Educational Psychologists' Experiences and Perceptions of Reflective Practice

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Abstract

This study explored Educational Psychologists' experiences and perceptions of reflective practice. Reflective practice generates significant professional interest. However, it is an area where there has been a lack of research to date. For this study, ten Educational Psychologists, currently practicing in the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland, were interviewed. The qualitative data from those interviews was analysed using thematic analysis. Four overarching themes, and eight themes, were identified: Educational Psychologists as Reflective Practitioners (professional interest in reflective practice); Outcome of Reflective Practice (effect on EP role; Dunning-Kruger effect); Wide-Ranging Reflective Space (.means for reflection; enabler of reflective practice; obstacles) and The Way Forward (observation of growth; opportunities for forthcoming development). Participants were generally positive in their views and experiences of reflective practice, feeling that it benefited both their professional practice and their personal wellbeing. In order for the use of reflective practice to grow, it needs to be given greater priority at individual, organisational and governing levels. The lack of an agreed definition of reflective practice was also seen as a barrier. Finally, the study highlighted the importance of continued research into reflective practice.

*Keyword*s: Educational Psychology; Professional Development; Personal Growth, Reflection; Reflective Practice; Training

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Acknowledgements

Contents

List of Abbreviations Used	
BPS - British Psychological Society	LA - Local Authority
CASP - Critical Appraisal Skills Programme Qualitative Checklist	HCPC - Health & Care Professions Council
CPD - Continuing Professional Development	UEL - University of East London
DECP - Division of Education and Child Psychology	VERP - Video Enhanced Reflective Practice
EP - Educational Psychologist	VIG - Video Interactive Guidance
EThOS - e-theses online service	

Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Overview of Chapter

The purpose of this research is to explore Educational Psychologists' experiences and perceptions of reflective practice. Despite the value that is placed on reflective practice, the theory base is still relatively underdeveloped (Thompson & Pascal, 2012). Much of the previous research concerning reflective practice has looked at training in the allied professions context, including the development of reflective skills. While these studies have been valuable, a key criticism of the research body as a whole is that it has almost entirely focused on whether practitioners, typically trainees, find reflection helpful. The research has generally not looked at how reflective practice is used, and what benefit, if any, it might bring to professional practice (Wigg, Cushway & Neal, 2011). Little attention has also been paid in previous research to how reflective practice is used by Educational Psychologists (EPs), both for qualified and trainee EPs. The heavy reliance on trainees' perspectives of reflective practice has been a widely reported criticism of the literature as a whole (Laireiter & Willutzki, 2003).

In order to address this research gap, this study aims to develop an understanding of reflective practice in the EP context, to explore some of the processes involved in its use, and its impact on learning and development. This chapter will introduce the background for this research, and discuss the relevance of reflection and reflective practice in the field of Educational Psychology. This chapter explores the theoretical underpinning of reflective practice within its national and local context. It also briefly describes my background and motivation for this research. This chapter concludes with a short discussion of the rationale of the research.

1.2 Aims and Purpose of the Research

The context in which EPs work has become increasingly complex and litigious, with Gersch (2004) noting that EP professional work is increasingly monitored and held to account (Beaver 2011). The profession continues to experience a systematic deconstruction and reconstruction of its role (The Summerfield Report, 1968; Gillham, 1978; Department for Education and Employment, 2000; Boyle & Lachlan, 2009). The psychology profession, and the world itself, are not static, and it is important to keep up to date with current narratives (Gersch 2009).

Educational psychology training courses vary in the emphasis they place on, and approaches they take towards, the training of reflective practice (Bolton, 2003; Wigg, Cushway & Neal, 2011). Competencies and skills included in courses include the use of peer support groups, built-in reflection opportunities during sessions and assessments (both written and presentational). The introduction of reflection models and the use of reflective diaries are also approaches used to promote reflection in training. These elements are designed to help Trainee EPs have the ability to reflect on practice, and to learn from their experiences as a framework for practice. Self-knowledge underpins specific key values in social justice; beneficence; and autonomy. These are vital aspects of EP training.

1.3 Legislation and Regulations

The Health Care Professional Council (HCPC 2015) and British Psychological Society (BPS 2017) are key components of maintaining and improving competence and fitness to practice. They provide guidance and legislation to help to maintain standards of practice. The BPS states that psychologists should be "cognisant of the importance of self-awareness and the need to appraise and reflect on their own practice" (BPS, 2008, p. 8). It is also one of the outcomes for UK Doctoral programmes in Educational Psychology for the

participants to be able to demonstrate self-awareness and work as a reflective practitioner at end of the programme (BPS, 2019).

The HCPC, has mandated that practitioner psychologists "be able to reflect and review practice" (HCPC, Standards of Proficiency 2015, 11.1, 11.3 p12). HCPC also set out the benefits of becoming a reflective practitioner, outlining the processes and advantages of good reflective practice for individuals and teams. The HCPC has stated that, "reflective practice allows an individual to continually improve the quality of care they provide and gives multi-disciplinary teams the opportunity to reflect and discuss openly and honestly" (HCPC 2019). Reflective practice is also identified as central to the BPS compulsory policy on Continuing Professional Development (CPD) (BPS 2017, 1.3 p11). BPS also describe that the HCPC requires reflection in the record of CPD in order to retain continued registration. Within the professional guidelines for EPs in the Division of Educational and Child Psychology (DECP 2002), however, a focus on reflective practice is perhaps more limited (Dunsmuir & Leadbetter 2010).

1.4 Author's Background and Motivation

I am a Trainee EP working in a East London borough and studying for a Professional Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology at the University of East London (UEL). My initial interest in reflective practice developed as I learnt more about the role of an EP, including the importance placed on EPs continuing to develop and grow throughout their career. EPs continue to need to provide an effective service and achieve positive outcomes, including when dealing with an "accelerating rate of change, uncertainty and ambiguity and … with a wide variety of ethical issues" (Cunliffe, 2004, p. 408).

During the course of my training, I have had increased opportunities to be reflective with peers, tutors and supervisors. This has helped me structure my practice and focus my CPD. But I am aware that there is still space to improve reflective practice.

1.5 Relevant Theoretical Literature

"Know thyself" - this ancient Greek maxim, inscribed on the temple of Apollo at Delphi and reiterated in various guises by Aeschylus, Socrates, and Plato, among other influential Greek scholars, reminds us that self-reflection and self-awareness have been valued as aspirations for at least two millennia (Pronin, 2009; Ryff & Singer, 2008). The historical development of reflection and reflective practice has primarily been in the context of teaching and learning, and adult education. Dewey (1933), Habermas (1971), Mezirow (1981), Freire (2006) and Brookfield (2001) have all developed the concept of reflection in various ways.

Dewey (1933) formally introduced the idea of reflective practice, asserting that "reflective thinking is closely related to critical thinking; it is the turning over of a subject in the mind and giving it serious and consecutive consideration" (p.3). Although Dewey (1933) viewed reflective practice as a rational activity, he believed that reflection involved the whole psyche, including emotions (Lilienfeld & Basterfield 2020). Dewey's ideas provided a basis for the concept of 'reflective practice', which gained influence through the work of Donald Schön, in collaboration with Chris Argyris (1974). Schön described the central role of reflection in professional action, and in reflective learning, such that it becomes applicable to all professional practice, not just to the field of teaching and adult education.

Schön identified ways in which professionals could become aware of their implicit knowledge and learn from their experiences. His main concern was to facilitate the development of reflective practitioners, rather than describe the process of reflection per se (Finlay 2008). Schön (1983) separately identified reflection-in-action (thinking while doing) and reflection-on-action (after the event thinking). According to Schön (1983), reflection-in-action involves pondering in the "midst of action," "thinking on your feet", "keeping your wits about you", and "learning by doing" (p. 26). This suggests that not only can we, "think

about doing but we can think about doing something while doing it" (Schön, 1983, p. 54). In contrast, reflection-on-action involves professionals thinking retrospectively about a situation to consciously review, describe, analyse and evaluate it in order to understand what happened in light of experience, and to gain insight to improve future practice. In Schön's words "the practitioner allows himself to experience surprise, puzzlement, or confusion in a situation which he finds uncertain or unique" (Schön 1983, p. 68).

The ideas and concepts contained in Schön's seminal works, "The Reflective Practitioner" (1983) and "Educating the Reflective Practitioner" (1987) have been applied and further developed by practitioners in nursing, teaching and education, organisational psychology and psychotherapy, health services, social work, and public planning and policy making (Redmond 2006).

Schön (1983) argued that reflective practice was important because professionals often need to make quick and difficult decisions, in complicated situations and without necessarily having access to all of the available information. Schön (1983) describes a quest for an alternative to technical rationality, an "epistemology of practice implicit in the artistic, intuitive processes which some practitioners do bring to situations of uncertainty, instability, uniqueness and value conflict" (p. 49). In Schön's view, technical rationality failed to resolve the dilemma of 'rigour versus relevance' that confronts professionals. Schön's argument, since taken up by others (e.g., Fish & Coles, 1998), was that professional practice is complex, unpredictable and messy. In order to cope, professionals have to be able to do more than follow set procedures (Finlay, 2008).

Schön's work has inspired many models of reflection and categories of reflective practice. It has been hugely influential in the way it has been applied to practice and professional training and education. For example, Lavender (2003) developed Schön's model further by including reflection about 'impact on others' and reflection 'about self', which

appear more related to the content of our reflections rather than the process. Imel (1992) defined reflective practice as "…a mode that integrates or links thought and action with reflection. It involves thinking about and critically analysing one's actions with the goal of improving one's professional practice" (p. 2).

In some fields, Schön's work has drawn criticism. Eraut (2004) finds fault in the work for its lack of precision and clarity. Boud and Walker (1998) argue that Schön's analysis ignores critical features of the context of reflection, while Greenwood (1993), states that Schön downplays the importance of reflection-before-action. Moon (1999) regards Schön's pivotal concept of reflection-in-action as unachievable, while Ekebergh (2007) draws on phenomenological philosophy to argue that it is not possible to distance oneself from the lived situation to reflect in the moment.

A consistent theme in the literature on reflection is the number of positive effects on professional practice that have been attributed to reflection. These include:

- encouraging continuing education (Page & Meerabeau, 2000);

- increasing professional knowledge (Clarke, James, & Kelly, 1996);

- increasing confidence in decision-making (Page & Meerabeau, 2000);

- integrating theory and practice (Paget, 2001; Rich & Parker, 1995);

- assisting with goal setting (Ghaye & Lillyman, 2000);

- increasing critical thinking (Durgahee, 1996; Platzer, Blake & Ashford, 2000);

- enhancing the ability to manage difficult situations (Yip, 2006);

- enhanced autonomy (Clarke, James, & Kelly, 1996); increased self-awareness (e.g., Clarke, James, & Kelly, 1996; Paget, 2001);

- and increased understanding of the `social, economic and political context' of practice (Clarke, James, & Kelly, 1996, p.173).

Schön proposed that the use of reflective practice can help to prevent habitual practice (1983), leading to the individual needs of the service-user being responded to (Atkins & Murphy, 1993; Schön, 1983), with increased empathy (Platzer et al., 2000). Reflective practice can be seen, therefore, as a counter to professionals taking an overly simplistic or technique driven approach to their practice (Thompson & Pascal, 2011).

The similarly used terms 'reflection' or 'reflective' are often confused and used interchangeably with 'critical reflection' and 'reflexivity'. This may have contributed to the difficulty of defining reflective practice. Finlay and Gough (2003) argue that it is helpful to think of these concepts as forming a continuum. Thompson and Pascal (2011) state that "the term reflexive relates to another meaning of the word reflection – that it is not simply to think, but to reflect as a mirror does" (p. 319). Reflexivity can simply be defined as an ability to recognise our own influence, and the influence of our social and cultural context on research, the type of knowledge we create, and the way we create it (Fook, 1999). In this sense, it is about factoring ourselves as player into the situation in which we practice (Fook, 1999, p.45). Accordingly, reflexivity is a key part of ensuring that reflective practice is critically reflective (Thompson & Pascal, 2011). Fook and Askeland (2006) argue that the focus of critical reflection should be on connecting individual identity and social context: "Part of the power of critical reflection in opening up new perspectives and choices about practice may only be realized if the connections between individual thinking and identity, and dominant social beliefs are articulated and realized" (p .53).

1.6 Defining Reflective Practice

Although numerous authors have advanced claims regarding the effectiveness of reflective practice in clinical psychology and allied disciplines (Lilienfeld & Basterfield 2020), a universal definition of reflective practice remains elusive (Russell, 2005; Cropley,

2009; Fisher et al., 2015). While definitions in the literature appear to remain contested, reflection is a concept that has been explored by many writers.

The core features of 'reflective practice' vary across scholars (Jarvis, 1992; Mackintosh, 1998; Atkins & Murphy, 1993; Mann, Gordon, & MacLeod, 2009; Mann & Walsh, 2013). Within different disciplines and intellectual traditions, what is understood by 'reflective practice' can vary considerably (Fook et al., 2006). Smyth (1992) notes that "reflection can mean all things to all people…it is used as a kind of umbrella or canopy term to signify something that is good or desirable…everybody has his or her own (usually undisclosed) interpretation of what reflection means" (p. 285). Reflective practice is also seen to enable the promotion of effective, competent and ethical practice (Furr & Carroll, 2003), and to permit an 'anticipatory reflection' process (Conway, 2001), i.e., the way in which the reflexive activities of the practitioner act to inform their subsequent practice.

In essence, reflection is seen as an approach for critically analysing practice and developing self-awareness, which initially emerged from education (Dewey, 1933; Lewin, 1952). Moon (2004) notes similarities between being reflective and using an imaginary instrument called a 'pensive' in the Harry Potter book series. In Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire, "one simply siphons the excess thoughts from one's mind, pours them into the basin, and examines them at one's leisure. It becomes easier to spot patterns and links, you understand, when they are in this form" (Rowling, 2000, p. 518). Being reflective in real life is not always so easy though.

Reflective practice is understood as the process of learning through and from experience towards gaining new insights of self-and/or practice (Boud et al., 1985; Boyd & Fales, 1983; Mezirow, 1981; Jarvis, 1992). This often involves examining assumptions of everyday practice. It also tends to involve the individual practitioner being self-aware and critically evaluating their own responses to practice situations (Finlay, 2008). For Nilsen,

Nordström and Ellström (2012), reflection is typically described as a mechanism to translate experience into learning, by examining one's attitude, beliefs and actions, in order to draw conclusions to enable better choices or responses in the future.

1.7 Models for Reflection

Reflective models have evolved over time. They can be singular or have multiple paradigms, (Finlayson, 2015). Ultimately, professional practice and education are likely to benefit from the stimulus, and challenge, provided by competing perspectives and multiple models. Models need to be applied selectively, purposefully, flexibly and judiciously (Finlay, 2003). Reflective practice models can be in formal and informal reflection (Cheetham & Chivers, 2001). Informal reflection involves self-questioning, whereas formal requires an underpinning of research and theory. To guide the process of reflective practice more explicitly, authors (e.g., Johns, 1994; Kolb, 1984) have proposed various multistage "cycles" of reflective practice, some of which have been recommended for use in psychological training (Anderson et al., 2004; Cooper & Wieckowski, 2017; Sheikh et al., 2007).

A number of models of reflection have been advanced in different fields of professional practice and education. Quinn (1998) suggests that the different models all tend to involve three fundamental processes: retrospection, i.e., thinking back about a situation or experience; self-evaluation, i.e., critically analysing and evaluating the actions and feelings associated with the experience, using theoretical perspectives; and reorientation, i.e., using the results of self-evaluation to influence future approaches to similar situations or experiences" (p. 82).

Dewey (1933) proposed a five stage informal reflection model: suggestions for a solution; clarification of the essence of the problem; the generation of hypotheses; comparison of these hypotheses; and testing the selected hypothesis by imaginative action.

One of the other models of reflection most commonly cited is Gibbs' Reflective

Cycle:

Figure 1

Gibbs' Reflective Cycle (1988)

(Retrieved from: https://www.ed.ac.uk/reflection/reflectors-toolkit/reflecting-on-
experience/gibbs-reflective-cycle)
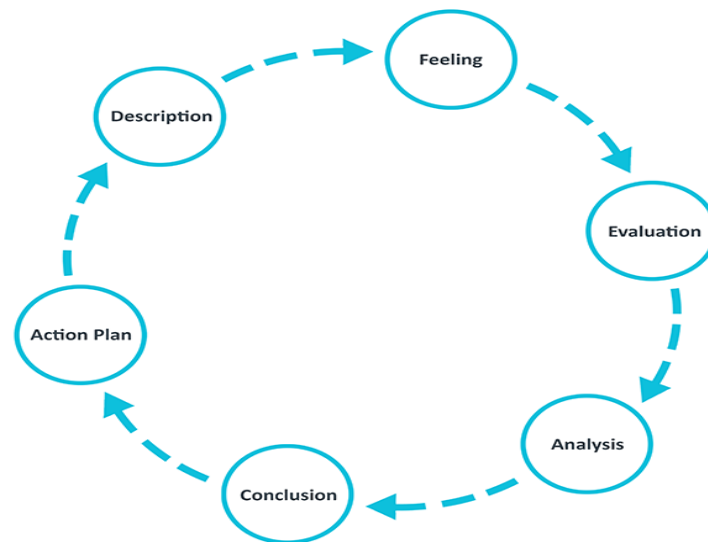
Built from Kolb's experiential learning cycle, Gibbs' cycle proposes that theory and

practice enrich each other in a never-ending circle. Originally conceived as a "de-briefing

sequence" (1988, p. 46), Gibbs' cycle has been adopted in nursing and other professional

education as a way to facilitate reflection.

Whilst Gibbs' model can suggest useful basic questions to help structure reflection,

some argue that a broader, more critically reflexive approach is needed. Zeichner and

Liston (1996) argue that reflective practice should be used to critically examine values, see

how practice can lead to change, and ensure a commitment to quality and respect for

difference. Such arguments have encouraged more elaborate models to find favour in higher

levels of professional practice and education. For example, Jay and Johnson (2002)

developed a typology of reflection involving three intertwined dimensions:

- Descriptive - the practitioner describes the matter for reflection, e.g., "What is happening?", "Is this working, and for whom?", "How am I feeling?" "What do I not understand?";

- Comparative - the practitioner reframes the matter for reflection in the light of alternative views, perspectives and research: "How do other people who are directly or indirectly involved describe and explain what is happening?", "What does research contribute to an understanding of this matter?", "How can I improve what is not working?";

- Critical reflection - a new perspective is established: "What are the implications of the matter when viewed from these alternative perspectives? Given these various alternatives, their implications, and my own morals and ethics, which is best for this particular matter?", "What does this matter reveal about the moral and political dimension of schooling?", "How does this reflective process inform and renew my perspective?"

Brookfield (1998) framed reflective practice as an activity where an individual views a situation using four lenses: autobiography; learner eyes; our colleagues' eyes; and theoretical literature. Rolfe, Freshwater and Jasper (2001) simplified the reflective model to: what (describe); so what (discuss); and now what (identify).

Reflective models have evolved over time. They can be singular or have multiple paradigms, as well as becoming simpler (Finlayson, 2015).

1.8 Rationality of the Research

Amongst the existing articles and books that discuss reflective practice, while they do include suggestions and techniques as to how to do reflective practice, it is often difficult to translate conceptual and theoretical aspects into practical implications. There is far less

research valuing the application of reflective practice in practice, and outcomes associated with these same methods.

Of the existing publications covering reflective practice in the psychology context, few involve research that tries to explore experiences and perceptions of reflective practice. Accordingly, this study aims to explore a detailed interpretation of Educational Psychologists' accounts of reflective practice in an effort to understand the way in which reflective practice is experienced and understood and how this impacts personal and professional development.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.1 Overview of Chapter

The previous chapter provided background information regarding this study, outlining the local and national context as well as the research rationale and main aims of the study. The aim of the following systematic review of literature is to provide a critical account of the literature surrounding how psychologists experience reflective practice. The limited research in reflective practice in the Educational Psychology context prompted consideration of the literature surrounding it more broadly, and the population it studies, which includes Educational, Clinical and Counselling psychologists. This chapter focuses both on relevant theoretical material and specific research on reflective practice. The chapter will conclude with a discussion of how this study could contribute to current knowledge.

2.2 Literature Review Methodology

Essential for this systematic literature review was deciding on 'who' 'what' and 'how' (Ibrahim, 2008). Within this context, it was important to consider the research question: how do the psychologists' experience reflective practice? It was important to consider the research questions and the audience for this study - Educational, Clinical and Counselling psychologists. Due to a lack of sufficient studies in the Educational Psychology context, the most relevant literature tended to report more on general perspectives on reflection, as opposed to reflections specifically linked to Educational Psychology practice. Identified literature that explored the experience of reflective practice was often drawn from allied professions. For the purposes of this study, that literature was explored and examined to see whether it could be applied to EPs.

