, and these judgements, it appears, are what Wald and Harland (2017) have made in proposing their framework. In evaluating their research-based curriculum model against their framework, they conclude that, while there is good evidence that real-world attributes enhance Authentic Learning, the existential and meaning attributes require further enquiry. This study therefore serves to highlight the nuances of the term authenticity in education, and the difficulties of integrating both Type and Moral Authenticity into an educational model, thus raising further questions about the coherence of the concept.

Luddecke (2016), in his exploration of Philosophically rooted Educational Authenticity, appears to highlight similar issues of definition as those discovered in this thesis. Drawing on similar key sources as explored in this work (Ashton, 2010; Cranton and Carusetta, 2004a; Kreber et al., 2007; Newmann et al., 1996; Splitter, 2009; Taylor, 1991), Luddecke (2016) identifies several integrated areas for discussion covering the various strands and interpretations exposed in the preceding chapters of this thesis, including real world activities, Teacher Authenticity, dialogical education, ethics and personal responsibility, social virtue and democracy. In each of these he uncovers both philosophical and practical implementation problems. However, perhaps surprisingly at this point, he proceeds by applying these parameters to a proposed "normative ideal for education" in advancing the Primary years International Baccalaureate (I.B.) curriculum as a possible exemplar. This appears to represent a disjuncture in his unfolding argument about the philosophical and practical implementation of authenticity. Luddecke concludes by advocating for the I.B. Primary Years Programme as effective in preparing learners as global citizens but advises that

learners need to be more involved in curriculum planning, and that the curriculum should be diversified and extended in terms of dialogue in order to enhance its authenticity. This is a rather unsatisfying conclusion, given the very valid arguments he presents about the problematic nature of educational authenticity.

Narrowing Authenticity

The case studies above exemplify the need for clarity when it comes to Authentic Education. To put forward some possible solutions, perhaps the academic literature would benefit from a less unwieldy and thus ostensibly less elusive definition of educational authenticity? Two ideas will thus be presented and evaluated here; both offer a somewhat narrower definition of educational authenticity. Firstly, the scenario whereby the authenticity is purely confined to the task and the second confining the authenticity purely to a way of being, and independent of the nature of the education or the pedagogy the teacher or learner is involved in.

The first case for a narrower definition stems from the problematic philosophical puzzles and shortcomings debated earlier, and the need for educational literature to have practical application for educators. The proposal here would thus be to leave the Moral Authenticity out of Authentic Education, and purely situate the authenticity in the task/mode of delivery. A way forward in providing a coherent, but philosophically much narrower, account of authenticity would therefore be for Authentic Education to be that which develops competence and experience in the activities required by the role the learner is being trained for, delivered by experts in that field. In this scenario, vocational, competence-based education is thus the only truly Authentic Education (for example medical training, involving hands on medical practice facilitated by experienced and qualified medical practitioners, or flight training involving real flight experience, overseen by a qualified pilot). Learning would also be assessed in this way, focussing heavily on competence and practice, such as in an apprenticeship.

In the same vein, Gulikers, Bastiaens, and Kirschner (2004) define authentic assessment in the context of professional and vocational training. To better prepare students for their future workplace, they expound, there is a need for assessment

tasks used in professional and vocational education to mirror the tasks students will encounter in their future professional practice. Authentic assessments in competence-based education should create opportunities for students to integrate learning and working in practice, which results in students' mastery of professional skills needed in their future workplace. Thus, the narrow interpretation of authenticity in vocational contexts is further illustrated and understood.

Stein et al. (2004) also go some way towards demonstrating this narrow understanding of authenticity, through their claims that the classroom is real life, and that Authentic Learning in their business management context involved learners in a real business management project facilitated by an authentic and experienced business manager (now university lecturer). The challenge, they explain, is to bridge the gap between the learning experience and experience of the world beyond the educational institution, to prepare students to become competent and critical persons, able to contribute meaningfully to ever-evolving communities of practice. The success of this, they go on to expound, is dependent upon the teacher's knowledge of these communities of practice and their currency as part of this community (thus maintaining a narrow definition of Teacher Authenticity too – as authentic qua discipline).

Perhaps those who smuggle in the philosophical or moral interpretations of authenticity, when they are actually simply designing learning tasks have misappropriated the term? A better approach could be this even narrower definition than Type Authenticity analysed in the chapters on Authentic Learning. In many of the examples in this earlier chapter, by attempting to compartmentalize Authentic Learning and model a framework around it, it could be argued that the writers are overcomplicating a term and needlessly including philosophical interpretations of the word when it is actually in general use as an adjective meaning "genuine, real and true". Therefore, the only realistic and pragmatic interpretation of authenticity in educational terms is the use of the term in a more banal sense e.g. aspects of a hairdressing curriculum involving real clients or a catering curriculum involving preparation and service of meals in a real restaurant would be deemed authentic. Put simply, a direct application of skills and knowledge to the work environment. This, it

is proposed, could be a much more coherent application of authenticity to the education context, more straightforward to define, and less complicated to implement. It would match the aims and nature of apprenticeship-based model of education that is gaining increasing momentum in the United Kingdom at present (HM Government, 2020) and would promote a clearer understanding of what is meant by the term authenticity in education.

Nonetheless, there are some significant reservations pertaining to this proposal, not least the assertion that this application of learning in practice has already been adequately defined and analysed in theories such as Situated and Experiential Learning (Brown, Collins and Duguid, 1989; Kolb, 1984). Therefore, it is proposed that the term authentic is not needed here, and actually better avoided as it is counterproductive to employ it in this educational context, particularly given the likelihood of confusion being generated by the various interpretations existing today. Additionally, it should be noted that Stein et al. (2004), in the business management project example cited above, do find it difficult to separate their interpretation of Authentic Learning from aspects of Moral Authenticity. By taking an interpretive approach to studying their authentic project, the effect that the thoughts and feelings of both the students and the lecturer have on the direction that the learning task takes inevitably leads the authors to question the scope of the learning and address the personal meaning attributes for both learners and lecturer. This highlights the difficulty of confining authenticity to real-world tasks in this way; the wider impact of any learning activity may be unique to each learner (and lecturer), irrespective of the anticipated curricula outcomes. It is difficult, if not impossible to divorce the outcomes of the human interactions in the learning task from the task itself and the human element will often serve to confound the effectiveness of any learning task.

To expand further on this point, there is widespread debate about measuring the effectiveness of teaching and learning. Whilst Hattie (1992) and Petty (2009) would advocate being able to calculate "effect sizes" for various educational interventions (based on achievement outcomes), the tenets of good and effective educational experiences are almost always bound up in both the task and the motivations and

actions of the people directly involved in the execution of this task. Thus, an educational intervention that works in one particular context does not necessarily work in all. This is why, once the term authenticity is employed in relation to education, its connections to Moral Authenticity, to personal meaning and identity muddy the waters and make the human and situational influences difficult to ignore. It could be proposed that there are inextricable links between the ideal educational activity, the educational community and the identity of the teacher and the learner (particularly in relation to their obligations to this community), which permeate all aspects of pedagogy and educational experiences. Linking back to the personal meaning attribute so commonly cited in authentic tasks, this therefore would seem to indicate that a particular task is only authentic when deemed so by the individuals undertaking it, and thus the authenticity of all parties involved needs to be considered, as well as the task itself. Hence a full circle is drawn, back to the all-encompassing, messy definition and the term authentic would even seem superfluous.

With this in mind then, and based on the previous conclusions that all-encompassing definitions are flawed, the only other route available is to explore the possibility that authenticity is only a way of being and not found in a learning task. Ashton (2010) corroborates this position by establishing authenticity as a uniquely human condition, and going on to dismiss the notion of authentic tasks with the following argument: "authenticity is a way of being hence neither emerges from, nor is conferred by, learning contexts, learning content or learning tasks, regardless of how 'real world' they may be" (p3).