Table 1

Stages in the Literature Search Process

Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
- research papers that explored reflective practice and reflection as a primary topic or area of focus. - studies that explore the concept of reflection, try to define reflection and describe the process of reflection. - studies focused on the use of reflective practice by qualified Educational psychologists, Counselling psychologists and Clinical psychologists. - primary focus is on the UK, but international studies will be considered if the findings can be applied to the local UK context, for example western countries and those that use the English language.	- the focus of the topic was not reflection or reflective practice. - reflection was used as method for exploring another topic in the study. - the sample population was not Educational, Clinical and/or Counselling psychologists. - they were not written in English, or findings were unable to be applied to the local UK context.

The strict inclusion of terms 'reflective practice' and 'reflection' was utilised to include studies that used these terms to describe their topic. This was important given the lack of academic and professional clarity on defining reflection (Atkins & Murphy, 1993) and in ensuring consistency.

Stage 1 - Formulating Search Terms

The initial scoping search was conducted in November 2019. It involved core electronic data bases like PsycINFO, Scopus, grey literature like EThOS (The British Library's e-theses online service), and UEL's repository. That scoping search helped in

planning the search terms for the full literature review, and enabled me to gain a broad overview of the topic and the available material. A further refined systematic review was conducted between May and September 2020.

The process of defining the subject terms (controlled vocabulary) helped in pulling together articles, book chapters and theses on a particular topic from across the databases. The use of a thesaurus was also employed to formulate the subject index. I also combined search terms and key words to help refine the search. These were useful processes to use as the review was based on studies that have specifically used the term 'reflection' or 'reflective practice'

Stage 2 - Conducting Search

I conducted a systematic search using three search strategies. The first strategy involved searching core electronic data bases: PsycINFO; ERIC; Academic search; British Education Index; Education Research Complete; Scopus; and Reflective Practice and Educational Psychology journals. A further online search of grey literature, like EThOS and UEL's repository, was done to minimise publication bias.

The second strategy focused on a combination of search terms and synonyms: 'reflect* practice' AND 'education* psycholog*' AND 'psychologist', theory OR tool OR method OR model OR framework AND "clinical psychology" AND "counselling psychology" AND 'perceptions OR attitudes OR opinion OR experience OR view OR beliefs'. The literature showed that supervision was regarded as an important mechanism for reflective practice for psychologists. Therefore, the subject term 'supervision' was added and used in combination with the above-mentioned terms.

The third strategy involved all publications obtained from the process set out above being examined manually, in terms of their bibliographies and reference lists, for additional relevant references, as well as identifying the citing papers in the Scopus database. Using the

previously identified inclusion/exclusion criteria, the titles and abstracts of the papers

retrieved were scanned for relevance, then the full text of the studies was assessed for

eligibility for inclusion (see Appendix A for a detailed record).

Figure 2 below is a Systematic Review and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) flow diagram

(Peters et al., 2015) demonstrating the search process. In the identification stage, the first box

refers to records identified through Ethos (which forms the grey literature). The third box

refers to records identified through a hand search, including bibliographies and reference lists

of the final list of nine identified papers, and via UEL's repository. The second box refers to

all others records identified via databases.

Figure 2

PRISMA Flow Diagram
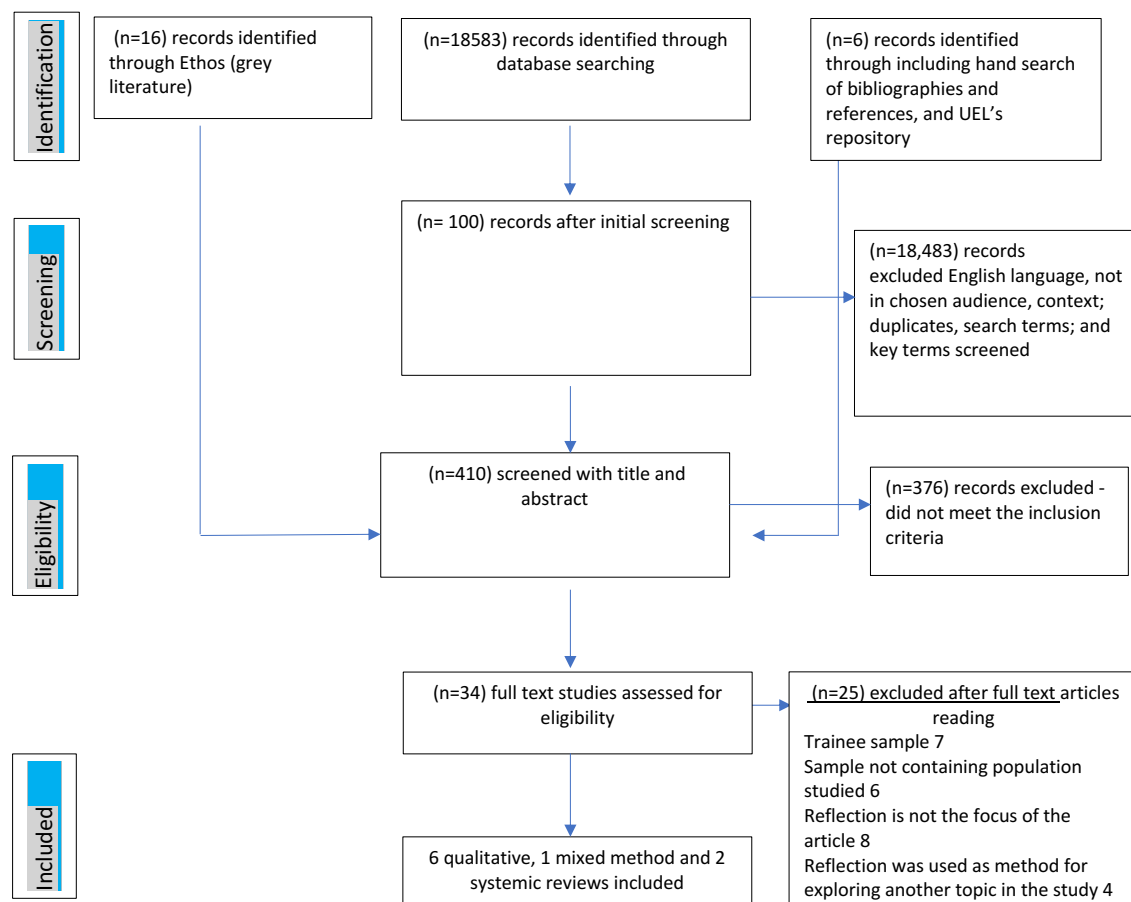
After deploying these strategies, a total of nine papers were identified as relevant and matching the inclusion criteria for this review.

Stage 3 - Assessment of Quality

Some researchers argue that using checklist tools to decide if a paper should be included is inappropriate (Dixon-Woods et al., 2004). Others, however, believe the appraisal can be used as part of the exploration and interpretation process (Popay et al., 1998; Spencer, Ritchie, Lewis & Dillon, 2003). For this study, literature was not excluded on the basis of quality for two main reasons. The first was that the main aim of this study was to understand how reflective practice was experienced by the selected population, and studies of all quality could contribute to that aim. Second, due to a lack of sufficient studies on this topic, excluding those found based on quality risked reducing those few studies identified even further.

While the literature review did not exclude work on the basis of quality, this literature review did use the Critical Appraisal Skills Programme Qualitative Checklist (CASP) (2018) to critically appraise the quality of the papers being reviewed. CASP provides 10 questions designed to help a researcher make sense of a Qualitative research issues systematically, for example, "was there a clear statement of the aims of the research?".

An additional criteria was added to the Checklist to see if the researcher attempted to define reflective practice for the purposes of their research. This was due to the previously highlighted problem of a lack of a universal definition of reflective practice. The results of the application of CASP on the nine papers identified is presented in Table 2 below, along with a critical summary of preliminary synthesis (for further background please see Appendix B).

Table 2

CASP and Critical Summary of Preliminary Synthesis

Author, Year Title & Country	Methodology and Study Design	Key findings
Carmichael et al. (2020). 'You're opening yourself to new and different ideas': clinical psychologists' understandings and experiences of how they use reflective practice in their clinical work: an interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA). UK.	Qualitative research, data analysis of transcripts was done using IPA. Reflective diary was completed by seven clinical psychologists to facilitate semi-structured interviews.	The findings suggest that reflective processes can help manage the influence of biases, create awareness of more possibilities and determine the direction that clinicians take in practice. Questioning, making sense of one's own thoughts and feelings were key takeaways. Participants' experiences of reflection showed an openness to uncertainty and a willingness to question and challenge one's own assumptions.
Andrews (2018). The Role of Reflective Practice for Educational Psychologists. UK.	Qualitative research. The study used a grounded theory methodology. It consisted of nine semi-structured interviews, with eight EPs and one final year Trainee EP.	The findings suggested that reflective practice supports EPs' sense of agency, and mastery of skills. The author also explained risks and protected factors. Risk factors included how participants identified that supervision and peer supervision was not being prioritised, as well as a lack of supervision models and lack of time. Protective factors included a reversal of some of the risk factors (i.e., supervision and a lack of reflective practice in initial EP training).
Kiemle, UK (2008). Clinical psychologists' experience of reflective practice and how this relates to their continuing professional development. UK	Qualitative research, data analysis using interpretive phenomenological analysis. It consisted of 16 individual interviews with qualified clinical psychologists.	Suggestion that for many participants, their professional identity is commensurate with a value system that includes critical reflection as an essential part of continuous professional development. Reflective practice aided these participants in theoretical and skills-based reflection. It also enhanced service provision. Participants referred to supervision as the formal space for reflection concerning all aspects of their practice.
Lilienfeld and Basterfield (2020). Reflective practice in clinical psychology: Reflections from basic psychological science. USA	Systemic Literature review. Review question: Is reflective practice consistent with findings derived from basic psychological science, such as social cognition? Data analysis method not discussed.	The review tackles core assumptions of reflective practice. It explores local and national context of professions. Authors acknowledge reflective practice's significance across psychology fields. Review takes a critical stance. It explains that the literature has remained largely disconnected from basic psychological science, especially work on the limitations of (a) introspection as a means of becoming aware of one's biases, (b) self-assessment, and (c) acquiring expertise from experience.

Author, Year Title & Country	Methodology and Study Design	Key findings
Beal et al. (2017). Critical reflection on peer supervision underpinning inter-agency work: EPs working experientially with a Youth Offending Service. UK	Qualitative research. Three Educational Psychologists' reflections on the use of reflective teams to provide inter-agency work between two EP services and Youth Offending Service (YOS). Data analysis method not discussed.	Reflection on how reflecting within an inter-agency context stimulated and illuminated further reflections for psychologists' supervision. The process of reflective practice in a team prompted further reflection-in-action about psychologists' own peer supervision. It also provided reflections on personal and professional engagement with reflective practice.
Kennedy et al. (2018). A relational model of supervision for applied Psychology practice: professional growth through relating and reflecting. UK	Qualitative research. A case study of EPs using the relational model of supervision. Reflective model in inter-agency supervision context. Data analysis method not discussed.	Reflection in this context refers to how aware practitioners are of their own personal feelings, thoughts, values and attitudes, and the degree to which they appreciate how these affect their behaviours and responses when relating to others (Tomlin, Weatherston, & Pavkov, 2014). Use of systemic, psychodynamic and attachment lenses supported the quality of relationship between supervisee and supervisor.
Fisher et al. (2015). Clinical Psychologists' use of reflection and reflective practice within clinical work. Singapore	Qualitative interviews with six clinical psychologists currently practicing in Singapore. The interviews were analysed using interpretative phenomenological analysis.	Reflective practice was useful for participants to: better understand themselves; work more closely with their clients; manage challenging clinical situations; be able to be aware of their professional roles; and to maintain appropriate profession and ethical standards.
Marshall (2019). The concept of reflection: a systematic review and thematic synthesis across professional contexts. UK	Systematic review of 14 sources. Data analysis using thematic synthesis. Review question: How does the existing literature explain the concept of reflection across professional context?	Cognition considered to be the core theme, as it is used to make sense of complex problems and ambiguities. Reflection explores and synthesises multiple ideas and perspectives, providing a vehicle through which practitioners explore personal subjectivity e.g., beliefs, meaning, perspective and emotions.
Ferreira et al. (2017). Guidelines for reflective practice in psychotherapy: a reflection on the benefits of combining moment-by-moment and phase-by-phase mapping in clinical decision making. USA	Qualitative research. Three case studies including three female clients over five years by a clinical psychologist. Use of integrating guiding methods including paradigmatic complementarity metamodel and developmental analysis of the psychotherapy process method.	Participants felt moment-by moment and phase-by-phase reflective practice helped them to appreciate that their relationships with clients were dynamic, not static. This helped them to relate to participant capacities and vulnerabilities, as well as psychologists. It looked for structural changes, consolidated gains, and looked at what clients were already capable of. Through the understanding of the developmental and sequential process, there were gains for both clients and the therapist's ability to support them.

Author, Year Title & Country	Methodology and Study Design	Key findings
Henegan et al. (2014). Clinical Psychologists' experiences of reflective staff groups in inpatient psychiatric settings: a mixed methods study. UK	Mixed methodology involving an online questionnaire and follow up interviews. The sample consisted of 73 clinical psychologists working in the UK, six of whom were interviewed. Data was analysed using descriptive statistics, content analysis and thematic analysis.	The findings indicated the common practice for psychologists in facilitating reflective staff groups. It reported similarities between their perceptions of positive outcomes and those of the attendees. Shifts in attitudes included increased compassion and empathy for patients, being more proactive, increased psychological thinking, psychologically informed care plans, more positive interactions with patients. Noted links to psychodynamic, attachment and group theories. Challenges included the group not finding time, space, and management support for reflection when they were overwhelmed by busy roles.

2:3 Overview of Empirical Studies

2.3.1 Study Characteristics

Implementation of the review methodology set out earlier in this chapter resulted in nine papers being identified. Two of those papers were systematic literature reviews (Lilienfeld and Basterfiled, 2020; Marshall, 2019), and one presented case studies (Ferreira et al, 2017). Four studies explored reflection through interviews with psychologists, with three using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) (Kiemle 2008; Fisher et al., 2015; Carmichael et al., 2020) and one using grounded theory (Andrews, 2018). Finally, two papers focused on inter-agency reflective group work (Henegan et al., 2014; Beal et al., 2017). The methodology used in the papers considered was predominately qualitative research, with the exception of Henegan et al. which utilised a mixed methodology. Seven of the papers found were published works, with Andrew's and Kiemle's studies being unpublished theses.

Four studies included a definition of reflective practice, while one provided a definition based on a synthesis of existing literature (Marshall, 2019). Six studies appeared to focus on what Schön (1983) refers to as 'reflecting-on-action'. Two were systematic reviews of literature on reflective practice (Lilienfeld and Basterfiled, 2020; Marshall, 2019). One study collected reflections on the process of reflecting through use of a reflective diary that was completed by psychologists to facilitate semi-structured interviews (Carmichael et al., 2020). Henegan et al.'s (2014) study involved an online questionnaire and follow up interviews.

The studies by Kennedy et al., (A relational model of supervision for applied psychology practice: professional growth through relating and reflecting, 2018) and Beal et al., (Critical reflection on peer supervision underpinning inter-agency work: EPs working experientially with a Youth Offending Service, 2017) both looked at reflection in

supervision. Due to the similarities between these two studies, I considered their findings together.

Two studies (Kiemle, 2008; Carmichael et al., 2020) met all eleven CASP quality criteria, and three met ten (Andrews, 2018; Fisher et al., 2015; Marshall, 2019). Three studies met eight (Beal et al., 2017; Henegan et al., 2014; Lilienfeld and Basterfiled, 2020), Ferreira et al. (2017) met six and Kennedy et al. (2018) met five. CASP was applied to the work by Henegan et al. (2014) even though it was a mixed method study and CASP is primarily used with qualitative studies. This was because, in order to ensure consistency of approach, I wanted to apply CASP to all of studies/papers identified.

Further analysis of the studies identified, building on the preliminary synthesis (Table 2), uncovered some consistent themes of how psychologists experience reflective practice. Table 3 below sets out the frequency of those themes across the identified studies.

Table 3

Frequency of Themes

Review of 9 studies	Improved Self-knowledge and Openness to Uncertainty	Reflection enhances quality of service	Reflection and Professional Identity	Reflecting on reflective practice	Facilitating factors in reflective practice	Obstacles to reflective practice	*Total no of themes*
Frequency	**9 of 9**	**9 of 9**	**7 of 9**	**$7^{1/2}$ of 9**	**7 of 9**	**5 of 9**	**6**
Carmichael et al., 2020 (UK)	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	**6**
Andrews, 2018 (UK)	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	**5**
Kiemle, 2008 (UK)	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	**6**
Lilienfeld and Basterfield, 2020 (USA)	yes	yes	no	partially	yes	no	**$3^{1/2}$**
Fisher et al., 2015 (Singapore)	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	**6**
Henegan et al., 2014, UK	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	**6**
Marshall, 2019 (UK)	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no	**4**
Ferreira et al., 2017 (USA)	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	no	**4**
Beal et al., 2017, (UK)	yes	yes	yes	partially	yes	no	**$4^{1/2}$**
Kennedy, et al., 2018 (UK)							

Across the studies, six individual themes were identified, which were then divided between two broad overarching themes. Those themes are set out in in Table 4 below.

Table 4
Representation of Themes Across Studies

Conceptualising Reflective Practice	Valuing Reflective Practice
• Reflecting on Reflective Practice • Facilitating Factors in Reflective Practice • Obstacles to Reflective Practice	• Improved Self-knowledge and Openness to Uncertainty • Reflection Enhances Quality of Service • Reflection and Professional Identity

2.3.2 Conceptualisation of Reflection Practice

2.3.2.1 Reflecting on Reflective Practice. The studies featured in this review found that reflective practice was seen as an overarching approach to professional inquiry and training (Anderson, Knowles, & Gilbourne, 2004; Fisher et al., 2015; Gates & Senediak, 2017; Lavender, 2003). Certain aspects of psychology training seemed to have a profound impact on participants' subsequent development as reflective practitioners (Kiemle, 2008). Cole (2000) stated that reflective practice was a defining characteristic of professional action, and that there was "a strong argument in favour of all who are involved in 'in-person service' in healthcare to reflect on their practice, regardless of their occupational status" (p. 20). Andrews (2018) and Marshall (2019) identified reflective practice as useful across the field of psychologists' experience, as it facilitates improvement in practice through on-going evaluation of practice. Reflective practice was also proposed as a foundational competency of professional and ethical practice (Fisher, et al., 2015; France et al., 2008; Kaslow et al., 2009; Rodolfa et al., 2005; Stucky, Bush, & Donders, 2010).

There was common acknowledgment in the studies of the complexity of defining reflection in the context of psychologists (Lilienfeld & Basterfield, 2020; Carmichael et al., 2020; Andrews, 2018; Kiemle, 2008; Fisher, et al., 2015; Heneghan et al., 2014; Marshal

2019). As previously mentioned, Lilienfeld and Basterfield (2020) noted that although language and theories of reflective practice have permeated much of the psychological literature, the concept of reflective practice is not easily defined, as its core features and boundaries often vary across scholars (Jarvis, 1992; Mackintosh, 1998; Mann, Gordon, & MacLeod, 2009). Heneghan et al. (2014) found a challenge for psychologists in reflecting on their experiences of facilitating reflective practice groups due to a range of differing practices in utilising the term reflective practice, and in naming the theoretical models they drew on in their practice. In Fisher, et al., (2015), participants were said to have found it hard to articulate what reflection was. Instead, they used metaphors, or resorted to providing specific examples to describe what reflection was. Despite the difficulties with defining reflective practice, the studies showed that psychologists, particularly those in the UK, increasingly valued the concept, especially in the area of training (Fisher et al., 2015; Knight, Sperlinger, & Maltby, 2010; Binks, Jones & Knight, 2013).

Some of the featured studies proposed definitions of reflective practice. Andrews (2018) suggested that reflective practice was the process of learning through, and from, new experiences, with the goal of working towards gaining new insights of self-and/or practice (Boud, Keogh & Walker, 1985). A participant in Kiemle's study said, "I think it's, for me, the ability to be able to stand outside of myself and look at what I'm doing and how I'm doing it and why I'm doing it..." (2008, p. 97). Gates and Senediak (2017) observed that the aim of reflective practice was to teach psychologists to "become curious and critical of their work" (p. 193). These goals have been echoed by numerous other authors in reflective practice literature (e.g., Anderson et al., 2004; Lavender, 2003).