Thus, the second case for a narrower definition is that authenticity is defined only in the moral, personal growth sense for both teacher and learner. Educational authenticity focuses on influencing all parties' Moral Authenticity and their development as human beings. However, being Morally Authentic is fraught with philosophical conundrums (as introduced in Chapter 5) and thus begs the question of whether this interpretation represents more of a philosophical debate than an education-related one, and thus whether it truly has significance for the education research community. In order to be pragmatic and demonstrate applicability to an

education context, many researchers (for example Cranton and Carusetta, 2004b) have possibly attributed education per se with advancing Moral Authenticity, when in reality it is the human interaction inherent in education that leads to personal growth, with the education setting and pedagogy being merely incidental.

If neither case for a narrower definition really holds up to scrutiny, there is only one alternative remaining: not using the term authentic when it comes to education. The next section will explore this alternative in detail: is the concept of authenticity more of a hindrance to education than a help?

Use of the term authentic

In all three identified strands of authenticity in education, many of the ideas and concepts raised about the recommended components of Authentic Learning, and ways to promote the authenticity of teachers and of learners are undoubtedly important and have proven to add value to the teaching and learning experience. It is not the intention of this thesis to dispute the findings of the examined authors as they pertain to pedagogy and teaching and learning approaches, but rather to dispute the use of the word authentic and the term authenticity in education.

The point raised here, then, is about whether there is any value in educational activities (and indeed educators and learners) being labelled authentic. As demonstrated in Chapter 4, several other (much less contested) educational theories actually serve the purpose of defining a situated, experiential approach to learning, which is essentially what Authentic Learning has proven to be. None of the components or frameworks described by authors such as Herrington and Oliver (2000) offer any particularly new ideas or approaches to pedagogy, negating the need for a new authentic educational approach. Furthermore, the tendency to interlink authentic learning activities with personal or Moral Authenticity (such as activities designed to be personally meaningful to the learner) adds a complexity and confusion to the frameworks that could be avoided had a different word from authentic/authenticity been used.

Additionally, the significance of Moral Authenticity in education is something often taken rather simplistically to mean finding (or being) one's true self, when this concept has proven to be far more complex, and thus rendered fairly meaningless unless the author engages in the attendant philosophical debate. Bialystock (2016, p3) summarises this dichotomy: this "zeal" for finding the true self "often coincides with skepticism regarding the possibility of truth per se, leaving the status of this essential relation unmoored (Williams, 2002). To what, then, are we being truthful when we are being authentic?"

In order to further strengthen this emerging conclusion, this chapter will return to two educational philosophies mentioned in Chapters 4, 6 and 7. In the context of these chapters, Neill (1960) and Holt (1967) were presented as possible examples of education with the potential to promote being authentic with regard to Teacher and Learner Authenticity, through their absolute commitment to a shared set of values, which dominate the principles and structures of the educational communities they founded and specifically rail against some of the core values of mainstream education.

Summerhill School (Neill, 1960) for example is guided by the principles of democracy and freedom, whereby the purpose of the school is to allow and enable the child to live their own life. No lesson, exam or authority is imposed upon pupils, but staff and young people live as a free school community involving the children in all decisions about how to prepare themselves for adult life. Likewise, the concept of Unschooling (Holt, 1967) involves no physical school facility, curriculum or authority and gives children the right to lead their own education, based on what they are interested in. Children decide how they will learn about the things they discover, and are trusted to find their own path in their own time.

In the 1960s, and subsequently as these ideas have endured, authentic has not particularly been a term that has been applied to these approaches. As mentioned in Chapter 4, it is more often Dewey (1938) and Kolb's (1984) Experiential Learning that is invoked as an underlying principle in these philosophies. Perhaps initially, they predated the "buzzword" that is authenticity in education but certainly approaches

modelled upon the principles of AS Neill and John Holt today would, to some educators, exemplify education for authenticity. Nonetheless, whilst they display some very distinct characteristics of so-called Authentic Education, neither they, nor their followers, tend to hold their approaches up as authentic in the literature. Multiple additional more recent examples abound - educational approaches modelled upon the use of real-world activities that are personally meaningful to the learner, but the term authentic is not used to describe them or to describe the impact they have on learners or teachers. The work of the Centre for Real World Learning is a case in point (Lucas, Spencer, and Claxton, 2013).

Interestingly Rule (2006), whose work on Authentic Learning (and specifically as editor of the Journal of Authentic Learning) was referred to in Chapter 3, seems to exemplify the academic stance introduced here. Upon relinquishing her editorship of the Journal, Rule's subsequent body of work (around 130 further peer reviewed papers, continuing to the present day) proposes and evaluates many varied educational interventions, which tend to be designed along very similar principles to the authentic learning activities she advocated earlier (especially as she has particular interests in STEM and Gifted and Talented education) and yet she chooses not to use the term authentic. Instead, terms such as enhancing creativity and critical thinking, or developing originality etc. are used, in a very similar way to the Centre for Real-World Learning. The point here, though, is that the possibility of authenticity found in these approaches would depend upon what the truth of education was taken to be and thus what it is that the teachers, learners and tasks were being authentic to. View education from a different perspective, and it becomes possible to find and justify authenticity in any given educational scenario, as well as to decide whether or not to label it as such.

As has been mentioned previously, the literature examined herein, that *does* specifically offer a label of authenticity (whether for teachers, learners, pedagogy or any combination of these) is most often situated within Higher Education. Examining the use of the term authentic in more detail, perhaps the need for academics in this field to confer authenticity upon teaching tasks, methods, and the teaching role, is motivated by the belief that this will somehow help to validate the role of teacher in

the world of academia and their proposed pedagogy within the educational community. It should also be recognised that many of these academics in Higher Education are teacher educators, and cynically it could be argued that the need to publish papers which reinforce the value of teachers and teaching represents a degree of self-preservation and self-promotion. If the body of literature on authenticity in education, and particularly justification of an approach or pedagogy as authentic, represents a need to elevate the worth of education, the whole concept of claiming authenticity could be viewed as something of a cultural construction of the Western world.

Two specific arguments help to explain this. Firstly, Carroll (2015) cites an example that contrasts Chinese culture with the West, in a study of views on microbreweries and the popularity of craft beer (Carroll and Swaminathan, 2000); Chinese drinkers finding these methods and producers unattractive and undesirable, whilst microbreweries became a growing phenomenon associated with authentic taste in the West. Whilst not an education related example, this did lead to the conclusion that authenticity as an attribute carries greater appeal in advanced market economies. Cynically, therefore, the use of the term authentic may also provide educators with a positive attribute that helps to promote and add value to education as a consumable product (particularly pertinent in Higher Education as it becomes increasingly market driven).

Secondly, Taylor (1991) focuses on a view of authenticity as being rather self-centred, another cultural association of the West. He examines the self-indulgence and individualism inherent in the modern ideal of authenticity, an approach less prevalent in Eastern culture. Thus, academics in the field of education searching for greater meaning in what they do, may represent a contemporary obsession with increasing one's self-worth in the face of the challenges of modernity (Taylor, 1991).

Hence the issue of the authenticity in any aspect of education being defined by the educator or author has been analysed, and it is proposed therefore that the teacher, the activity or the aim for the learner can be labelled authentic if deemed so by the

participants. Ashton (2010) takes up this argument in explaining that authenticity, as a unique way of being, cannot be attributed to models or theories of learning, or to a particular type of teacher or learner; something can only be authentic if the person concerned confers authenticity upon it (it is their truth, as it were). Thus, an educational approach or method may be authentic to one person's version of education, but inauthentic to another, therefore authenticity is not a helpful term to use when applied to education and has little conceptual value in educational research.