The proposed definitions of reflection and reflective practice found in the studies mirror language used by the psychologists' professional body, the BPS. The BPS states that psychologists should be "cognisant of the importance of self-awareness and the need to

appraise and reflect on their own practice" (p. 8, BPS, 2008), and that psychologist training programmes "should ensure that trainees monitor and review their own progress and develop skills in self-reflection and critical reflection on practice" (p. 40, 2019). The HCPC state that, "reflective practice allows an individual to continually improve the quality of care they provide and gives multi-disciplinary teams the opportunity to reflect and discuss openly and honestly" (2019, p. 1). Many major Universities in the UK subscribe to a "reflective scientist–practitioner" model in training psychologists (Lilienfeld & Basterfield 2020, Andrews, 2018; Kiemle, 2008; Fisher, et al., 2015). Kiemle highlighted reflective practice's relation to CPD and its importance for professions where there is an emphasis on reflective scientist practitioners.

Andrews (2018) noted that reflection provides a sense of agency i.e., the impact of the individual feeling a sense of control, autonomy and processing of experiences (Frie, 2008). Within the psychologists' role, reflection on the complexity and changing social and cultural constructions of the profession might "enable us to actually think about the way that we are approaching the different demands that are made of us" (Andrews, 2018, p. 42).

2.3.2.2 Facilitating Factors in Reflective Practice. Lilienfeld and Basterfield (2020) noted that reflective practice can occur in multiple ways, including thinking, talking to supervisors and peers, and writing. Reflective practice was seen both as an individual and a collaborative process (Beal et al., 2017). Fisher et al. (2015) said that when reflecting individually, participants used materials such as case notes, audio tapes of sessions, diaries and journals. One of Fisher et al.'s participants said "where you see you have unsuccessful cases, then you start to think a bit more… reflecting a little more and you see the benefit of it. So that's why you keep doing it" (2015, p. 8). Andrews (2018) said that Video Interactive Guidance (VIG) was named by participants as a specific tool of reflective practice.

Research suggests that significant numbers of psychologists are actively engaged in both giving and receiving supervision in a variety of forms (Beal, et al., 2017; Heneghan et al., 2014; Ferreira, et al., 2017; Kennedy, et al., 2018). All studies identified in this review placed great value on having supervision as an identified and protected space, where participants could formally take time out to reflect on their work (Dunsmuir et al., 2015); Carmichael et al., 2020; Andrews, 2018; Kiemle, 2008; Fisher et al., 2015; Heneghan et al., 2014).

The studies by Beal et al., (2017); Carmichael et al., (2020); Andrews, (2018); Kiemle, (2008); Fisher et al., (2015) and Heneghan et al., (2014) noted that non-hierarchical peer supervision supported participants' emotional resilience, and opened alternative spaces for turning the gaze back to themselves. Furthermore, these studies uncovered that collaborative reflective practice potentially offers opportunities for learning about different viewpoints and professional experiences. Beal et al. (2017) identified this as experienced reflection-in-action, as relationships of trust developed in inter-agency and peer supervision contexts. Research by Heneghan et al. (2014) suggested that collaborative reflective practice supports positive attitudes and agency within the practitioner. In practice, however, participants in Kiemle's (2008) study also identified reflective practice as a solitary process.

The participants in the studies demonstrated limited awareness of known formal models of reflective practice. The studies did, however, demonstrate the application of psychology theory. For example, exposure to attachment, psychodynamic or systemic theory and practice was cited by participants as a significant influencing factor (Kiemle, 2008; Kennedy et al., 2018; Heneghan et al., 2014). Beal et al. (2017) drew on the social constructionism assumption that all knowledge could be constructed as necessarily contextual, and dependent on the standpoint of those concerned (Willig, 2001).

The studies highlighted that the application of reflective practice occurred across all timeframes of a psychologists' practice. For example, in Andrews' study (2018) participants explained that they may undertake reflection in the moment, at planning stages and retrospectively to review work. There was one exception, with Participant 2 reflecting on the difficulty of applying Schön's (1983) 'reflection-in-action', echoing criticisms found in the theoretical literature (Moon, 1999).

2.3.2.3 Obstacles to Reflective Practice. According to most of the studies included in this literature review, the main obstacles to reflective practice were time and performance pressures, fears of being judged, and lack of value placed in, and support for, reflection and supervision (Kiemle, 2008; Heneghan et al., 2014; Carmichael et al., 2020; Andrews, 2018). Time was considered to be especially important for reflective practice in a number of studies (Andrews, 2018; Carmichael et al., 2020; Kiemle, 2008; Kuit, Reay & Freeman, 2001; Ganly, 2017). This may reflect the systemic value placed on reflective practice (Davis, 2003) and the impact of the daily demands of a psychologist's role. Study participants also described their difficulties with reflective tasks in service settings, suggesting the need for training and skill building (Heneghan et al., 2014).

As was also found in the historic and theoretical literature, another common obstacle emphasised in these studies was defining and describing reflective practice. These difficulties appear to be exacerbated by the range of terms used to describe similar processes (Kiemle, 2008; Andrews, 2018; Carmichael et al., 2020; Heneghan et al., 2014). In these studies, it was felt that potential benefits to learning could be lost if reflective practice was not valued by the culture and environment, and there was not a safe and protected space for reflection (Heneghan et al., 2014). In Andrews, Carmichael, Kiemle's studies, although supervision was occurring, it was identified that supervision was not necessarily being prioritised. There was some uncertainty about the application of supervision models, uncertainty about

understanding the reflective practice needs of the supervisee, and a suggested lack of consideration of systems thinking for peer supervision (Andrews 2018; Kiemle 2008).

2.3.3   Valuing Reflective Practice

2.3.3.1 Improved Self-Knowledge and Openness to Uncertainty. According to the studies, reflecting on yourself appeared to be central to psychologists' everyday practice. Across all the studies identified for this review, a commonly held view on reflective practice was that it was seen to help develop self-awareness and openness to uncertainty. This supports Lavender (2003) who suggested that one's reflective process involves understanding the self, and O'Loughlin (2003) who suggested that psychologists need to understand their own motivations for undertaking clinical work (Fisher et al., 2015).

In the featured studies, psychologists were shown to value reflection for helping them to: look after themselves; access their feelings; build resilience; enhance their connection with clients; manage stress; have openness to uncertainty and opportunity situations; and increase their self-awareness (Fisher et al., 2015; Carmichael et al., 2020; Andrews, 2018; Beal et al., 2017, Heneghan et al., 2014). Kiemle (2008) quoted a participant explaining that, as a result of reflection, they were "more comfortable with not knowing or not having the answers or not solving things for people" (p. 100). Further studies elaborated that, through understanding the self, it allowed the psychologist to focus on their client's needs, reflecting the interface between the personal and the professional (Carmichael et al., 2020; Kiemle, 2008; Andrews, 2018; Beal et al., 2017; Heneghan et al., 2014). Marshall (2019) found that personal development reflection provided a vehicle to personal subjectivity e.g., beliefs, perspective and emotions. Lilienfeld and Basterfield (2020) built on this further, stating that reflective practice strives to enhance individuals' self-assessment accuracy.

2.3.3.2 Reflection Enhances Quality of Service. Stedmon and Dallos (2009) found that understanding the self through reflection helped participants to be attuned to internal

processes. This helped in creating an ability to understand themselves, and to attune more fully with their clients. This appeared to help the psychologist be more effective in their work, and in particular, helped them avoid premature responses or act out (Fisher et al., 2015; Carmichael et al., 2020; Kiemle, 2008; Heneghan et al., 2014).

Beal et al. (2017), noting the work of Shotter and Gergen (1989) and Winslade (2002), said that reflection supported both the client and the psychologist, "through our experiences of peer supervision in an inter-agency context, we experienced identities being continually constructed and reconstructed through language between us" (p. 115). All participants in Fisher et al.'s study (2015) reported that reflective practice had a positive impact on both their professional behaviour and on their care for clients. In Ferreira et al. (2017) a participant appreciated that reflection helped them to be reflexive on how they could best respond to clients' needs, and helped them in having an understanding of their contributions.

In the studies by Andrews (2018), Heneghan et al. (2014) and Kiemle (2008), participants stated that reflective practice could be further enhanced by supporting systemic thinking, and having an understanding of change, relationships, practitioner well-being, and the application of psychology. As well as Andrews', Carmichael et al.'s (2020) study also explored how systemic thinking about the self in a wider social context was an important influencing factor for a number of psychologists, primarily those who were working with children and families, or with other client groups (such as learning disabilities) in a systemic way.

The findings of the various studies suggest that a core assumption of reflective practice is that reflection enables individuals to overcome their own biases and create awareness of more possibilities (Carmichael et al., 2020; Kiemle, 2008; Heneghan et al., 2014; Marshall, 2019; Lilienfeld & Basterfield, 2020).

2.3.3.3 Reflection and Professional Identity. The featured studies found an appreciation of reflective practice, especially the support it provides in ensuring professional and ethical practice. It was also seen to enable psychologists to ensure high standards of professional practice by improving their skills (Kiemle, 2008; Heneghan et al., 2014).

Carmichael et al. (2020), Kiemle (2008) and Andrews' (2018) findings suggest that reflective practice is perceived as having a beneficial impact on personal and professional development for psychologists. A participant in Kiemle's study (2008) described reflection as 'a mirror to the self' (p. 98) acknowledging the importance of reflection on the way 'the personal' could impact on 'the professional'. Participants in the Kiemle study explained that reflection and reflective practice appeared to be a core part of their professional identity, and in turn, reflective practice seemed to be an enabler of reflection.

In Fisher et al. (2015), it was suggested that reflective practice aided the development and management of professional identity and roles, often within complex organisational systems. Andrews' (2018) study suggested that reflective practice was a life-long process that appeared to support psychologists' sense of mastery. Fisher et al. (2015), Andrews (2018) and Kiemle's (2008) studies appeared to suggest that the growth of reflective skills can be progressive or evolving, with reflective practice improving and increasing as psychologists advanced in their careers. For example, Andrews' participants felt that reflective practice had increased for them over time and with experience. Participant 3 felt that experience had a specific role in the development of reflective practice, suggesting that a broadening of experiences broadened the spectrum of reflective practice. This may suggest that, over time, the purpose of reflection evolves as the individual reflects (Andrews, 2018).

2.4 Overview of Literature Review Findings

2.4.1 Conceptualising Reflection

As part of the process of exploring the answer to review question, "how do the psychologists' experience reflective practice?", this chapter has presented an extensive review of the existing research and other literature related to this study.

Due to the lack of sufficient studies on EPs' use of reflective practice, this review explored the wider implications of reflective practice by considering its application in applied psychologist professions, including Clinical and Counselling Psychologists. The search terms utilised were kept broad, but consistent, to ensure that the searches of different databases were conducted with sufficient consistency and rigour. In total, the review yielded only nine papers. This included two papers that were systematic literature reviews (Lilienfeld & Basterfield, 2020; Marshall, 2019).

The nine papers reviewed for this study did present some interesting findings, with recurring themes and patterns emerging. They highlighted some key benefits for psychologists and their service users. The limited number of findings, however, makes drawing out recurring themes and patterns challenging. The papers also showed the varied experience of reflective practice in the context of psychologists, and that the conceptual understanding of reflective practice is still emerging.

Authors identified in Lilienfeld and Basterfield's (2020) systemic review raised concerns about the conceptual and evidentiary basis of reflective practice having been, for a long time, largely disconnected from substantial bodies of well-replicated research in basic psychological science. Many of the current publications on reflection and reflective practice in psychology professionals (including educational psychology) are not based on empirical research findings, such as systematic attempts to explore what reflection actually means to certain groups of practitioners or how they practice reflectively. This difficulty of

conceptualisation could be due to the lack of a clear definition of reflective practice, making it hard for professionals to discuss and describe themselves engaging in reflection. This could serve to further hinder the development of a workable definition and integration of reflection.

In this review, four of the studies featured provided a definition of reflection to facilitate their study, while one provided a definition based on a synthesis of existing literature. Four studies did not provide a definition. That disparity could present difficulties in terms of replicating, synthesising and comparing studies and models of reflection from these findings.

2.4.2 Valuing Reflection

This review highlighted that reflective practice is seen as one of the key competencies for a psychologist, and one that benefits both psychologists and their service users. There is value in understanding it better. As discussed in Mann (et al., 2009) and Lilienfeld and Basterfield (2020), there is a lack of evidence that reflective practice techniques yield more reflective practitioners and, in turn, better service user outcomes, judgements and predictions. The absence of clarity around this concept appears to be a common issue in the literature (Bennett-Levy, 2003; Stedmon, Mitchell, Johnstone & Staite, 2003).

In spite of this, reflective practice is an overarching approach widely adopted by many professional organisations and training programmes around the world (Lilienfeld & Basterfield 2020), and is likely to remain an important area for all psychologists.

2.5 Limitations

As previously explained, exploring reflective practice by considering its application in applied psychology professions, including Clinical and Counselling Psychology, could have led to some limitations in the synthesis of data. For example, whilst psychologists might experience similar complexities in everyday practice, the nature of the emphasis of placed on

reflection or reflective practice may potentially vary between different psychology fields (Carmichael et al., 2020).

The lack of evidence that reflective practice techniques yield more reflective practitioners was highlighted during the course of conducting this review, as only four studies were found that explored reflective practice in psychologists' everyday practice context.

The overall lack of studies found during this review could limit to the ability to generalise or draw wider conclusions about any themes found. The methodological differences between the studies that were found might also present limitations in capturing a deeper understanding of reflective practice in psychologists' everyday practice. The methods used in a number of the studies also appeared to only elicit more general perspectives on reflection, as opposed to reflections specifically linked to psychologists' practice.

The CASP criteria was a useful approach to assess the quality of the studies. However, it presented limitations as well. It assessed what was reported, rather than what might have been done. For example, unpublished theses scored higher on quality compared to the published studies. This was likely due to unpublished work not being constrained by journal word limits, therefore allowing for more in-depth content. Although this is likely to be a common issue and not just limited to the studies identified in this review.

Finally, even with careful planning of index terms according to each data base, and use of sufficient consistency and rigour, including hand searches and screening of titles and abstracts of 432 articles, some relevant papers might have been excluded due to study titles and because of the range of terms used to describe reflection. Additionally, the terms used to define the type of the psychologists included in the review may have missed research that had described psychologists in another way.

2.6 Implications for Educational Psychologists

The reviewed studies appeared to indicate that reflective practice has some encouraging effects on everyday practice. Psychologists valued reflection in their role where reflection helped with greater self-knowledge, helped to overcome feelings of uncertainty and helped to enhance their service delivery. Andrews (2018) reported that reflective practice provided a professional sense of agency (sense of control, autonomy) and mastery (competency, skills). This review also revealed the importance of having protected space and time for reflection, and the importance of having opportunities for reflection with others, i.e., in supervision, peer supervision and as a facilitator in reflective practice groups. Whilst the review supports the value of reflection, it also found that there is a lack of research on how this competency is being used in EP practice (Carmichael et al., 2020).

While the body of research into reflective practice in psychologists appears to be steadily growing, only very few have explicitly explored qualified EPs' experiences (Andrews, 2018). Many of the other articles and books published provided descriptions of various pragmatic models or frameworks for reflection/reflective practice and proposals as to how these may be used by EPs. But there has been little research exploring practical applications, and associated outcomes, for the profession.

Burton (2000) notes that while reflective theory and practice has not been adequately tested, neither has it been rejected. Opportunities for future research need to build upon existing studies (Ruth-Sahd, 2003). Andrews' (2018) research in particular offers a narrative of this largely unexplored area of Educational Psychology practice. She helpfully acknowledges that the role of reflective practice might require further consideration.

2.6.1 Implications for Research

Future research could help increase the understanding of the concept of reflective practice. Additional studies could also be used to systematically evaluate the contribution of

reflective practice practitioners. Studies featured in this review have suggested that future research that explores the views of those who have different definitions or opinions on reflective practice could provide a more balanced insight and offer further clarity on the role of reflective practice for EPs (Andrews, 2018).

At a time where most psychology training programmes include reflective practice in their teaching, it might be difficult to identify participants who admit that they do not practice reflective practice, especially amongst more recently qualified practitioners. It should be possible, however, to compare those who take a formal approach to reflective practice with those who take a more informal approach. The studies in this literature review also suggest that we should be seeking to understand reflective practice in the context of personal resilience (Carmichael et al., 2020).

It has also been proposed that a thematic analysis of psychologists' views may help to widen understanding of what supports and hinders their practice (Kiemle, 2008). Further research could fill an important gap in understanding how psychologists operate in everyday situations (Lilienfeld & Basterfield, 2020; Marshall, 2019) and the role of reflective practice in psychology service delivery (Beal et al., 2017; Fisher et al., 2015).

This study aims to address some of the gaps found in the research literature by further exploring and understanding the ways in which reflective practice is experienced and understood by EPs. As has been explored in this review, it is important that the research questions for this study help to address those gaps, and reflect the suggestions for future studies made in the previous research. Accordingly, this study explored the following research questions:

1. What do the terms reflection and reflective practice mean to EPs?

2. What part do reflection and reflective practice play in EPs' practice?

3. What approach to reflection and reflective practice do EPs take?

4. Does reflective practice change over time for individual EPs?

These research questions were inspired by and adapted from Fanshawe's research on coaching (2019). The questions Fanshawe used matched the explorative nature of this study. It is hoped that this study will make a helpful contribution to the existing body of literature.

Chapter Three: Research Methodology

3.1 Overview of Chapter

This chapter will provide reasoning for the paradigm used in the research and a description of the design and methods of data collection. The philosophical assumptions underpinning the research will be set out to explain and justify the methodological approaches taken. This chapter will also set out the way participants were selected, and the sampling method used. Ethical issues will be discussed, including the importance of ensuring reflexivity, validity, reliability, consent and confidentiality throughout the research process. Clear descriptions and justification for strategies for data gathering and analysis will be provided. There will also be a critical review of the approaches taken, how they fit with the paradigm adopted, and the aims of the research.

3.2 Rationale for the Research Design

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) assert that, "research design is governed by the notion of 'fitness for purpose'. The purposes of the research determine the methodology and design of the research" (2011, p. 115). Research questions are concerned about informing the research methods and providing the most useful answers (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). For this research, it was therefore considered to be essential to fit the design of the study around the research questions, rather than preferred research methods. This would ensure that the paradigm fit the aims of the research. The key question at the centre of the design of this research was how to advance methods of reflective practice, whilst simultaneously attempting to explore and understand the experiences and perception of the participants.

3.2.1 Researcher's Philosophical Assumptions

Crotty (1998) describes ontology as "what is", and epistemology as "what it is to know" (p. 10). As Kelly (2017) explained, a researcher's philosophical perspective on each of these determines their research paradigm and the resulting design considerations.

This research adopted an ontological pragmatic stance (Guba & Lincoln, 2005; Mertens, 2005). In such an approach, the researcher is guided by the idea that meaning consists of the practical application of theories (Mears, 2020). One way in which this resonates in this research is how reflecting on reflective practice may help in providing an insight into approaches and experiences of reflection in practice. Pragmatism takes the view that the methods best suited to the research questions take philosophical priority (Mears, 2020). As Morgan (2014) argues: "pragmatism can serve as a philosophical programme for social research, regardless of whether that research uses qualitative, quantitative or mixed methods" (p. 1).

Adopting a pragmatic stance does not mean that other research paradigms should be considered correct or incorrect (Morgan, 2014). Morgan (2014) argues that pragmatism is simply a focus on what works. In situations where the course of action is not immediately clear, a pragmatist would look at the consequences of the different available actions, and their potential benefits, before taking any steps (Biesta 2010; Morgan, 2014). When taking a pragmatic view, the researcher's values often drive the vision for the research, with an emphasis on the decisions taken, and why, rather than trying to align towards any particular philosophical belief (Morgan, 2014). Pragmatism promotes methodological flexibility, and enables the researcher to combine approaches in the most appropriate way to answer the research questions (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Patton, 2002; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003).

Pragmatism was demonstrated in this research by the attempt to identify the most meaningful and fitting way to explore EPs' views and experiences. The emphasis was on what has happened, is happening and what can be learnt from it (Morgan, 2014).

A pragmatic approach was also taken because there has been little research to date on reflective practice in the EP context, so this research was setting out to extend understanding

of an under-researched area. The literature review findings for this research did highlight some brief and early views and experiences of psychologists' reflective practice. Subsequent studies revealed that the evidence base is still emerging. So, taking a pragmatic perspective ensures that reflective practice will be investigated in an exploratory way, led by questions developed from the literature review. Furthermore, as previously explained, the purpose of this research determined the methodology and design of the research and, as Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) and Mears (2020) helpfully note, the research questions are fundamental in forming a research method that can gather the most useful answers.