Chapter 9 - Conclusion

In the Introduction, the stated aims for this thesis were to identify, clarify and possibly further develop, the use of the term authenticity in relation to education. Therefore, the research in this thesis consciously sought to review and discuss how helpful the term authentic is, when applied to educational activities and the people involved in educational interactions. Given the findings from these questions, this thesis steered away from creating and applying a framework, or empirically testing a model for Authentic Education, for this would have implied that authenticity was indeed a valuable attribute to apply in educational settings. Instead, the value gained here is in ensuring that academic research in education is robustly carried out, and findings can be meaningfully applied by educators. Had the meaning and usage of authenticity in education been clear and consistent, this work would have been able to conclude by advocating for the adoption of more authentic educational practices and making suggestions as to how this might be achieved.

However, in the subsequent investigation, it has been proven that pinning down authenticity as a concept in education is a messy endeavour beset with complex philosophical conundrums, contradictions and value judgements about what education is for and how it should be approached. Thus, far from clarifying the meaning of the term, this work demonstrates the lack of clarity in the term, and the challenges inherent in using the label Authentic in relation to an educational approach, educator or learner. The clarity comes in recognising that authenticity has little conceptual value for educational research.

> On the whole, the semantic and ontological vagueness surrounding authenticity has generated an uneven dialectic between the term's potential significance for education and its actual relevance creating what Adorno (1973) refers to as an 'aura'; a term which is only meaningful because it is used but, at a deeper level, has no conceptual value (Luddecke, 2016, p510).

This is another way of putting across the point highlighted in the Introduction by Carroll (2015), in which he proposes that the characteristics of authenticity are

indefinable, the authenticity of something being entirely dependent upon the product or service it is being attributed to and the person or organisation attributing it. For this reason, empirical research into Authentic Education, far from strengthening the importance of authenticity to educators, only serves to exacerbate confusion around the use of the term authentic.

As has been demonstrated, the research often necessitates entering into complex philosophical debate and results in the authors reviewed having to falsely simplify these complex arguments in order to arrive at a definition that will serve the purpose of the research: justifying whether something is or is not authentic. In this way, the research often sets out to use the term as a buzzword synonymous with good education but uncovers much greater depth and complexity to the term, thus resulting in unconvincing and unsatisfying conclusions. Nind (2019) highlights the issue of many practitioners feeling excluded by arguments based on definition and semantics, but these are imperative if a meaningful discussion of authenticity in education is to be had. As has been demonstrated, when authenticity is applied to education in its populist language (aura or attribute) sense, it is far from helpful.

A wider implication of this conclusion about the importance and value of definition and semantic argument, is a call to educators and educational researchers to question the language used and the terms appropriated when describing effective educational approaches and practice to ensure clarity and consistency of understanding. This could extend to several terms briefly highlighted in this thesis such as freedom of choice and autonomy, for example, and demonstrates the need for educators to recognise the possible problems associated with assuming mutual agreement and awareness about the meaning of terms, particularly when they have a range of philosophical and ontological foundations.

Conclusions in the literature pertaining to developing authenticity or being authentic, as a teacher or as a learner, are particularly problematic. The use of the term authentic appears to be motivated by a culturally contingent, some would say selfish need to be more authentic. Thus authors (such as Chickering et al., 2006; Tisdell, 2003; Cranton

and Carusetta, 2004a, 2004b) often find themselves mired in conundrums and contradictions and having to explain their perspective at length, meaning that, where the purpose of the piece is to offer meaningful and pragmatic approaches to teaching and learning, conclusions of this nature become untenable. This is not to say that all of the literature sets out with this purpose; those who aim to contribute to the debate in an ontological sense do have value, but their value lies mainly in their confirmation of the fact that authenticity is not a useful focus for education research.