When exploring pragmatism further, it is important to refer to the work of Dewey, one of its key proponents (Briggs, 2019). Dewey (1938) believed that the world is constantly in a state of flux. Nothing is permanent and "there are no constant truths" (Briggs, 2019, p. 12). Taking a pragmatic approach means that a researcher focuses on action, practice and its effects on future outcomes (Hassanli & Metcalfe, 2014) rather than attempt to make assumptions from a distance (Briggs, 2019). Pragmatism offers "an alternative way of thinking about knowledge" (Briggs, 2019, p. 12). Dewey's (1938) pragmatic philosophy for education highlighted learners as being active agents in the process of education, and that it is what is experienced that informs the actions of the learner.

This research adopted a pragmatic approach by exploring experiences and perceptions of reflective practice, with an intention to explore potentially successfully strategies, barriers and how experiences change over time, in order to inform future practice and research (Morgan, 2014). For this research, I also reflected on the value of the experience and learning of conducting research as a novice researcher. As a paradigm, pragmatism is an experience-based, action-oriented framework, whereby the purpose of research is to help us address the issues of dealing with how we experience and come to know the world in a practical sense (Hothersall, 2019).

3.2.2 Rational for Research Method Used

For the purposes of this study, qualitative methods were determined to be the primary means of gathering data. It was felt that qualitative methods would allow for a greater focus on the views of the participants, especially how they understand and have experienced reflective practice, and how they construct meaning from their experiences. It was hoped that exploring the participants' understanding of reflective practice could lead to examples of best practice that could help the future work of professionals and practitioners (Pomeroy, 1999).

A qualitative methodology allows for the in-depth study of personal experiences (Barker, Pistrang & Elliot, 2002). Smith (2003) asserts that qualitative methods are, "generally engaged with exploring, describing and interpreting the personal and social experience of participants" (p. 2). Qualitative research is useful in exploring issues about which is little is known, and therefore it is inductive, i.e., it does not rely on a prior conceptual framework, or a set of hypotheses to be tested (Morse & Field, 1955). It can allow for greater exploration of issues that lie beneath the behaviours and actions participants present with.

Qualitative research is also useful in helping to make sense of complex situations, in gaining new insights, and in constructing themes in order to explain and understand these topics (Morse & Richards, 2002). Such rationality was why, after careful consideration of other approaches, a qualitative methodology was chosen for this research (Cameron, 2011; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

The conceptual framework of this study is considered paradigmatically. Pragmatism is related to: practicality; multiple viewpoints; biased and unbiased; and subjective and objective. Therefore, initial consideration had been given to adopting a mixed methodological approach, enabling a combination of approaches in whichever way might be most appropriate

to answer the research questions (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Patton, 2002; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003).

A critique of qualitative methods is that the findings cannot be easily generalised to the wider population (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Therefore, early consideration was given to adding a secondary quantitative approach to this study to try and add that wider coverage. Qualitative methods can provide rich information and meaningful context. In contrast, one of the main critiques of quantitative methods is that they are reductionist and do not allow for detailed exploration of an issue (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). In this context, it was judged that quantitative measures, while likely to reach a wider population, would yield comparatively superficial information on EPs' experiences and perception of reflective practice. Such quantitative measures would not explore the role of social-contextual factors, or effectively explore the experiences, views and perceptions of participants from the "first-person perspective" (Ashworth, 2003, p. 9). This conclusion was supported by further investigation of relevant literature, conversations with peers who have conducted, or are conducting, their research using mixed methods, and consultations with my supervisor.

Following this initial consideration of an alternative methodology, the formulation of the study's exploratory aims, and the successful recruitment of ten participants for semi-structured interviews, it was judged that qualitative research design alone would be appropriate and sufficient for this study.

3.2.3 The Role of Reflexivity

There were two important issues that I needed to grasp before immersing in the qualitative research. First was the issue of subjectivity, and second, closely related, was reflexivity (Braun & Clark, 2013). Subjectivity is reflected by acknowledging the topics we find exciting to research, questions we might ask related to it, and aspects of research that

interest us the most. As objectivity is valued in a quantitative paradigm, subjectivity is positively valued in the qualitative paradigm (Hollway, 1989; Braun & Clark, 2013). In adopting a qualitative methodology, I understood this research as a subjective process, and the importance to reflect on the context in which the research is being carried out, along with my experiences and position. Reflexivity recognises that a researcher is inescapably part of the social world that they are researching. This is required in order to be transparent about the influence of researcher (Hamersley & Atkinson 1989; Finlay, 2008). Qualitative enquiry is not neutral activity and researchers are not neutral. They have their own values, histories, culture, biases, language and world views. These are lenses through which they look at and interpret the already interpreted world of the participant (Preissle, 2006). Both participants and researchers bring their own personal histories, values and assumptions into the research, which must be considered in order to conduct good qualitative research (Braun & Clark, 2013).

Elliot, Fischer and Rennie (1999) highlight not only the importance of acknowledging one's own position, but also the importance of self-reflexivity, in order to enhance the validity of the findings of the research. The pragmatic stance adopted in this research meant that I was able to proceed with the research after careful thinking and planning about the potential consequences of various research choices (Morgan, 2014)

It is necessary for the researcher to be open about their interests and stance (Emerson & Frosh, 2004). It is paramount that the theories we develop to explain the behaviour of the people we study should also, where relevant, be applied to the researcher's activity. For the purposes of this study, it was important to be open and transparent about my positions at the outset and state where my interest in this area stemmed from.

My culture, educational experiences and explicit experiences of reflective practice while at university have all inspired my interest in this area of study. I am originally from

India where I was boarding school educated. During my education, I was frequently asked to reflect on my experiences in group discussion. We often thought about the wider impact of our actions within these group discussions. This learning has given me an implicit understanding of the importance of reflective learning, with a more explicit use of reflective practice coming through my university learning. As my training has progressed, having opportunities to have regular reflective discussions with tutors and supervisors has provided me with structure to my practice, and helped in developing my reflective competencies and skills. The learning of theories like different systemic theories, group theories, for example psychodynamic theories, and my use of integrating different models to reflect and emphasise learning about my values, has helped target my reflection.

Trying to move from implicit to explicit reflection, especially during the first year of my doctorate, was challenging. I wanted to be able to reflect in ways that felt authentic and comfortable, but I lacked experience at that point. Being reflective ultimately helped me to be aware of my pattern of working and the influence it might have on others. It helped me to make more conscious decisions by helping me to reflect for future action, and whether I would want to respond in the way that I would do usually, or whether I want to do something different while considering the impact.

My interest in reflective practice was further affirmed from learning about the role of an EP, including the importance of continued growth and professional development throughout one's career (Gersch, 2009). I see reflective practice as a complex and dynamic concept, and one I believe is an important competency for EP practice.

In Figure 3 below, Samy and Robertson (2017) have outlined how a researcher's thoughts are made up of values and beliefs. These make up the mindset of an individual, who then frames the problem(s) to be investigated.

Figure 3

Mindset of the Researcher

(Adapted from Samy & Robertson, 2017)
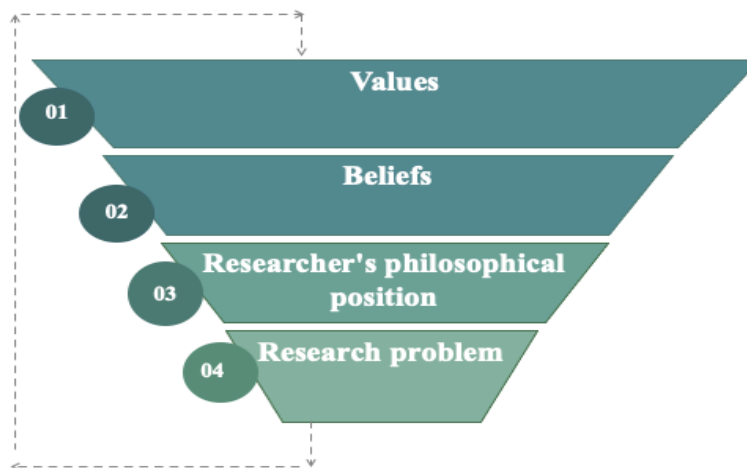
McCormick and James (1988) argue that combating receptivity through reflexivity requires a researcher to monitor closely and continually their role, biases and any other matters that might affect the research. Openness to data, a preparedness to modify one's initial presuppositions and positions, a declaration of the extent of the knowledge that may be influencing the research, and a willingness to use the research to generate a hypothesis are all important (Meinefeld, 2004).

The process of remaining reflexive throughout the study is acknowledged as being influential in shaping the research process. I took a pragmatic stance to ensure that I was guided by the study and it was fit for purpose. I kept a reflective diary throughout the study, engaged in an ongoing process of formal supervision with my supervisory team, and had informal supervision with peers. Throughout the study, I was continually conscious of the importance of ethical practice. I sought ethical approval for the study, and ensured that I adhered to the commitments I had made to gain that approval.

3.3 Process

Figure 4 below presents a broad timeframe of this study. The timeframe was flexible enough to allow for any changes to participants' schedules and any unexpected factors. Data analysis started simultaneously towards the end of the data collection process in July.

Figure 4

Research Timeframe

2019			2020												2021			
OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR
Scoping Review Research Proposal Agreement of Research			Agreements of Ethics Literature Review			Pilot Study Participant Recruitment Interviews			Data Analysis Methodology Chapter		Data Analysis Findings Chapter Discussion Chapter Introduction Chapter Testing Literature Search And Updating With Potential Literature				Amendments On All Chapters Full Draft Submitted Further editing			Final Edits, Submission

3.4 Data Collection

The specific data gathering method chosen for this research was semi-structured interviews. It was hoped that the use of semi-structured interviews would help provide a more in-depth investigation into reflective practice in EPs.

In essence, an interview or 'inter view' (Kvale, 1996) involves an exchange of views and ideas amongst people. As a research method, it acknowledges the importance of human interaction for knowledge production and emphasises "the social situatedness of research data" (Cohen et al., 2007, p. 349). Robson (2011) suggests that "to find out what they [people] do in private...what they think, feel and/or believe, use interviews..." (p. 232). Frey and Oishi (1995) provide a practical definition, describing an interview as "a purposeful conversation in which one person asks prepared questions (interviewer) and another answers them (respondent)" (p. 1).

Semi-structured interviews are thought to be appropriate when the person conducting the interview is closely involved with the research, such as when the interviewer is also the researcher (Robson, 2011). This was the case in this research.

3.4.1 Piloting

King and Horrocks (2010) outlined some key considerations which were addressed during the development of the interview schedule. These included ensuring that the interview questions were clear, distinct and not leading. The interviews consisted of seven questions (Appendix C), which were generated from the headline research questions created for this study, a review of existing literature (Appendix D), and knowledge of reflective practice.

An initial pilot interview schedule was developed for this research. According to Tiejlingen and Hundley (2001), an advantage of carrying out a pilot study is, "it might give advance warning about where the main research project could fail, where research protocols may not be followed, or whether proposed methods, instruments are inappropriate or too complicated" (p. 1). The interview questions for this study were piloted on the 5th June 2020, with written feedback received the next day (Appendix E). Suggestions were subsequently made to reframe two of the questions to make clear that the aim was to draw out views from only a professional point of view, instead of asking directly about personal impact. Revisions to the interview script were subsequently made. No other changes were suggested.

The pilot was useful as it allowed me to reflect on my style of questioning, and how the pilot participant experienced the process. Relatively inexperienced qualitative researchers have been said to use inflexible questions within their early interviews (McNair, Taft & Hegarty, 2008), as such, reflexivity is important here.

3.4.2 Recruitment and Participant Sample

A recruitment advert was sent directly to Local Education Authorities, as well as via EPNET (on online EP forum). EPs were invited to participate in video interviews, rather than in-person interviews, due to COVID-19 restrictions. There is more discussion of the impact of COVID-19 in the 'Data Collection' section of this chapter. The distributed recruitment advert was attached to an information sheet (Appendix F) giving more information about the

research. Interested participants were invited to contact me directly. Eligible participants could be at different stages in their Educational Psychology careers and working in different organisations. The only inclusion criteria was that participants should be qualified EPs working in the UK or the Republic of Ireland. The Republic of Ireland was included given the similarity to the UK of EP training and work there. In total, ten participants agreed to participate in the study.

Demographic Information. In order to provide a description of the sample of professionals who agreed to participate in the study, the demographic information collected was: EP organisation type; their type of qualification; and years of experience. Nine participants were based in England, while one was based in the Republic of Ireland.

Table 5

Participant Demographics

Number	Pseudonyms	Type of qualification	Highest level of experience	Year of since qualified	Organisation	Full time/part time
1	Albert	Doctorate	EP	1 year	LA	Full time
2	Richard	MSc/Doctorate	Principle EP	31 years	Independent	Full time
3	Donald	MA	Senior EP	15 years	LA/NHS	Part time
4	Mary	Doctorate	EP	2 years	LA	Full time
5	Liz	Doctorate	EP	3 years	LA	Full time
6.	Josephine	Doctorate	EP	1 year	LA	Full time
7	Catherine	Doctorate	EP	2 years	LA	Full time
8	Teresa	MA/Doctorate	Senior EP	15 years	Locum/Independent	Full time
9	Jennifer	Doctorate	EP	9 years	Independent	Part time
10	Sharon	MA	EP	16 years	Independent	Part time

Participants completed a consent and demographics form (Appendices G & H) which was returned via email prior to interview.

3.4.3 Adaptation Due to COVID-19

The original intention for this research had been to conduct the semi-structured interviews in-person at the location of the interviewee's work. A full risk assessment was produced for this method of data collection. The social distancing restrictions brought about by the COVID-19 global pandemic meant that face-to-face interviewing indoors was unlikely to be possible for a prolonged period of time. Accordingly, alternative plans were considered.

The first alternative plan considered was to delay the interviews until such a time as the COVID-19 restrictions had been lifted. That option was discounted due to the uncertain timeframe of when restrictions would be lifted. The second plan considered was to conduct the interviews over the telephone. This was because participants might feel more comfortable, and it would increase accessibility for the participants in terms equipment available to them. A third option was to conduct interviews via video conferencing system, which were increasing in use and popularity due to COVID-19 restrictions. This option would be the closest to simulating the style of a face-to-face meeting, while not being able to be in the same location. Although there were the advantages to using video, it was important to weigh the risks of using such a method. For example, not everyone could have access to the same technology, or be proficient in its use in similar ways, which could subsequently reduce participation in the research. Another risk was online safety, as the need to ensure privacy, confidentiality, and storage of records was essential. After careful consideration, including through supervision and peer supervision, I consulted an IT staff member at UEL to discuss ways for me implement safe and engaging interviews.

Ultimately, participants were given the choice to conduct the interviews over the telephone or use Microsoft Teams video conferencing capability. Re-approval was

successfully received from the relevant University ethics and data management bodies for

this amendment to the study. All participants chose video conferencing, although three

interviews were subsequently audio only due to technical issues.

Going ahead with the alternative interview option allowed the research to proceed

without any impact on the previously prepared timeframe for the study.

3.4.4 Conducting Interviews

Following the piloting stage, a final interview script (Appendix C) was developed for

this research and, following recruitment of the participants, individual, semi-structured

interviews were carried out between the 15th June and the 2nd July 2020. Each interview

lasted approximately 45 minutes to one hour. Of the ten video interviews conducted, three

were audio only due to IT connection issues. During the interviews, the interviewees were

asked open questions to explore their understanding and experience of reflective practice.

Prompts were added for each question to obtain further clarity if needed, however, the pre-

prepared schedule was not intended to be prescriptive. Participants were encouraged to be

spontaneous when talking about their experiences of reflective practice.

I conducted all of the interviews. lt was likely that a degree of bias occurred as,

outlined by Mason (2002), "you cannot separate the interview from the social interaction in

which it was produced" (p. 65). Therefore, conducting interviews requires the researcher to

reflect on their own influence. Minichiello et al. (1990) point out that every piece of

behaviour has infinite possible interpretations. In this instance, I dictated the purpose of the

interview, the line of questioning, and initiated, defined and terminated the meeting. I made

sure to often give the interviewee invitations to build further on what they had said by asking,

"anything else?" I also asked if the interviewee had any further questions about the study, and

if they wanted to cover or add anything that had not been covered. My VERP (Video

Enhanced Reflective Practice) training skills were used to create flow, and for participants to feel heard and encouraged to express their views.

At the end of the interview, there was a debrief to provide an opportunity to reflect back on the interview experience of reflecting on reflective practice, and to further develop understanding. Following each interview, I reflected on the overall experience, including my planning, how I was feeling prior to the interview and how this may have influenced how it had progressed using Braun & Clarke's (2013, p. 205) reflective questioning *(*see Appendix I). This was particularly important as I entered the data collection with pre-existing views and motivations on the research topic relating to the outcomes of the research.

3.4.5 Potential Distress During Data Collection

Consideration was given to the likelihood that the questions asked in the interviews might cause distress to participants. A risk assessment was completed prior to the research to predict the nature and likelihood of distress that might happen. This supported me in being vigilant, transparent and careful in my consideration of what I would be doing and what could be expected during the interviews. As well as practical steps like ensuring breaks were offered, participants were also given an opportunity to discuss their experience of the interview, to ask questions and to voice any concerns they had. I made sure to offer appreciation and gratitude the participants. After the interview, a debrief letter (Appendix J) was provided with further information and contact details for relevant support organisations if required.

3.5 Data Analysis

Boyatzis highlights the importance of using a systematic process for analysing data (1998). A number of methods were considered for their suitability for this research. Grounded Theory (Charmaz, 2011; Strauss & Corbin, 1998) was one such method, and was the method utilised by Andrews (2018) in her paper exploring EPs' views on reflective

practice, as described in the literature review. As Strauss and Corbin (1998) illustrate, Grounded Theory shares a number of similarities with other qualitative methodologies, such as utilizing similar sources of data and using interpretations. However, this approach differs in that a theory is developed via a bottom-up process, whereby theory is grounded in the analysed data (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). The intention of this research was to explore the phenomenon of reflective practice, not to construct or develop theories to explain it.

Other qualitative methods, such as Narrative Analysis, were also considered. Narrative Analysis is primarily concerned with the content and structure of stories that individuals tell (Woodward, 2014). Such an approach might be suitable for an exploration of life events, for example, individuals' adjustment to a serious illness, from diagnosis through to treatment to recovery. But it seemed less suitable for the subject area being explored by this study. Conversation Analysis was also considered. But it was deemed to be more concerned with patterns in conversation (Drew, 2003) than with an exploration of professional practice that aimed to address the 'what', 'where', 'why' and 'how' of reflective practice (Kimle, 2008).

As a researcher, due the explorative nature of this research, I was primarily concerned with accurately describing participants' experiences, staying close to the data, and ensuring my own interpretations were transparent, as much as they can be. This was as compared to researchers who adopt a more theoretically based approach (Sandelowski, 2004).

Ultimately, thematic analysis was chosen for the analysis of the findings of this research. This was because it was a good match to the pragmatic stance underpinning the research, in particular in its recognition of context while seeking patterns. Braun and Clarke (2006, 2013) describe thematic analysis as a flexible qualitative analysis tool that can be used across different paradigms, theoretical perspectives, and epistemological approaches. It can

be seen as a particularly useful method for investigating an under-researched area, or with participants whose views on the topic are not known (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Thematic analysis allows for a rich and detailed analysis of qualitative data, highlighting recurring themes or patterns. Thematic analysis involves organising a large and complex set of data to make it accessible and communicable to others (Boyatzis, 1998). Whilst thematic analysis is often considered simply to describe and summarize patterns within data, Braun and Clarke (2006) propose that it endeavours to tell an interpretative story in relation to a given set of data. Thematic analysis is said to have epistemological flexibility (Aina, 2015).

One strength of thematic analysis is that it is "a data, rather than theory-driven process, enabling the researcher to describe and summarize the data in its entirety, rather than seeking only parts of the data that were deemed relevant" (Earle & Eiser, 2007, p. 284). Themes or patterns within data can be identified in one of two primary ways in thematic analysis: in an inductive or bottom-up way (Frith & Gleeson, 2004); or in a theoretical or deductive or top down way (Boyatzis, 1998; Hayes, 1997). An inductive approach means the themes identified are strongly linked to the data itself (Patton, 1990).

Inductive analysis is a process of coding data without trying to fit it into a pre-existing coding frame, or the researcher's analytic preconceptions. In this sense, this form of thematic analysis is data driven. Although, as discussed earlier, it is important to note that researchers cannot free themselves of their opinions and experiences, and data is not coded in a vacuum.

A decision in thematic analysis revolves around the level at which themes are to be identified: at a semantic or explicit level; or at a latent or interpretative level (Boyatzis, 1998). A thematic analysis may typically focus exclusively or primarily on one level. In a semantic approach, the themes are identified within the explicit or surface meanings of the data. The researcher is not looking for anything beyond what a participant has said or what

has been written. Ideally, the researcher's process involves a progression from description, where the data has simply been summarised and organised to show patterns in semantic content, to interpretation, where there is an attempt to theorise the significance of the patterns and their broader meanings and implications (Patton, 1990).

Considering the explorative nature of this study, an inductive analytical approach at sematic level was used to identify any themes and categories that emerged from the participants' comments (Patton, 1990), and to explore the experiences and constructed meanings of the EPs.

Table 6 below outlines a seven-stage thematic analysis process as proposed by Braun and Clarke (2013). The data analysis process for this research utilised these stages.

Table 6

Stages of Thematic Analysis

Phase	Description of the process
1 - Transcription	This involved line by line transcription of all 10 recordings of the interviews. Transcribed verbatim or orthographic transcripts recorded all verbal utterances, including actual words and non-semantic sounds, for example, 'uhuh', 'erm' 'mm' and 'mm-hm' (Braun & Clarke, 2013). The orthographic transcription of each interview took 5-6 hours and consisting of between 5641-10321 words. An example of a transcript is included in Appendix K, and all interview transcripts are contained on a separate USB stick in PDF format (Appendix U).
2 - Reading and Familiarisation	Transcribing data verbatim line by line; reading and further active re-reading the data, noting down initial ideas (to use as a memory aid and trigger for developing analysis) as well as checked against the original tapes for accuracy. While word reading actively, analytically and critically allowed opportunities for familiarisation and immersion in the data. They also supported in asking questions reflectively outlined by Braun & Clarke (2013, p. 205)

Phase	Description of the process
3 - Coding	There are two main approaches to coding in pattern based forms of qualitative analysis - selective coding and complete coding (Braun & Clarke, 2013). I chose complete coding, with aim to identify anything and everything related to the research question across all of the data. This phase required coding interesting features of the data in a systematic and thorough way across the data set, collating data relevant to each code in a systematic fashion, and working through each data item in full (Braun & Clarke, 2013) (See Appendix L for sample of initial coding and emergent themes). This ensured coding of extracts related to the main research questions and that all of the data was given equal attention in the coding process. To organise the data, it was put manually into NVivo software for cross checking (see Appendix M). This helped in providing rigor and reviewing themes in the next stage.
4 - Searching for Themes	The final stage of completing coding involved collating the coded data and initial ideas for themes from each interview into a Word document for further coding (see Appendix N) to capture both diversity and patterns within the data. gathering all data relevant to each potential theme. A visual strategy was used, whereby where all codes were printed out on paper and arranged into groups representing overarching themes (Appendix O). Each theme was then carefully analysed, leading to sub-themes being identified.
5 - Reviewing Themes	This involved checking if the themes worked in relation to the coded extracts (Level 1) and the entire data set (Level 2), in generating a thematic 'map' of the analysis. Identified themes were reviewed to ensure fidelity to the coding groups identified. It was also important to consider themes on their own, and the relationship between them, in order to fit them together to form an overall analysis. At this stage, the researcher also went back for a final re-read of all of the data to ensure that the themes identified captured the meaning of the dataset in relation to the research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2013).
6 - Defining and Naming Themes	This phase involved ongoing analysis of each theme to refine the specifics and redefine, as necessary, with clear purpose, scope and focus

Phase	Description of the process
	(although the themes are related and subthemes build on the previous analysis). It was important to ensure accessibility and clarity in navigating, creativity and understanding of each theme, when generating clear definitions and names for each theme. This meant that, together, they provided a rich, coherent and meaningful picture of the data in order to address the research questions.
7 - Writing-Finalising Analysis	This phase was the final opportunity for analysis. A selection of vivid, compelling extract examples were pulled out (Braun & Clarke, 2013), with final analysis of the selected extracts done, relating back the analysis to the research questions and literature, and production of a scholarly report of the analysis. Analysis of themes was reported in Chapter four, with further full details of the thematic map, showing all subthemes and overarching themes, is provided.

The interviews for this study were conducted, recorded and transcribed by me. I acknowledged that I approached the analysis with some prior knowledge of relevant literature and data, having conducted the research myself and because of my interest in reflective practice. Prior engagement with the literature can arguably enhance the researcher's analytical abilities, by sensitising them to aspects of the data that may have otherwise been missed (Tuckett, 2005). However, Robson (2011) makes the point that, "at a practical level it can be argued that such preconceptions can bias you toward some aspects of the data, perhaps leading you to ignoring other potentially important themes" (p. 12).

When using thematic analysis, it is important to avoid interpretation bias (Smith, 2015). As such, to ensure rigor and transparency, transcripts for this research were checked back against the original recordings. Repeated re-reading of the transcripts also enabled further engagement with the data and, while time consuming, proved to be a useful step in helping to develop a thorough understanding of, and familiarity with, the data set.

As an initial step, two of the ten research interviews conducted were analysed and coded into categories developed from this analysis. This was independently checked by my doctoral Director of Studies. Advice was taken and then the rest of the interviews were coded. These codes were checked by a fellow doctoral Trainee EP independently to verify the themes, and also by an educational professional who does not work in the field of psychology. Examples of sample transcripts with initial codes (see Appendix L), and the process of creating groupings from the initial codes, through to the construction of themes, subthemes and an overarching theme is presented in Appendix O. Final themes were shared again with my doctoral Director of Studies, with specific extracts relating back to the research questions and literature. Themes were then inputted into NVivo software, a program that uses a coding system organised around different topics and themes identified within the interview transcripts (Appendix M). This allowed each dataset to be further individually analysed and themes to be refined and redefined as necessary.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

The nature of the research process creates tensions around the aims and the rights of participants to maintain privacy, including an awareness of potential harm regarding the sharing of sensitive material, as well as safety issues (Willig, 2008; Creswell, 2009). The HCPC's Guidance on Conduct and Ethics for Students (2016) and the BPS's best practice guidance on conducting research with human participants during COVID-19 (2020), offer further considerations of principles to keep in mind when conducting research during the pandemic. This includes respecting the autonomy, privacy and dignity of individuals and communities, maintaining scientific integrity, social responsibility and maximising benefit and minimising harm. These principles were kept in mind throughout the research process, from making the initial proposal, through to writing up the research.

This study adhered to all ethical principles and guidelines as outlined by UEL, and within the Code of Ethics and Conduct set by the BPS (2018). A 'research integrity module' was completed prior to the start of the study. Ethical approval was obtained by submitting an ethics approval form, along with a risk assessment, to the UEL Research Ethics Committee on the 16th May 2020 (please Appendices P & Q for ethics approval, amendment email and ethics form, and Appendix R for UEL's risk assessment). The following section outlines the key ethical considerations that were made throughout the research design process.

3.6.1 Consent

This research followed the required process to obtain consent from Educational Psychology Services in Local Education Authorities through direct communication with various Heads of Educational Psychology Services. EPNET (an online open forum for EPs in UK to exchange ideas and information) was also used to issue an email recruitment invitation for EPs to participate in this study (Appendix S). The purpose and nature of the study were clearly articulated to potential participants' in the information sheet (Appendix F). Sufficient time was given to allow potential participants to consider their participation, before seeking consent and the demographics of those participants that agreed to take part (Appendices G & H). Information regarding participants' rights to not take part in the study, or withdraw at a later date, were included on the information sheet and the consent form that the participants completed. It was checked and double checked that the participants fully understood what would be involved prior to the research interviews.

3.6.2 Confidentiality

As mentioned above, the data collection involved in this study was via face-to-face video interviews using Microsoft Teams. Maintaining confidentiality and anonymity of those who participated in the research process was achieved by keeping identities and research records confidential and fully anonymised. Immediately after the interviews had ended,

interview recordings from Microsoft Teams were uploaded as audio files onto my password protected personal laptop. Audio files were saved in a separate folder on my laptop and titled as follows: 'Participant 1 (in interview chronological order): date of interview'. Transcription files were given pseudonyms. To further protect confidentiality, agreement was made with participants that potentially identifiable information (e.g., names, schools, locations, identifiable scenarios) would be anonymised in the transcripts. Anonymised transcripts were shared with my research supervisors via the UEL's One Drive. File names were the participant number / pseudonyms and date and time of the interview e.g., Participant 1, 27/06/20, 3:00-3:45pm. It was also anticipated that the anonymised transcripts would be shared with the examiner using this format.

Beyond the personal and demographic data, no sensitive data was collected during the course of this study. No further data was created in the process of analysing the transcripts. Personal data was collected on consent forms (names) and prior to the interview (email address and/or telephone number for purposes of arranging the interview, via my UEL mail address). Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained by storing a separate list of participants' email addresses in a password-protected folder on my password-protected laptop, kept within a locked safe in my house. These were deleted following transcription of the interview. Complete data management was done in accordance with the Research Data Management (RDM) policy for the UEL, and data generated in the course of the research abided with the Data Protection Act (2018). The General Data Protection Regulations were adhered to throughout the process.

3.6.3 Validity and Reliability

Validity and reliability are central concepts when establishing the trustworthiness of the findings of research (Robson & McCartan, 2016). The validity and reliability of this study was ensured by adopting a research paradigm and methodology that fit the aims of the

research. Consideration was given to the quality and reliability of the study throughout the research process.

Creswell (2014) proposed adopting at least one or more of several identified strategies for ensuring the validity of qualitative research and the accuracy of findings. This research adopted three of these strategies: a) used rich descriptions to convey findings; b) clarified the researcher's bias; and c) presented negative or discrepant information that ran counter to the themes (Creswell, 2014).

The accuracy of my interpretations, and sensitivity to context, was addressed in the study through the analysis and with verbatim extracts presented from the interviews. This was shared and discussed with the research supervisors. Furthermore, within the 'Findings' chapter, quotes were included throughout the analysis, demonstrating how the links between the data and the research conclusions were drawn. Braun and Clarke (2013) set out a checklist of criteria for good thematic analysis. Within the structured stages of analysis, Braun and Clarke (2013) emphasised the importance of interpretation and making sense of the data found.

Commitment and rigour were demonstrated through evidence of a paper trail throughout the Appendices. Transparency affords the reader the opportunity to establish why and how the research was conducted, and whether it is plausible, credible, and rigorous (Kirkman, 2002; Riessman, 1993). The strength of the current research was evaluated based on credibility, rigour and pragmatic usefulness (Yardley, 2008; Riessman, 2008). This study also made the reader aware of my ontological and epistemological position, the reasons for my interest in the research and how the findings would be used.

I kept a research journal to keep a full and complete record of all the various activities and process related to the research. A full account of notes, articles and books read was also kept. To aid reflection, Knight (2002) recommended keeping a record of how the researcher

was influencing the research. Accordingly, throughout this research, a reflective diary was kept to ensure my reflexivity.

Researcher qualities for flexible designs are considered to include a need for flexible researchers (Robson & McCartan, 2016). A common 'researcher-as-instrument' notion highlights the need to understand that a reliance upon the individual researcher, rather than specialist tools or instruments, is largely required (Robson & McCartan, 2016). Therefore, a description of my own and the participants' backgrounds has been provided in order to explicate potential biases and social and cultural context.

Resources and measures were utilised to ensure validity and reliability. This included taking lessons with the UEL's Psychology Librarian in such areas as further formulating and refining search terms, and subject indexes for different electronic databases. I also took pragmatic steps to prepare for video interviews due to COVID-19 restrictions, including ensuring security of the technology by taking training on the use of Microsoft Teams, focusing on confidentiality, risks and benefits. Amongst other benefits, this preparation helped in understanding how to build rapport over a video call, as well as understand what could pose a risk to confidentiality over a video call.

3.7 Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to provide an overview of the methodology adopted in this study in order to provide a transparent and replicable detailing of the journey from data collection to the findings. The chapter introduced the aims, philosophical assumptions, and the adopted research paradigm. Details of participants were provided, alongside discussion the data collection and analysis methods used. Ethical issues were also highlighted.

Chapter Four: Findings

4.1 Overview of Chapter

This chapter will focus on reporting the key findings of the qualitative data obtained from the interviews of EPs and analysed using thematic analysis. The qualitative data draws on an exploration of EPs' experience and perceptions of reflective practice. In the data analysis, participants have been quoted using the same pseudonyms as in Chapter 3, followed by a line number, e.g., Richard, line 40. Direct quotes from participants are presented in their original form, to provide illustrations and interpretations, although added punctuation has been included for presentation and readability purposes, and '…' has been used to signal some repetition or that a section has been deleted for readability purposes. No further editing or clean-up of the data has taken place in order to ensure it is presented as spoken language rather than written (DeVault, 1990).

Codes for each dataset were grouped into emergent themes (Appendix O). Final analysis of the codes led to the development of four overarching themes and eight themes. Table 7 below sets out the overarching themes, themes and subthemes:

Table 7

The Relationship Between the Overarching Themes, Themes and Subthemes

Overarching Theme	Theme	Subtheme
1. Educational Psychologists as Reflective Practitioners	Professional interest in reflective practice	• Central to EP role • Reflection promoted in psychology • Slightly mystical
2. Outcome of Reflective Practice	Effect on EP role	• Influence on development • Internalisation of EP role
	Dunning-Kruger effect	• Opposite effect

Overarching Theme	Theme	Subtheme
3. Wide-Ranging Reflective Space	Means for reflection	• Reflection is not distinctive practice • Reflective space with others • Sources for reflection • Unconscious reflection
	Enabler of reflective practice	• Facilitating Personal factors • Factors that enabled reflection with others • Experiencing context
	Obstacles for reflection	• Emotions • Cognitive effort • Value of reflection in EP role • Demands of the role
4. The Way Forward	Observation of growth	• Trained reflective muscles • Adapting and learning professionally and personally • Reflection supporting the EP role
	Opportunities forthcoming development	• Individual responsibility • Equal status at the local and national level • Significance of supervision • Opportunities with other psychological fields • Training • Optimistic view of reflective practice

The themes presented aim to reflect the shared experiences of the participants in this study, as well as capture their unique experiences. This chapter will explore each theme in depth, with supporting quotes as appropriate. Figure 5 below illustrates the relationship between the overarching themes and related themes across the participants.

Figure 5

Overarching Themes and Related Themes
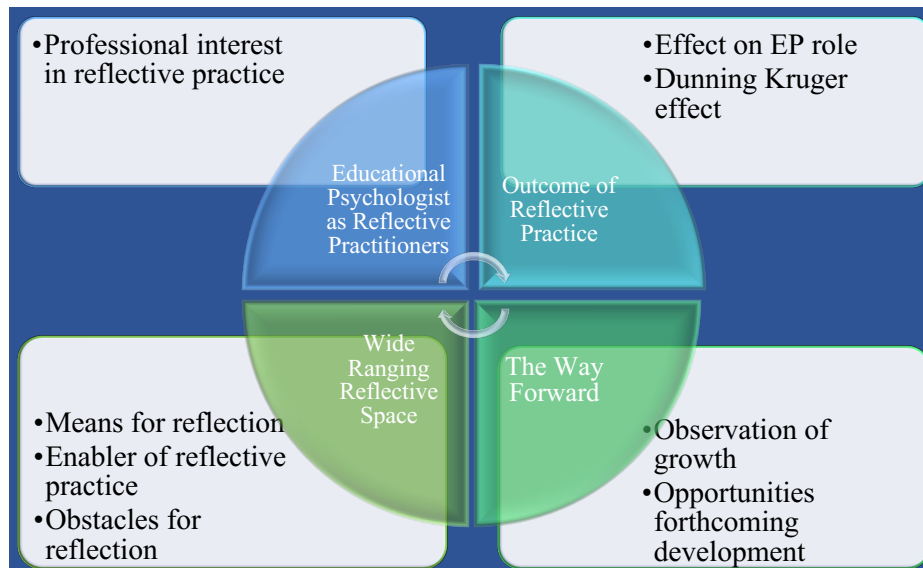
4.2 Overarching Theme 1: Educational Psychologists as Reflective Practitioners

Figure 6

Educational Psychologists as Reflective Practitioners
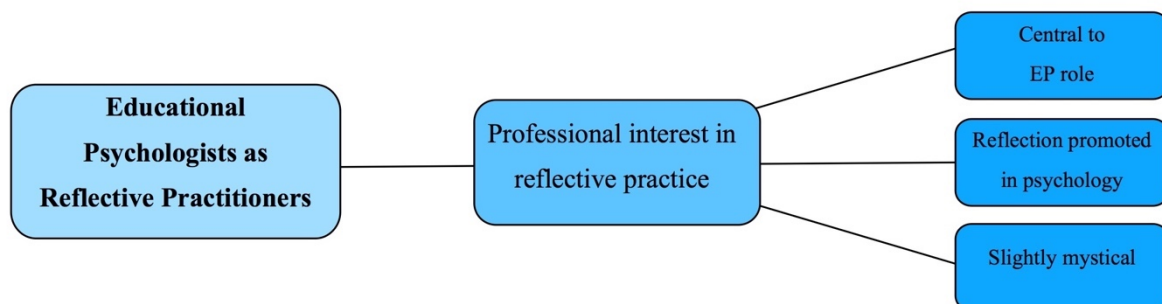
4.2.1 Professional Interest in Reflective Practice

The analysis of the interviews from all ten participants uncovered common ways in which psychologists understand the significance of reflective practice in their role. This led to the identification of the theme of 'professional interest in reflective practice', which was further developed with the subthemes 'central to EP role, 'reflection promoted in psychology' and 'slightly mystical'.

4.2.1.1 Central to EP Role. Professional interest in reflection was explained by participants as being central to the EP role. It was seen to support ethical and critical aspects of the EP role. It supports EPs in understanding their contribution to, and promotion of, reflection in EP practice, and helped EPs recognise their professional interest in it. Participants explained the significance of reflective practice:

Really important actually, one of the most important things …, because I think with it's kind of like as long as you've got reflective practice, then everything else should follow. (Jennifer, line 184)

I think I think reflective practice is the only way that in lots of ways ethical. We can make sure that we are accountable and transparent, and then we know why we did what we did, even if there was a different way. (Catherine, line 491)

I think part of being a psychologist is, is being reflective is being kind of critical and thinking about the why and the why not and there asking those questions of yourself and that those kinds of difficult questions and not being afraid to challenge yourself and your own thinking like I said. (Jo, line 390)

You're working with human development you that…kind of that necessitates learning. You know you do, you know to mean it's, it's changeable, it's dynamic. (Sharon, line 469)

I think it's of vital importance because I think we have to always be mindful of how oppressive our role has been and can be. (Liz, line 301)

Participants described the nature of their work as being a situation where there was no one answer. Participant Sharon asserted that psychologists' work with human development revealed its complexity, and that there was "no absolute mantra" (Teresa, line 372).