The literature on Authentic Learning (as in Chapter 3) is somewhat more successful, although it would still benefit from further philosophical and ontological debate, particularly when personal meaning for the learner is included and explored. Applying the term Authentic to tasks and activities rather than people, as a tool for conducting empirical research and recommending strategies or approaches that educators can translate into practice, appears to be a more accessible, although limited, use of the term. This thesis has provided several examples of Authentic Learning activities being widely proposed to improve the effectiveness of teaching and learning. Perhaps this focus on empirical research into the effectiveness of teaching, learning and assessment tasks stems from the recent drive to practice evidence-based teaching (Petty, 2009; Marzano, 2017) and to adopt approaches that have a proven effect on learning, avoiding methods and activities that are based on scant and unreliable anecdotal evidence. However, the inclusion of Authentic Learning tasks in this evidence-gathering context, and proposals that authentic tasks are thus effective tasks need to be approached with caution, as authentic has proven to be a subjective and ill-defined term. Thus, these frameworks or models for Authentic Learning should only be viewed as one approach to teaching, learning and assessment of many, which may be carefully and knowledgably implemented where applicable, but practitioners should be aware that being labelled authentic (by meeting the required characteristics), does not necessarily make an activity or task more valuable.

Moreover, several teaching, learning and assessment tasks proposed by the papers reviewed in this thesis (see Figure 2) have claimed to be Authentic Learning by virtue of their use of technology to deliver real-world tasks to learners. As educational

practices continue to evolve in the 21st century, particularly in relation to technological advances in education and its globalisation, questions of what factors make learning Authentic may well become more complex still. If one draws upon Bialystock's (2016) question "authentic to whom or what reality?" both technology and globalisation both have the potential to further disrupt the educational debate.

Specifically, technological advances have the capacity to influence perceptions of reality. As digital simulation and artificial intelligence become ever more advanced for example, future activities in the real world of work become increasingly difficult to predict. Careers, job roles and work-tasks exist today that did not exist ten years ago, and many more will exist in ten years that do not exist today (Cascio, 2009). Therefore, particularly in technical education, the question of what exactly a real-world task should look like, the currency of the teachers' knowledge and the learners' certainty about how their learning will apply in future, adds further complexity to the concepts of Authentic Learning and to teacher and Learner Authenticity.

Additionally, globalisation within education also has the potential to further confuse perceptions of authenticity; how one views the authentic self, and what Authentic Learning looks like varies widely across different cultures. As global work-based participation develops to encompass more culturally diverse populations, there will be a need for views on authenticity to evolve. Interesting questions are raised here about what authentic means to other cultures as well as what constitutes good education and whether there are elements which are (or are not) transferable across cultural boundaries. This could form the basis of future studies; as discussed previously in respect of the value of education, the label Authentic itself is something of a Western cultural construction.

Thus, in all three of the explored strands of authenticity in education, teachers should be wary of accepting authenticity as an inherently positive addition to pedagogy, and no matter how convincing the conclusions and recommendations, educators must avoid thinking that doing Authentic Learning or being authentic as a teacher or

encouraging learners to be their authentic selves will somehow transform the educational experience and the outcomes for learners.

Therefore, this thesis puts forward the recommendation that Authentic Learning and education for authenticity are not terms that should be advanced in educational literature as a unique approach to teaching or an educational aim. Instead, it is proposed that Authentic should remain a far more banal term or attribute meaning genuine or real, with no deeper meaning than this, and if it must be used in relation to education, it should be used as a passing adjective rather than being attached as a label to a value-laden educational proposal with an attendant promise of better education or greater personal and moral fulfilment.

The final contribution of the thesis is to point to a much wider application of the method used in this particular worked example of authentic education. The method may be applied to many concepts used in educational theory and practice and it is proposed that it be more widely disseminated as an effective way to encourage critical awareness and analysis amongst teachers and trainee teachers. As the thesis has demonstrated, working through this method is intellectually demanding, but the benefits when introduced into teacher training and in-service training, for example, could be considerable. Rather than unquestionably accepting new theories and concepts in teaching and learning, application of the method would encourage delving deeply into the concepts being used in order to expose assumptions and thus evaluate the impact on current practice and the educational experience.

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