Other participants built on this further:

Our role isn't that kind of black and white and I guess being able to reflect on that and be able to reflect on kind of complexities of our role. (Mary, line 72)

Any EP I think it's really, really important and that we are able to reflect on our work and I think often we feel under pressure to kind of come to some sort of conclusion, and especially if it's a quite a complicated case. (Mary, line 68)

It's a profession where you're constantly learning the grounds, always shifting beneath it. But if you need to learn from that, you need to be adaptable. Uhm, and I think…if you're not reflecting or not, you're not learning, you're not progressing [said with strong emphasis]. (Jo, line 393)

Albert extended the significance of reflective practice by stating that it seems to be linked to the uniqueness of an EP's role, but it was also about becoming the best practitioner one can be:

Closely linked to the unique contribution of the psychologist and if we are therefore able to be reflective about ourselves and our own practice. (Albert, line 415)

A way of trying to, a way of helping yourself to be the best practitioner you can be and a way of thinking in a world in the profession and a world where things are not always clear about how to try and make sense of something that's not always easy to make sense of in the moment. (Albert, line 124)

4.2.1.2 Reflection Promoted in Psychology. A number of the participants described a journey of prominence for reflective practice in the EP role:

And as well as the nature of our, our roles cause us to be reflective people, whether we articulate that or not to ourselves and more because of you know, the notion of reflective practice has been gaining gain such importance over the last number of years. (Donald, line 280)

Donald also noted the positioning of reflective practice as part of CPD (line 68), as specified by the BPS. He also noted its significance with other applied psychological professions saying:

> *But also, clinical people working in both child and on the other mental health side. It's reassuring to see that sometimes that they have the same issues that we have even though they work as part of a kind of team.* (Donald, line 112)

This can be understood by the varied and early exposure to reflective practice during EP training (Jo, line 53). Sharon recalled her training, which had been a long time ago. Learning about reflective practice was not as explicit then, but she saw elements of it:

> *Maybe because back then it wasn't uhm, you know, so current, uhm. So, in terms of, of actually I think the way we were taught to think critically and analyse, and problem solved in a way. Incorporated reflective practice, but I don't think it was made explicit.* (Sharon, line 64)

Albert, Liz and Mary explained their experiences pre-qualification:

> *Someone told me that in the application process that what the kind of applicant course leaders are looking for is people is not the experience that you've had, but your ability to be reflective on your experience. And that was a little bit of a paradigm shift I think for me.* (Albert, line 41)

> *I've come from quite reflective undergraduate experience and they did a lot of critical psychology, which I really enjoyed. Sort of challenging psychological history. Uhm, and how psychology has been used in practice in damaging ways to different groups, so I think it fitted very much with why I was passionate about psychology and what I'd learned and kind of talked about in my undergraduate degree.* (Liz, line 41)

I think at university when we were training it was something that came up all the time…like I said we had a lot of opportunities to reflect on our work and then even any kind of assignments that we did. (Mary, line 180)

4.2.1.3 Slightly Mystical. A common theme amongst participants was where their efforts to describe their understanding of the term reflective practice revealed the complexity and difficulty of defining reflection. Some attempted to define it by describing simply what it might entail, and specific actions required of them:

I think it's thinking about what you're doing in your day-to-day job, and thinking about how that relates to or links to psychology with a view to improving your practice. (Jennifer, line 40)

Being able to take that step back and consider what is underpinning what you're doing. Um, it's quite, um, multi-layered. (Jo, line 76)

I think it's something to do with kinda giving yourself. Space and time to think about the work that you're doing. And I think it also has something to do with kind of helping you to feel contained. (Mary, line 120)

I would describe it as something which is active. And conscious. OK. Uhm, I would describe it as something which is, uh….It's easy not to do it. Um and it's something which could evolve a degree of discomfort. Because you need to look almost stepping outside of what you're doing. (Teresa, line 138)

And so, it's almost being your own critical friend I guess, and checking out the decisions and saying, 'what if I had done this?' Or 'someone else might do this, why did I not do this?' So being able to check your practice, um, and challenge it. (Liz, line 93)

The above views from participants seem to present reflection as an active and deliberate practice (Goulet et al., 2016) and with some process of engaging with learning

and/or professional practice that provides an opportunity to critically analyse and evaluate learning or practice (Black & Plowright 2010, p. 246). Other participants hoped to have received a definition to frame their thinking:

Uh in a way one of my initial questions was, uhm, to actually Um Uh, ask you whether you had a definition of it. Uhm, that was framing of your, your work. Cause I wondered about what I recall when I saw the subject matter. I was wondering whether it was and this is part of the issue. You know, it's about reflection reflecting what you're doing, something reflecting after you've done something. (Teresa, line 73)

Are we absolutely clear what we're talking about? What exactly you know it it, it means you know, is it a specific something or other? Or is it just being you know, good, good practice. (Teresa, line 81)

I think in lots of ways the minute you start kind of naming something, you almost make it slightly more mystical and difficult. (Catherine, line 43)

Sharon and Donald wondered if this was due to an understanding of how reflection should be operationalised in their EP role, and that differences in training may be perpetuating a notion that reflective practice is a "bit mystical", as other participants had described earlier. Sharon (line 401) explained this difference in terms of newly qualified EPs compared to those who had qualified some time ago:

But how do you do that yourself? How do you operate that into practice? It becomes part of your practice. But you can still make it something more tangible. I'm not sure about that. (Sharon, line 78)

It's a bit like people who are digital tourists and digital natives. You would be reflective practice native whereas I would be reflective practice tourist in that I've had to learn it formally. (Donald, line 419)

4.3. Overarching Theme 2: Outcome of Reflective Practice

This overarching theme showed how psychologists valued reflective practice, as it

appeared to allow for a deeper appreciation of their role as EPs:

Figure 7

Outcome of Reflective Practice
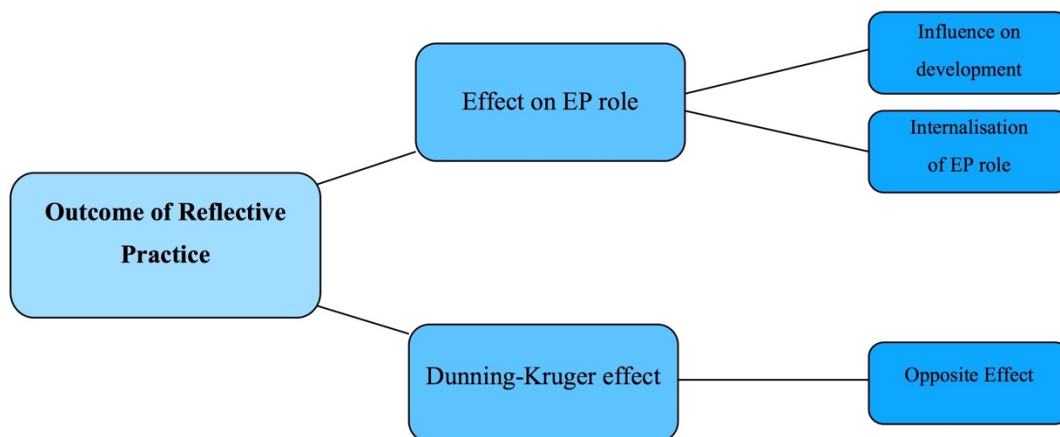
4.3.1 Effect on EP role

4.3.1.1 Influence on Development. This accounted for EP development, both in

personal and professional terms. For example, when talking about their work with

stakeholders, Jo, Albert, Richard and Donald explained the following:

> *Being able to think about the complexities of a piece of work and actually what my*
>
> *contribution is or can be, or even the limitations of my contribution.* (Jo, line 139)
>
> *I think often the unique contribution is that the way that we encourage people to think*
>
> *differently about things.* (Albert, line 415)
>
> *My reflective practice…influences and shapes not the advice I gave but how I*
>
> *give the advice.* (Donald, line 174)
>
> *My reflections on that so I'm understanding how people are thinking about it*
>
> *as opposed to imposing.* (Richard, line 96)

> *And I'm in my mind is always that, working with, versus colluding, and I'm always checking that out, um, you know where I stand in in those relationships.* (Liz, line 392)

The subtheme, 'Influence of Development', further highlighted a deeper and increased understanding of how reflection looks in everyday practice in the EP role. Participants explained that this led to a feeling of confidence in themselves and people around them. It continued to challenge their practice and continued their learning journey. For example:

> *One of a kind…key skills that you probably need to be a reflective practitioner is to be flexible and interested in the why and able to receive and give challenge and support in a balanced way.* (Jennifer, line 57)

> *You constantly reflecting on what's working well and why, and adjusting.* (Jennifer, line 50)

> *I certainly in conversation in consultation and then psychological advice, I would say that, um recommendations shouldn't just be applied unthinkingly, but there should be applied within a reflective space so that people thinking about the context in which children are in.* (Jennifer, line 47)

Participants reflected on developing greater awareness of their contribution as EPs. They considered the complexity of them being part of multiple systems, being part of visible and invisible systems, having a deeper understanding of stakeholder vulnerability, and the impact their decision making had on the life of their stakeholders. The participants appreciated their personal growth in reflective practice in terms of wellbeing, understanding of their biases and assumptions, and finding a work-life balance in their personal life:

I became a lot kinder to myself and accepting that there are so many factors at play in

even just in the simple consultation, there are so many kinds of social dynamics and

expectations that exist on the micro to the macro levels. (Albert, line 81)

I think also being able to be honest with yourself about your own assumptions,

and background and experience, and trying to minimize any negative impact, and you

can't get rid of it entirely, but being able to always check out maybe 'I think this'

because of my own background and not because it's a universal truth. (Liz, line 98)

I'm not afraid to, to reflect and share on what I've done and what I might want

to do. And then I just say, but I'm going to go away and reflect on my practice and

reflect on what I've seen. (Teresa, line 163)

4.3.1.2 Internalisation of EP role. This subtheme described the effect of reflection in

relation to the internalisation of the EP role in everyday practice, including influencing EP's

development in how they understand professional identity and the multiple roles they fulfil.

Participants saw themselves as part of the system and had confidence in collaborative

practice. Catherine articulated her understanding of the system in terms of *"how many*

systems are in the room, even if they're not in the room" (Catherine, line 338). She reflected

on the impact on stakeholders, both visible and invisible. Teresa added that internalisation

aided her in making her contributions bespoke for individual stakeholders, and helped those

stakeholders feel valued:

Opened myself up to that I'm not the person who knows everything kind of and I'm not

absolutely sure of the answer. […], but I'm quite confident now I guess, and I think

that allows people to feel that I value them. Um, that I'm seeing their child or their

school or this whatever it is in a in an individual way, you know, and in a kind of

Bespoke way, […]. So, for what's best for them, rather than just shoving them into a

box. (Teresa, line 266)

For some psychologists, internalisation supported them to critically think about the relation of an issue to the vulnerabilities a stakeholder might have. Having an understanding of the impact of a stakeholder, and questioning their practice, was important in terms of managing the complexities of what they do and why they do it:

> *These people are vulnerable to what you say you, could say. Anything, and I probably agree with you and actually it's about recognising that vulnerability and making sure I expose myself to some degree, to same level of vulnerability by how I question myself.* (Catherine, line 323)

This awareness of the complexity of their work seemed to help psychologists to see that there was not one way of understanding. This also supported them to further describe the limitations of their contributions, how much they could do, and knowing for themselves what was a good enough job. This awareness helped them to manage expectations of others and themselves about their role:

> *Makes you kind of realize that actually sometimes there's only so much you can do and not being good enough or doing a good enough job is OK.* (Mary, line 74)

> *Take all that stuff into account, which I think is reflective cause you have to challenge yourself in the sense of what is this a value set that I'm bringing to bear and is it. I'm not saying my value set is wrong, I'm just saying it's not the only yeah, so why do I have the right to pontificate on that.* (Richard, line 211)

> *I'd very much reflected on the power differentials and worked very hard to find ways to hear the voice and not allow my own at adult assumptions, or educational psychology assumptions.* (Liz, line 475)

4.3.2. Dunning–Kruger Effect

4.3.2.1 Opposite Effect. The Dunning–Kruger effect is a phenomenon whereby an individual overestimates their skills and knowledge (Dunning, 2011; Knapp, Gottlieb, &

Handelsman, 2017). Dunning-Kruger explained that what was lost for EPs by not reflecting was the opposite of what was gained by EPs engaging in reflective practice:

> *I can only say that it would be in some ways it be easy. Um, If you just make assumptions about what you see in front of you and what you gonna do about it and just did it, I'm sure there are times when I do that.* (Teresa, line 455)

> *Yeah, I think it would be someone who's quite a rigid and confident in what they are uhm. Confident in what they're deciding I guess, and uhm, I think we all need to feel a bit vulnerable and a bit shaky too, in different ways…to adjust that practice.* (Jennifer, line 194)

Other participants contributed to this view:

> *Become perhaps too comfortable in practicing in a certain way. You might become resistant to challenging yourself.* (Albert, line 215)

> *They're actually very under confident they stick to one way of doing things that feel safer, and they appear to be very confident.* (Jennifer line 206)

Sharon added that there could be a risk of EPs losing their curiosity in terms of how they do things. Jennifer (line, 432) further added that psychologists might be *"entrenched in one way of thinking"*. Donald made an analogy with the TV programme Fawlty Towers, explaining the impact of this not just on the individual psychologist, but also on the purpose of the psychologist's role:

> *But a line I always remember from that was that he used to say that the hotel would run fine if it wasn't for the guests. In other words that they could get on with, you know cleaning the place, making the plans, blah blah blah. But missing the point, of course, that the reality, the purpose hotel is to have guests there.* (Donald, line 303)

4.4. Overarching Theme 3: Wide-Ranging Reflective Space

This theme draws on the various approaches and spaces psychologists' employ in their reflective practice. The themes 'means for reflection', 'enablers of reflective 'and "barriers to reflective practice' explore and give evidence of this:

Figure 8

Wide-Ranging Reflective Space
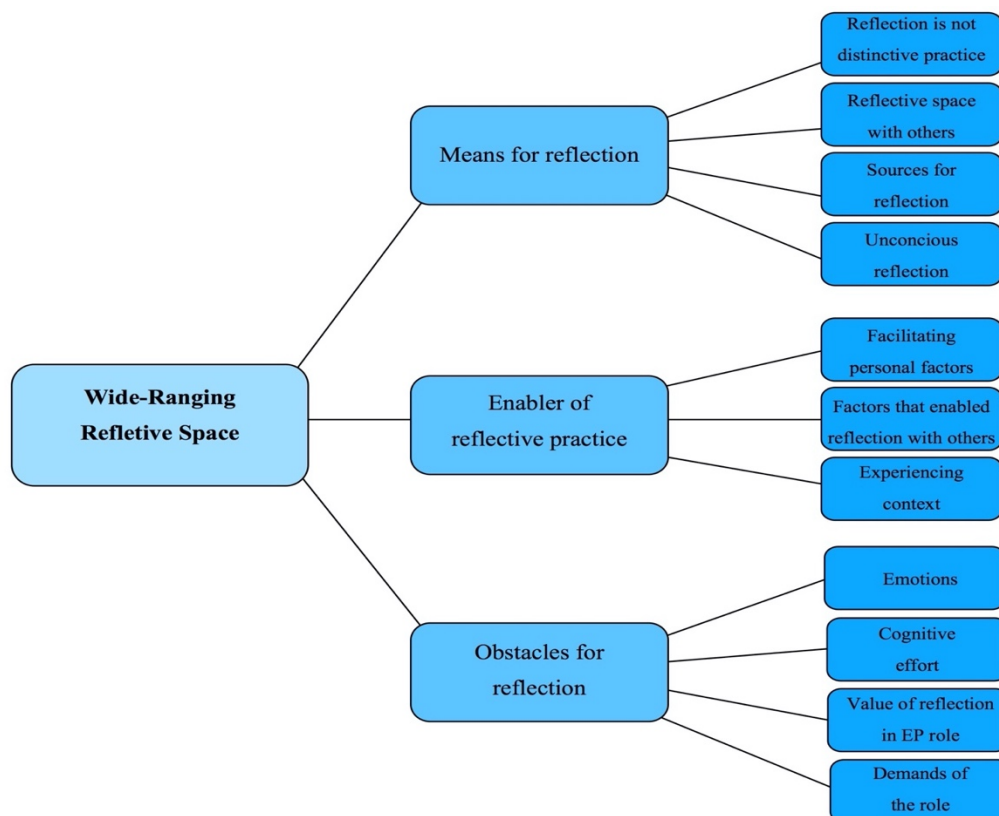
4.4.1 Means for Reflection

4.4.1.1 Reflection is Not Distinctive Practice. When explaining this subtheme, psychologists' thought about how they might use individual, and shared approaches, the conscious and unconscious nature of the tools they might use, and how everyday practice creates incidental reflective learning spaces. Albert started with explaining: *"I think reflective practice occurs at lots of different levels, so I think it kind of my own individual level"* (Albert, line 140).

Along with Albert, Mary and Catherine described how they might notice a feeling after a complex meeting. They may reflect on their action by using questions and examining the emotions attached:

If you have a certain meeting or a tricky consultation, you kind of come out feeling a certain way. Being able to kind of reflective, think about why you're feeling that way or why you responded in a certain way. I think that can be. (Mary, line 291)

A few psychologists expanded on this by exploring how their reflection appeared to be a constant process in their everyday learning, and that there was *"always that kind of reflected element"* (Jo, line 200). Jennifer and Liz spoke about their incidental learning:

I guess it's kind of like running through is the golden thread throughout your day. Sort of thinking whilst you're on a walk or making tea or whatever. But what helps that is probably having some space, maybe sometimes the way that we make notes helps as well, because they often trying and have a bit of space on our page for formulation or hypothesises and stuff like that. (Jennifer, line 93)

I suppose the most obvious time is when it is difficult. You know when the solution is is not obvious, I guess, but uhm. I don't know if that's that's, that comes back to my conscious competence in unconscious competence model. (Teresa, line 210)

Normally in normal circumstances [non-COVID-19 national restrictions time] I will always try and use part of my driving time as an opportunity to reflect. (Liz, line 377)

4.4.1.2 Reflective Space with Others. Across the psychologists in this research, supervision was collectively identified as a key place for reflection. Jennifer explained that her reason for participating in this research was due to her interest in supervision:

Uh, well I mean, um, interested in supervision within my profession, um for a while. So, I guess the reflective element of that is one of the most important things in supervision in my...mind. (Jennifer, line 17)

I guess, um that supervision places central role because I think you can reflect in supervision on what you've done, um, in your role, and think about how it applies to psychology. And then, um, strengthen the bond between um theory and practice in supervision. (Jennifer, line 27)

Sharon explained that the nature of supervision supported her style of questioning. She developed that point further by saying *"it kind of challenges you with open ended questions, uhm. It, it may be, takes you away from your particular comfort zone"* (Sharon, line 173). Catherine (line, 115) added that, for her, asking others to reflect helped her hold curiosity.

Another common and popular space for reflective practice was amongst peers. Jo described how this was prioritised in her team, *"Where more formally we would bring kind of um themes that were coming up in our work, or things you weren't sure about. When we reflect on that situation"* (Jo, line 132).

Mary described how support in peer supervision on complex issues helped extend her thinking, and help her understand when she had done enough:

I really been reflecting on this this case the last few days and I had, uhm. Just some peer supervision with a colleague yesterday and that was really helpful because I actually really was able to kind of think about what I've done and what else I could do, but actually…that is enough and I don't have a magic wand. (Mary, line 92)

Liz saw peer supervision as an informal place where was you could discuss reflection systemically, *"I would say we would think about reflection more systemically in our*

discussions, and that being quite a focus to, to think about the wider systems, cultural

institutional systems" (Liz, line 250).

Along with Liz, Richard said that peer supervision could also appear in different

spaces and conversations, while creating a culture of reflection, "*You get a lot out of your*

supervision sessions, but you also get a lot out of your pub sessions…Both are important.

OK, so there needs to be a culture of reflecting on things" (Richard, line 272).

4.4.1.3 Sources for Reflection. Participants demonstrated some heterogeneity in their

use of reflective tools, models and frameworks when reflecting. Some gave examples of

drawing on everyday practice tools, as well as explicit tools for reflection. Others touched

upon psychological models and theories, while others talked about questioning their

unconscious reflection process, subsequently describing that there was no one way of

reflection, or that they did not use a formal model. Catherine (line, 418) recalled her use of

Rolfe, Freshwater and Jasper's (2001) three stage model: 'What'; 'So What'; and 'Now

what', and Teresa (line 308) referenced the Gibbs Reflective Cycle. Sharon recalled that

reflection was something that she was taught in her training:

> *We were introduced to a quite a tight framework, problem analysis and so it became*
>
> *ingrained that framework and, and, and having that structure to kind of lead you*
>
> *through the process of analysing a problem or reflecting on a problem with*
>
> *facilitating as well.* (Sharon, line 184)

Jo and Mary extended the previous point on reflective peer supervision, utilising a

reflective team approach as a model with peer support. Jo explained this approach as,

"*Talking about the like the reflecting teams approach a that's something more which is built*

into the kind of peer support, um, process" (Jo, line 365).

Similar to this, Donald (line 69) articulated the benefits of being part of a weekly

formal reflective practice group. He explained the powerful impact it has had on his

professional growth and has given him personal validation of his experiences and what he has to contribute.

Jennifer described her strong personal interest in VIG. This had given her the space and a framework to self-reflect while examining, via her videos, what could be better personally and professionally:

> *Video interaction guidance I should, I would say is at its heart, a reflective process and that's helped, um. Across more than professional domains it's helped in my personal life as well. To understand about how to help people feel heard and, and understood.* (Jennifer, line 117)

There were similarities in psychologists' particular choice of tools. They said that the use of certain tools had provided them with space for reflection with their stakeholders:

> *Also, I'm a restorative justice practitioner. I would tend to bring that kind of idea, so I'm thinking will have on what, what, what went on there that sort of. Feelings and emotions, do I attached to me in that situation or to the other.* (Teresa, line 315)

> *You know, touched upon explicitly with a framework or with. I think it's been more through an interest in coaching that I that I have already.* (Sharon, line 67)

Teresa elaborated that her interest and choice of model could also be dependent on her dominant use of psychological theory. She spoke about how she would try, *"sort of positive strengths based" and "solution focused, brief therapy"* (Teresa, line 338 and line 340). Liz similarly added to Teresa's approach:

> *Uhm, I think in terms of, not so much models, but paradigms, I think I do lean towards using sometimes reflecting around psychodynamic or attachment approaches, and thinking about what's going on under the surface that people may not be aware of.* (Liz, line 265)

Mary expanded on this, saying that approaches might be influenced by EPs' training and where they gained their qualification from:

But again, when, when you enter the workplace, depending on where people have qualified, I think it can vary greatly in terms of the first theory, theory that people will draw, or the frameworks that values I suppose…that's something I do tend to kind of think about. (Mary, line 272)

Another common tool that psychologists' have used to create space for reflection was the use of questioning, indicating a certain use of language appearing to create reflective space. Questioning was employed when they asked questions about their own practice and when questions were asked of them:

I think the, the, the main sort of question I asked myself is why and why? Why does this feel this way? Why have I chosen to go in this direction? Uhm, and then what? So, why and then what is underpinning? (Jo, line 352)

Sharon's earlier explanation about her interest in coaching (Sharon, line 187) and supervision also appeared to stem from her interest in questioning:

Questioning I think also because those questions lead you back to piece of work as well, um, which is quite nice. So you, you kind of re-examining it based on, on some questions that you had maybe not considered before. (Sharon, line 338)

Participants further discussed their approaches to reflective space in their everyday role. Liz and Albert explain its rationally for them:

I'm more likely to use reflective practice if I'm doing work that's more predominantly consultation, and so I think it allows for reflective practice because there's collaboration built in very obviously through the process. (Liz, line 127)

I guess reflection is, I think reflection is a meaning making experience and so sometimes having a model can be limiting because you're limited to what the model suggests you reflect on. (Albert, line 306)

This was again explored by Sharon, "*you know, is very precise feedback about a certain aspect of your report. Its feedback that's more open ended, and this kind of allowing you to then go back and, and reflect on my piece of work*" (Sharon, line 149).

4.4.1.4 Unconscious Reflection. A few psychologists discussed how they were possibly reflective unconsciously, which seems to be in contrast to how they defined reflection as conscious and active, "*Yeah, it's about taking that time and kind of stepping back an. Yeah, but I mean as I said, I'm sure there's certain frameworks as I have drawn to them and maybe like unconsciously*" (Mary, line 297).

Donald explained that having years of experience in an EP role meant that he might be reflecting in a variety of situations, almost like an "*a la carte approach*" (Donald, line 221). He added, "*I suppose my own life experiences, both personal and professional. So, it's like a mixture of everything. It's not a kind of very conscious, deliberate activity on my part*" (Donald, line 221).

Related to this, another, psychologists talked about how them having used structured reflective models may perhaps have contributed to them using reflection unconsciously:

Sometimes I think I followed quite structured reflective models. Even that I might use to structure my thinking quite explicitly. And then I think as a result of doing that a few times, then it becomes more implicit, and you might naturally think. (Albert, line 193)

4.4.2 Enabler of Reflective Practice

This theme explores the potential enablers of reflective practice that help create and maintain psychologists' space for reflection. The psychologists in this study conceptualised

the enablers of their reflective practice in the varied aspects, including personal and professional experiences, the importance of relationships and organisations, and the context they worked in.

      4.4.2.1 Facilitating Personal Factors. When talking about individual factors Mary noted:

> *Comfortable in the role, I guess, um. And I think you kind of maybe have more opportunities to reflect on the work then because you're, you gotta know the systems that are in place and you're familiar with your school. So actually, I guess in my experience having that.* (Mary, line 215)

>   *I joined in September and it took me a little while to feel comfortable to share…what facilitated that was the familiarity in the skills of the other people in the room in creating a space and a dynamic which felt welcoming and, and kind of supportive.* (Jo, line 168)

In contrast to Mary's point about how being comfortable helped psychologists' to reflect, Teresa explained that her desire to do well in her role helped her to be reflective:

> *I'm always pushing, always pushing, always reflecting on how I could be better. Be different, I always wanting to learn which of course I get as a working for different local authorities. I learn a lot.* (Teresa, line 111)

Three psychologists felt that they were always reflective, even before becoming EPs:

> *I suppose it was like the act of I think, I think , I probably have always been quite reflective person. I suppose it's, it's part of what drew me to this profession.* (Jo, line 193)

>   *What helps it is, is my personality, I suppose, on my motivation to want to improve.* (Teresa, line 431)

It probably comes down to I was brought up in a in a family that thought about things. Where we had opinions and views but you didn't have to have the same opinions and views. (Richard, line 295)

For Donald, while reflection was also important, it was formal opportunities which enabled his practice further, "*Reflection was always important. But in terms of there being a formal as I said to you before, joining the group has made it a more formal activity for me*" (Donald, line 278).

4.4.2.2 Factors That Enabled Reflection With Others. Participants collectively appreciated reflection with other people, and that reflection, when done with others, had enabled their own reflection:

I think often reflections are most impactful when you're able to share them and discuss them with others. (Albert, line 239)

So again, just as in every organization, every team, some people kind of click more with others, so there would be one or two people I would be…. kind of would have clicked with well, those colleagues and on a personal level and we would have kind a mixture of reflective practice and peer support. (Donald, line 138)

If you work in a team like I do, then having people on the team that you have rapport and trust with that you can share things with and also be able to tell the knowledge of yourself, get much from them as a response. (Albert, line 161)

Albert's views here also seem to highlight that people might find it useful to reflect with likeminded people, and enabling reflection could likewise rest on a psychologist's ability to reflect by themself. Catherine and Liz elaborated through their experience with stakeholders, where encouraging them to reflect had facilitated their reflection as well. Liz explained that having built a relationship, for example with a SENCo (Special Educational Needs Coordinator), reflection was facilitated *"so I can ask those questions and reflect on my*

own practice and on their practice, and they are already kind of in that space" (Liz, line 153).

4.4.2.3 Experiencing Context. One other enabler a participant drew upon was the current national restrictions and social distancing due to COVID-19. Experiences during these restrictions appear to have provided context and time to enable them to reflect more. They also explained that discomfort could actually be a source of change:

> *Come back to coronavirus, but after a few weeks of this lock down and working from home, I found myself uhm thinking quite a lot about my identity as a professional and I was reflecting on. My understanding of my role uhm and how much of my role in my professional identity.* (Jo, line 218)

Catherine appeared to share this view, saying that the pandemic had made her more reflective and had positively influenced her work. She stated this was because *"the situation you're in, that kind of change your thinking within that, like for me discomfort is where change comes"* (Catherine, line 585).

For Mary, the restrictions had given her opportunities to reflect on broader social issues too, *"The black lives matter I do like to think probably now is a time where actually we need to be much more effective"* (Mary, line 338).

Richard explained how working in a different context, or period of particular work, had been an influence for him, similar to Jo, Catherine and Mary. He was also value driven, *"Uhm, so massive influences from people like that, plus the whole inclusion agenda at that time was enormously powerful, uhm, and value driven"* (Richard, line 340).

Teresa spoke about her personal context, namely how working in different roles and organisations had empowered her ongoing learning by enabling her to do reflection in her practice:

The other facilitating factors again of being because I sometimes work in different for

different local authorities went in different contexts, whether that be independent

worker, local authority work or training or supervision work. (Teresa, line 185)

I'll try and be reflective as well and think about kind of how I'm what cultural

norms of I just absorbed and accepted and not questioned. You know, and, and those

are constantly shifting as well. (Catherine, line 303)

4.4.3 Obstacles

This theme drew attention to some of the obstacles psychologists' appear to face. The aspects which seem to create space and enable reflective practice could also shed light on some of the obstacles for reflective practice.

4.4.3.1 Emotions. A few psychologists explained how their feelings after a complex meeting provided them with data for reflection. Other psychologists said that one of the outcomes of reflective practice in their personal life being a feeling of wellbeing. But three psychologists explained that feeling stressed in their role prevented them from reflecting:

Think for my own experience as well when I'm stressed out, I can't really think very

clearly. So one kind of hindrance factor. (Albert, line 472)

But I think even when you're under stress when I'm under stress. I don't have

the, the headspace to kind of think and the only time I get that really is when I'm

driving from one school to another. (Jo, line 467)

I do think we have to look at effective practice in the context of survival and

Maslow in the effective hierarchy of needs. (Catherine, line 219)

4.4.3.2 Cognitive effort. Albert highlighted one obstacle to reflection could be a psychologists' lack of ability to reflect in action:

That didn't strike me in the time because I was focusing on the task of following an

assessment procedure or just being present with someone in the room that take

requires some cognitive effort that you wouldn't direct towards the reflection of it.
(Albert, line 351)

> *Um, being able to have to be reflective in that process is much harder, because you feel that they just want you to donate the information and for it to happen in a very quick time. So, I think the type of work that I'm doing, the time element has an impact.* (Liz, line 142)

4.4.3.3 Value of Reflection in the EP Role. Six psychologists stated that their collective obstacle was the value placed on reflection by other people, "*Some people might say you're not doing anything and then in the kind of capitalist society where output is valued in exchange for goods and services, reflective practice is not something often it's seen as a tangible output"* (Albert, line 430).

Jo and Liz similarly said that this was how they felt when reflecting with others:

> *I think it sometimes I kind of reflected discussions can feel quite a quite vulnerable if you're bringing up something and then reflecting on it. Uhm, and I mentioned earlier on that I'm quite critical of my own practice, not necessarily from uh, from a lacking in confident.* (Jo, line 171)

> *Uhm, I had a supervisor that was much more old, old school, um, and he saw my sort of beginnings of reflection as self-doubt, so he'd always shut them down and it was quite a tricky thing in the relationship to try and get across to him.* (Liz, line 368)

Liz added that *"EPs that see the role by differently and that's not always helpful"* (Liz, 371). Sharon and Mary explained this may also be how other stakeholders see the EP role, which could be a hindrance if they have certain expectations of the role, *"Uhm the schools' perspective in what an EP does with EP world is as compared to our perspective. What we can do? All those sometimes push against reflective practice"* (Sharon, line 455).

Catherine appeared to agree with Liz's assertion that the understanding of the EP role could be an obstacle:

There aren't many people that challenge you in terms of actually actively say to you. I don't agree with you. I think you might have got that wrong. Is there any other way to look at this in schools with families availability there you know. (Catherine, line 527)

As mentioned earlier, across the psychologists in this study, supervision was seen as a positive place for reflection. But it could also be an obstacle:

I feel the supervision, I guess at the moment isn't really a space for reflecting. Yeah, it's more kind of line management, and I, I really feel that last because as you know, when I was training I'd such good supervision and lots of opportunities to reflect an inner kind, you know, a safe space, I suppose. (Mary, line 133)

Um, it doesn't reduce supervision, but supervision is not necessarily uh, supporting reflective practice it argues it is, but I'm not sure that really. (Richard, line 630)

Psychologists saw how their own roles and opportunities within their organisation could present obstacles for their work, *"Working privately concerns me a little bit because it's so much harder to have those dialogues. You know more kind of you have to really make the opportunities and you have to"* (Sharon, line 370). *"It's not something we really have the opportunity to do in a more formal way"* (Mary, line 146).

This may be linked with the previous point where some of the psychologists explained that when feeling stressed, it might be hard to be reflective, *"In managerial positions and the pressure for outcome or managers. Yeah, which I think forever reduces reflective practice"* (Richard, line 628).

4.4.3.4 Demands of the Role. Another common obstacle found by psychologists was demands on them in their role, *"What hinders and again I can touch on this right at the*

beginning we were just going to checking in is the kind of demands placed on myself and in

terms of the, the amount of work" (Jo, line 457).

Time and space for reflection was also an important obstacle for psychologists, *"The*

main hindrance would be the demands that are played in terms of time and space to think"

(Jo, line 475).

While the COVID-19 pandemic had brought opportunities for refection, it was also

mentioned that it presented challenges for reflection, especially reflective space with others:

> *It's more difficult to reach out because you're losing those informal chats that you*
>
> *have in the office or that you'd have in schools. You know, so actually, it's probably*
>
> *more important now to take that time to reach out to people.* (Mary, line 423)

One of the psychologists said that they felt lost after being recently qualified, *"I think*

sometimes when you qualify, you can, that can be lost" (Mary, line 137). While Richard

thought, at times, a barrier could be the processes of thinking in reflection, *"there is a danger*

of overthinking" (Richard, line 608).

4.5 Overarching Theme 4: The Way Forward

This theme focused on EPs' views on the way forward for reflective practice in EP

practice, and some ideas that could support it:

Figure 9

The Way Forward
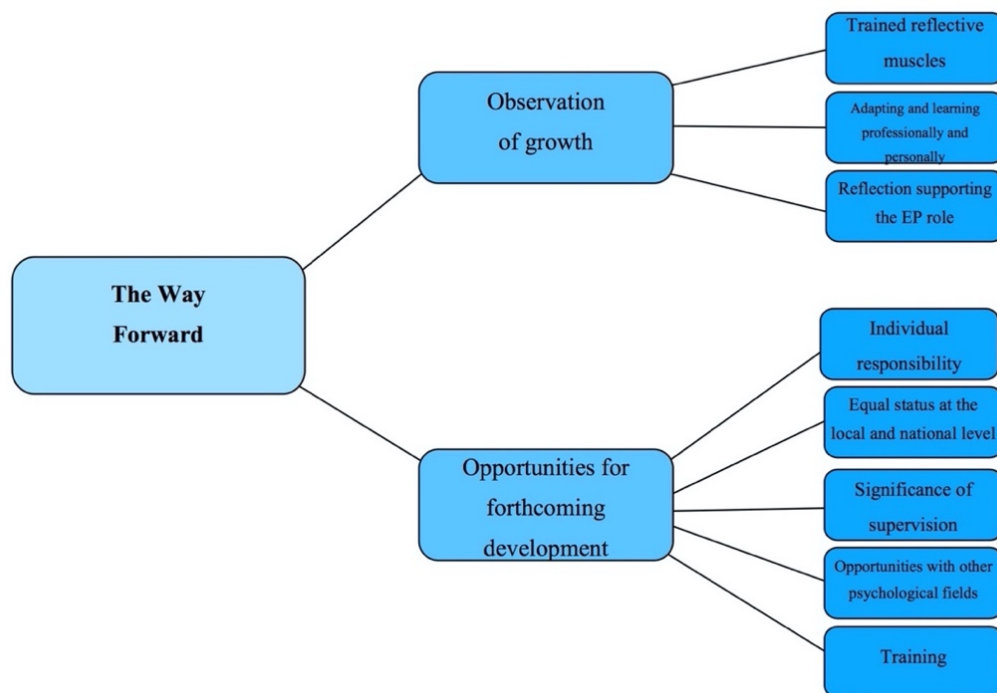
4.5.1 Observation of Growth

This theme covered how psychologists saw their experiences of reflection, how reflective practice in their role helped in their growth over time, and what supported in their ongoing growth and change.

4.5.1.1 Trained Reflective Muscle. This subtheme was inspired by the psychologists thinking deeply about their reflective practice journey, with careful deliberation of how and what might have facilitated and maintained their journey of being reflective practitioner. A number of psychologists saw their journey as something that grew with time:

> *Yeah, certainly it's a journey and it's something that you can have carry with you as you move along in it. It evolves, it changes. It's not a static thing.* (Jo, line 97)
>
> *On the course I was encouraged to reflect more, but then that means that it's been trained a bit like a muscle. Now I think so that it is uh, automatic and also more.*
> (Albert, line 90)

4.5.1.2 Adapting and Learning Professionally and Personally. Donald explained that, due to his experience over the years, reflecting had helped him to transition organically to different roles that he had taken. He explained that, "*So, so the fact that my, the evidence that I would be a reflective practitioner and would be the fact that when I look back on my career, work experience, I have changed my way of working*" (Donald, line 260).

Jo experienced change in her reflective practice, which helped her to find her unique and effective way of reflecting:

There are many, many different skills of consultation and as a psychologist you will sort of find ways that work for you and I think it's similar with reflective practices you find certain you ways of reflecting on things that I kind of personal to you and you find that are effective, and I think that's the evolution as the journey as well as you kind of learn how best to reflect for yourself. (Jo, line 100)

Jo expanded on the above by noting that reflecting had helped shape her identity as a psychologist, *"Yeah, it's like a melting pot with everything altogether. Uhm and it's resulted in the kind of psychologist I am today"* (Jo, line 332).

Sharon's reflection had helped her professionally too. She explained how it kept her curious, leading to further learning in her role, making her more confident with her skills and making communication easier. She said that *"it's probably made it easier to communicate with parents and teachers"* (Sharon, line 245). Teresa agreed, stating that reflection had helped her professionally, with a feeling of confidence and change in her practice:

I hope hopefully it's made me change my practice sometimes. Uhm, it's giving me confidence in to, to know that, that's what I'm doing right now is the correct thing to do because I have gone through that process of challenge I've reflected on how I felt about what I've done. (Teresa, line 238)

4.5.1.3 Reflection Supporting the EP role. Teresa said that reflection had helped shape her role as psychologist (Teresa, line 399) and explained that:

I think I use it. I think I'm much more reflective from my practice now. And I think initial, initially. Maybe you're just coping. You're just trying to cope with all the everything, all the bits and pieces that you have to learn. (Teresa, line 395)

Psychologists discussed how reflection for them had moved from reflecting on themselves, to reflecting on the process of the EP role. This included understanding the shifting nature of practice, "*my reflections of moved in terms of structured models of reflection have moved away from being about me and more about the needs that I'm being that are being assessed as part of the process of the work*" (Albert, line 367).

Related to how Albert and Catherine saw how reflection was shifting their role identity, Jennifer said that this highlighted the significance of relationships. All the above examples appear to indicate how reflection changes in time with the shifting of identity. Reflection in action could also be useful in understanding how psychologists' are moving from an individual perspective to a more systemic and critical appreciation of issues:

I think it's made me realize the importance of relationships and human interactions, so um it's less about the physical things and more about the people. It helped me to be able to work with people in, um, be aware, a bit about reflecting in action. (Jennifer, line 115)

Earlier it was highlighted how psychologists thinking about what might not have gone well was a source for reflection. A distinction to this was, when seeing change over time, a source of reflection could be things having gone well and trying to understand why:

I became aware of the need to do it proactively, whenever even if a situation had gone well or, it was experienced positively rather, rather, than well, it was experienced positively by everyone still thinking, reflecting. For example, being quite conscious of

sometimes an experience can go well, but you've ended up colluding with a school's view of a child that's negative. (Liz, line 201)

One psychologist explained how it might be tricky to know growth over time as it is a constant process:

It's the guy pushes the rock up the hill every night and then the falls down and starts again the next day. Like the Greek mythology. But there's something about it. It's almost a continual piece of practice, and sometimes it's really hard to know.

(Catherine, line 312)

4.5.2 Opportunities For Forthcoming Development

4.5.2.1 Individual Responsibility. Some participants explained that taking personal responsibility would support their reflective practice further:

They say that in some ways you're the best driver round about, passing the tests and then all the bad habits creep in. And maybe it's that conscious incompetence and conscious competence and the learning as well and I do feel as though I need to challenge myself more to make sure that I'm always questioning. (Catherine, line 231)

Something very valuable an. Yeah, I think just having. Protective space to be able to. To reflect and I suppose taking responsibility for yourself as well that I can, you know, get caught up in just trying to get reports done and finished. (Mary, line 414)

In terms of tools, Jennifer explained how she wanted to learn more about what would support her reflection, *"I'm starting to think of more ways that you can use video to develop reflective practice, not just within VIG but within other areas of what we do"* (Jennifer, line 244).

Jennifer, (line 241) recalled that having access to journal articles when she was a trainee was helpful for reflection and something that would be good to have again. While

Sharon (line, 499) said that having training in reflection would support her further. Two psychologists explained that they saw it as the responsibility of experienced EPs to model opportunities for reflection, "*So it's …a dyadic that's going on there that experienced people are both modellers and learners themselves at the same time as yourselves are learning, being given the resources to be a reflective practitioner"* (Donald, line 401).

Teresa explained how this could be done through psychologists' giving positive feedback and supporting other psychologists according to their development, "*You know what phase in a person is learning and development is it. Best to encourage it, you know and not necessarily treat every EPs in the same way you know"* (Teresa, line 546).

4.5.2.2 Equal Status to Reflection at the Local and National Level. One of the most powerfully felt hopes for the psychologists in this research, when thinking about their further growth, was for reflective practice to been given equal status to their casework:

> *And the same way with reflective practice. If that has an equal status, in other words, if reflective practice, is given the same status as the need to develop clinical skills through a variety of case work on placement, that to me is the pinnacle, and that means that reflective practice has arrived.* (Donald, line 382)

Liz said that the support might also look like, *"Um, maybe, the BPS or the AEP offering sort of reflective space um, because for someone like me, if it can't be offered by my company"* (Liz, line 447). Sharon added, *"Especially for, for independently EPs would be kind of network or form of reform for reflective practice where people can share their ideas or connect with others too*" (Sharon, line 500). Catherine further explained that one way of doing this might be to increase reflection's value in an EP's role at an organisational level:

> *I think I think it always has to start with an organization. A system that values it.*
>
> *People that feel confident to be honest, to share to expose. Because then what you do*

for yourself was modelled for you and with you. You can then model and offer to others. (Catherine, line 642)

Jennifer described how dedicated time and value for growth in reflection would enable ongoing reflection, "*Uh having um time kind of more dedicated to growing reflective practices in your profession. So, um, having senior leaders that, uhm really value and recognize the importance of it in policy and in practice*" (Jennifer, line 242).

Building on Jennifer's point, Mary said that one way to have reflection valued would be to, *"Draw upon the importance of you know…kind of just talk a little bit more at about being reflective practitioner I think that would, would help"* (Mary, line 316).

Along with organisational status, two psychologists noted that having leadership involved as a model and influencer would support their growth in reflective practice, "*The opportunity to work with another member of management or someone who's more reflective and that sort of sits more naturally with them, whereas my manager is a little bit more about problem solving*" (Liz, line 430).

4.5.2.3 Significance of Supervision. A number of participants explained that supervision remained essential for continual progress as a reflective practitioner:

Ensuring regular supervision and different types of supervision like peer supervision. (Albert, line 562)

What have I learned from, from the experience of my second year of training and how that shaped as a professional, so I think actually, my exposure to different supervisors as well. (Jo, line 305)

I, I do think supervision is important, but maybe along with training for supervision. (Richard, line 634)

4.5.2.4 Opportunities With Other Psychological Fields. Psychologists saw benefits of having opportunities for reflection with practitioners in other psychological fields:

Occasionally if I do feel like I need that perspective from outside of the system of educational psychology or the local authority, or yeah, that kind of even just the kind of the realm of work itself. (Albert, line 245)

Maybe we could meet up with clinical psychologist or other, other um people from outside the EP profession because the same ideas float around using reflective frameworks to talk to people on a wider basis that. (Jennifer, line 257)

Maybe there could be a lot more joined up um work or papers or training between the different sorts of some psychologists as well. I like how you is also seeing multiplicity even in how we can approach these things. (Catherine, line 671.)

4.5.2.5 Training. Some of the psychologists expressed that it would be helpful to have further training to enhance and develop additional understanding:

Well, I think I would be reflective on my practice if I were to attend CPD events or if I was to do things trying to do things in a slightly different way. (Albert, line 512)

Be great to have refresher on it. To hear about, like, um, different tools and, and frameworks and ideas. (Sharon, line 498)

Building on the theme of growth of reflective practitioners within University courses, some psychologists recalled some experiences that had supported them, and hoped for something similar when describing what might be helpful for trainee EPs' ongoing development:

I guess um, we had like reflective consultation throughout the whole of year two, I think we had like reflective group consultation and that was really enjoyable. I think maybe that being built in more across all the Universities. (Liz, line 442)

Open to the possibility that one might be wrong is really, really important. As opposed to right, I've now got my bag of skills. (Richard, line 471)

4.5.2.6 Optimistic View of Reflective Practice. Donald's experience of reflection had given him a hopeful outlook. It had also made him realise that the significance reflective practice might only grow further. He explained, "*So I think because we're at a transition point now at the moment between people like yourself automatically learning there being exposed to opportunity for reflective practice in your training course, so you will bring that with you*" (Donald, line 413).

4.6. Conclusion

In this chapter, the qualitative data obtained from the participant interviews was aligned into overarching themes, themes and subthemes, supported by thematic analysis. Through this process, four overarching themes and eight themes were developed.

The overarching themes, themes and subthemes produced by the qualitative analysis provided substantial and significant information to draw upon when considering the key questions of this research. The next chapter will take that information, combined with the previously discussed literature and theories, and explore in detail EPs' experiences and perceptions of reflective practice.

Chapter Five: Discussion

5.1 Chapter Overview

The aim of this research was to explore Educational Psychologists' experiences and perceptions of reflective practice**.** An inductive, or bottom up, approach (Frith & Gleeson, 2004) was used to generate themes at a semantic level for a detailed appreciation of how the participants experienced and perceived reflective practice. In this chapter, the research findings will be considered in relation to the main research questions. A use of Force Field analysis (Lewin, 1951) will be presented, before consideration is given to the implications of this research for EP practice and possible opportunities for future research. In addition, I describe some reflections on being both a Trainee EP and a researcher, and the effect of this on the process of research.

Most participants in the study had more than one reason for their participation. Six of the psychologists' cited their own interest in the topic, and six were interested due their training experiences. Four psychologists were motivated by wanting to support me due to me being a trainee EP. Two psychologists explained that they were taking the opportunity of having more time provided by the COVID-19 national lockdown to get more involved in research. While four also thought that participating would provide them with a reflective space.

5.2 Main Research Questions

- What do the terms reflection and reflective practice mean to EPs?

- What part do reflection and reflective practice play in EPs' practice?

- What approach to reflection and reflective practice do EPs take?

- Does reflective practice change over time for individual EPs?

The discussion of the findings of this research are presented in the order of the research questions, demonstrating the overall links (please see Appendix T for the relationship between research questions and themes).

5.2.1 What Do the term Reflection and Reflective Practice Mean to EPs?

The overarching theme of an 'Educational Psychologist as a Reflective Practitioner' showed that EP's view reflection and reflective practice as highly valued and vital to the context of their everyday role. The related themes of 'Professional interest in Reflective Practice' and subthemes describing reflection - 'Central to EP Role', 'Promoted in psychology' and 'Slightly Mystical' - appear to correspondingly offer a perspective through which to make sense of the other themes. These themes demonstrate participants' current understanding, described the development of their reflective skills, and how they engaged in reflection, yet simultaneously struggled to define reflection or seem to fully account for the processes involved when they were being reflective.

A key view of EPs was that it is the EP role itself that causes practitioners to be reflective. Findings from this research show that reflection is seen as inherent to the EP role. Research findings and literature (Schön 1983; Fish & Coles, 1998) described the relevance of reflective practice for EPs in relation to the complex, unpredictable and dynamic nature of professional practice, suggesting that reflective practice helps EPs to cope (Finlay, 2008). The findings of this study, and the literature review, also proposed a foundational competency of professional and ethical practice (France et al., 2008; Kaslow et al., 2009; Rodolfa et al., 2005; Stucky, Bush, & Donders, 2010). Reflective practice supports ethics in terms of ensuring transparency and accountability as EPs are able to explain the rationale for their actions. Furthermore, participants explained that it supports them in being critical analysts (Dewey 1933, Lewin 1952). It enables them not to be fearful of asking themselves challenging question about their practice. The findings predominately demonstrate how

reflective practice supports EPs in the context of self, and the impact of practice on others, similar to the model developed by Lavender (2003), and explained in the literature review, relating reflection to the content for reflection.

Findings showed that participants valued reflective practice as it aided them in understanding their unique contribution, and helped them to adapt, learn and keep progressing. Reflective practice contributes to EPs becoming the best practitioners they can be. The findings from the subtheme 'Reflection Promoted in Psychology' built on the previous theme 'Central to EP Role' by describing how reflective practice for EPs has continued to gain importance.

In this research, EPs noted the evolving growth of reflective practice in EP training, although that growth was seen to be slow and uneven. EPs who had been qualified for a longer period of time tended to have seen the presence of reflection and reflective practice as being implicit in their training, specifically when they were taught to think critically, analyse and problem solve. More recently qualified EPs identified that there were more explicit opportunities to develop their reflective practice through their training. Interestingly, newly qualified EPs cited the appeal of reflective practice as having been a motivating factor for them when applying to be EPs in the first place.

Reflection was seen as promoted and valued across the field of psychology. This was found both in the literature review and the findings of this research. It was favoured for use in in-person service in healthcare as it facilitates improvement in practice through on-going evaluation of practice (Cole, 2000; Andrews, 2018; Marshall, 2019).

EPs further saw the importance of reflective practice as part of CPD**.** As described in the literature review, many major Universities in the UK subscribe to a 'reflective scientist–practitioner' model in training psychologists (Lilienfeld & Basterfield 2020; Andrews, 2018; Kiemle, 2008; Fisher et al., 2015). This further highlights the increasing value placed on the

concept of reflective practice, especially in the area of training (Fisher et al., 2015; Knight, Sperlinger & Maltby, 2010; Binks, Jones & Knight, 2013).

As mentioned earlier, the BPS stresses the importance of trainees monitoring and reviewing their own progress and developing skills in self-reflection and critical reflection (2019). Findings in this research suggest that, for some participants, their drive to become an EP appeared to fit organically with their interest in critical psychology, as well as their experience in previous roles where they had used psychology (Christenson, 2001). As Adam (2002) noted, "critical practice is not just reflective practice, because the critical practitioner does not take the world for granted and does not automatically accept the world as it is. Reflective practice contributes to critical, transforming practice…. critical practice involves reflectiveness but transcends it" (p. 87).

As noted in the literature review, while numerous authors have advanced claims regarding the effectiveness of reflective practice in allied disciplines (Lilienfeld & Basterfield 2020), a universal definition of reflective practice remains elusive (Russell 2005; Cropley 2009; Fisher et al., 2015). What is understood by 'reflective practice' can vary amongst scholars (Jarvis, 1992; Mackintosh, 1998; Atkins & Murphy, 1993; Mann, Gordon & MacLeod, 2009; Mann & Walsh, 2013). Smyth (1992) notes that "reflection can mean all things to all people" (p. 285). This lack of an agreed definition can make describing and accounting for reflection difficult (Thompson & Pascal, 2011). Accordingly, this research found a consistent struggle in defining and describing what reflection and reflective practice are (Lilienfeld & Basterfield, 2020; Carmichael et al., 2020; Andrews, 2018; Kiemle, 2008; Fisher, et al., 2015; Heneghan et al., 2014; Marshal 2019). Participants in this study expressed how, when they were trying to describe reflective practice, it made them realise the 'mystical'(Catherine, line 43) nature of reflection for them.

The difficulty participants had with a definition of reflective practice can be observed in the different values the participants placed on reflection, and their experience of reflection as a way of being, rather than a competence or a method of implementing practice. For some, they saw reflective practice as an almost unconscious process. Whereas for others, reflection was an active and deliberate practice (Goulet et al., 2016). It was a tool to think differently about their work, giving themselves time and space and involving degree of discomfort, with reflective practice taking on the role of a critical friend. For others, it was a measure to determine gaps in their skills or knowledge and that provided an opportunity to critically analyse and evaluate learning or practice (Black & Plowright, 2010, p. 246).

5.2.2 What Part Do Reflection and Reflective Practice Play in EPs' Practice?

The findings in response to this research question located the meaning of reflection through the theme 'Effect on EP Role'. For example, influence on their professional and personal growth in their everyday practice and internalisation of the EP role was considered to be key (Carmichael et al., 2020; Kiemle 2008; Andrews, 2018). Reflection helped participants understand their professional role and maintain professional and ethical standards.

For many participants in this study, and those in previous studies, critical reflection was seen as an essential part of CPD. As Clarke et al. (1996) noted, "they appeared to demonstrate an increased understanding of the 'social, economic and political context' of practice" (p. 173).

The findings of this research suggest that being reflexive is part of EPs' reflection. Reflexivity can simply be defined as an ability to recognise our own influence, and the influence of our social and cultural context on research, the type of knowledge we create, and the way we create it (Fook 1999). In this sense, it is about factoring ourselves as players in the situations in which we practice (Fook, 1999, p. 45).

A number of authors (Brookfield,1998; Fook, 2010; Mezirow, 1990) have argued that there are extra steps between reflection and critical reflection. These steps involve more than just thinking about our experiences. To be critically reflective means an EP both understanding their experiences in the social context, and also understanding how they can use that knowledge to develop their practice.

One of the suggested positive impacts of reflection and reflective practice in EP's practice is increasing professional knowledge (Clarke, James & Kelly, 1996). Reflection professionally supports an enhanced ability to manage difficult situations and uncertainty, and understand the complexities presented in practice (Yip, 2006). Previous literature, and the previous research questions in this study, highlighted the value of EPs' contemplating their unique contributions. This research also found that EPs consider their limitations in particular situations. EPs can feel that they are not the expert in a situation and that they do not have all the answers (Kiemle, 2008).

The use of reflection and reflective practice to enable EPs to understand their client's needs and perspectives bears a close relationship to the concept of psychological formulation i.e., the core process that psychologists use to make sense of their clients' problems (American Psychological Association, 2005; BPS, 2017). The use of reflective practice can help to prevent habitual practice (Schön, 1983), leading to the individual needs of the service-user being responded to (Atkins & Murphy, 1993; Schön, 1983), with increased empathy (Platzer et al., 2000). The findings of this research showed that reflective practice aided EPs in making their work bespoke by seeing stakeholders in an individual way, allowing them to feel valued. Reflection was seen to enable practitioners to overcome their own biases (Tate and Mills, 2004). This increased awareness can lead to more possibilities (Carmichael et al., 2020; Kiemle, 2008; Heneghan et al., 2014; Marshall, 2019; Lilienfeld & Basterfield, 2020) and allows for psychologists to make better decisions for clients and other professionals

(Fisher et al., 2015). Reflection helped with self-awareness in EPs, with participants viewing themselves as being part of a system, acknowledging the value they might have, whilst acknowledging and allowing for the systems' values. (Finlay, 2008). Psychologists described reflection as a mirror (Thompson & Pascal, 2012). For example, Albert (line 60) and a participant in Kiemle's study (2008), described reflection as the 'mirror to the self', indicating that development in reflection was not a separate process, and should be integrated (Sheikh et al., 2007; Woodward, 2014).

Psychologists said that for reflection and reflective practice to work, it needed them to be flexible, question their practice and constantly learn by adapting in their role. Awareness through reflective practice could also have benefits for EPs' personal lives by giving them feelings of contentment and wellbeing, and help support them to find a work-life balance.

Concerns have been raised by Mann et al. (2009) in that there is no evidence linking reflection to increased self-awareness (Fisher et al., 2015). Participants in this study, however, stated that reflective practice helped them to reflect on, and be aware of, how they could best respond to their clients' needs and to understand the contribution they could make to their clients. Subsequently, findings note how reflective practice shaped how advice was given, with a consideration of how stakeholders were thinking, as opposed to the EPs simply imposing their views. Participants described that reflection helped them to appreciate stakeholders' vulnerability, and how EPs can demonstrate a degree of vulnerability by questioning their practice.

This research uncovered an arguably clearer articulation than previously published work of how EPs find reflective practice helpful in their daily work, as well as appreciating the impact that they feel it makes on their practice. In this way, this paper addresses some of the critiques of the existing literature, as discussed by Wigg et al. (2011), Fisher et al. (2015), as EPs in this study showed a deeper understanding of the significance of reflection by

explaining the likely impact of an absence of reflective practice in EP practice. If EPs did not employ reflective practice, the complexity in the EP role might be lost and it might appear to be easy. Assumptions could be made about practice without reflective practice. Flexibility could be replaced with rigidity and an entrenched way of thinking and working. For example, EPs could "become perhaps too comfortable in practicing in a certain way" (Albert, line 215). In this way, reflective practice can be seen as a reaction against professionals becoming too simplistic, or driven by technique, when applying their knowledge (Thompson & Pascal, 2011).

5.2.3 What Approach to Reflection and Reflective Practice Do EPs Take?

EPs in this study predominantly used reflection-on-action. Reflection-on-action involves professionals thinking retrospectively about the situation to consciously review, describe, analyse and evaluate. This is done as a means of understanding what happened in light of an experience, and to gain insights to improve future practice (Schön 1983).

This study found that, similar to the previous literature, reflections could occur in individual and collaborative group related spaces (Lilienfeld & Basterfield, 2020; Beal, et al., 2017). This can be also understood using the Vygotsky principle (Peck et al,. 2009), representing individual learning within public and private spaces. This involves four phases of interaction: appropriation; transformation; publication; and conventionalisation (Peck et al,. 2009). Appropriation is seen as how the individual learns by observing others. Transformation has the individual adapt knowledge in order to meet their needs. Appropriation and Transformation both involve learning from others, and occur in the 'collective learning space'. In contrast, Publication and Conventionalisation involve 'learning through oneself' and occur in individual learning. Publication involves the individual rationalising the knowledge and capturing it formally. Conventionalisation has the individual demonstrating knowledge by sharing it with others (Finlayson, 2015).

In terms of Appropriation and Transformation across the participants in this study, and in the literature review, supervision was identified as something of great value, and of having a central role in providing a space for formal reflection (Beal, et al., 2017; Heneghan et al., 2014; Ferreira, et al., 2017; Kennedy, et al., 2018). Findings from this research revealed that reflection in supervision was supportive through the nature of questioning used. These questions may help in reflecting on practice in the EP role, help EPs work outside their comfort zone and strengthen relationships between theory and practice. Driscoll (2007) describes the use of experiential learning to cultivate further understanding as one of the functions of supervision.

As well as formal supervision, peer supervision was seen to provide an informal space for reflection and learning from a different viewpoint (Beal, et al., 2017). In peer supervision, EPs could discuss wider systems, cultural issues and have extending thinking about complex casework. Space was created in both formal spaces, like using a reflective teams approach, and informal spaces, like a pub or coffee shop, creating a culture of reflection. The need for Conventionalisation was felt by participants in this study to describe how reflection may rest on a psychologist's ability to reflect by themselves and share reflection with others.

The literature review, and findings of this research, reveal that there is no one approach to reflection. Both highlight a limited awareness and use amongst practicing psychologists of formal models in reflective practice. Some psychologists in this research recalled Gibbs' Reflective Cycle and Rolfe, Freshwater and Jasper's (2001) three stage model ('What'; 'So What'; and 'Now What'). In the absence of formal models, the use of questions appeared to be an approach for creating a space for reflection. This links to the findings of the first research question, which described reflection as more content-led rather than process-led. Some psychologists drew upon certain psychological theories (Kiemle, 2008; Beal, et al., 2017), and their choice of everyday practice tools acted as a catalyst to reflection. For

example, espoused theories-of-practice (Argyris & Schön, 1974) included Bronfenbrenner, psychodynamic and attachment approaches. EPs were also found to use tools that mirrored what they believed about practice, i.e., solution focused, positive strengths based, and VIG.

The research findings suggest that reflective practice was encouraged by some enablers, which might support all four phases of interaction (Peck et al., 2009). Being comfortable in a role, and familiarity about systems, was found to create more space for reflection ('Publication'). In contrast, EPs seeking opportunities for learning, as well as working in different contexts and settings, could support reflection ('Transformation'). The findings also point out that EP reflection could be aided when reflecting with a group who were likeminded, and where trust and rapport had been developed ('Appropriation'). Similarly, building collaboration in consultation was seen to enhance reflection with stakeholders ('Conventionalisation').

Incidental reflection in practice could be an approach too. Thinking back to pre-COVID-19 circumstances, some participants revealed that they used regular moments like driving time, walking and making tea, as opportunities for reflection.

Dewey (1933) writes of "a state of doubt, hesitation, perplexity, mental difficulty, in which [reflective] thinking originates, and . . . an act of searching, hunting, inquiring, to find material that will resolve the doubt, settle and dispose of the perplexity" (p. 12). Findings from this research would support this suggestion. Tolerating uncertainty and discomfort provides an access to alternative perspectives and allows for an exploration of new avenues. In the EP context, this could include thinking about how to apply a personal philosophy of practice to the dynamic process of professional development (Kinsella, 2001), for example, Situational Learning (White, 2010), where reflection helped EPs to learn from the social community. EPs in this research explained that the national restrictions and social distancing due to COVID-19 had provided discomfort, as had various societal changes and movements,

such as Black Lives Matter. Unanticipated events supported reflection by highlighting any inconsistencies in practice, which is a common starting stage for reflection (Atkins & Murphy, 1993). Tolerating uncertainty and discomfort, and accessing and exploring painful thoughts and feelings, aids EPs to access alternative perspectives and, subsequently, explore new avenues (Carmichael et al., 2020).

Finally, participants discussed factors that enabled them to maintain an ongoing approach to reflection. This included EPs' own previous experiences, and factors of their personality where they felt motivated to keep learning.

5.2.4 Does Reflective Practice Change Over Time for Individual EPs?

The findings from participants' answers to this question were closely related to the idea of learning from experience. This notion owes much to the work of Dewey who wrote of a dialectical process of learning that transformed observation and reflection into action (Pascal & Brown, 2009, p. 72).

This research offers originality by providing examples of how, through lived experiences, reflection may evolve. The effect of reflective practice can be observed in both professional and personal life (Lavender & Paxton, 2004), which was a theme for the research question that looked at the role reflective practice plays. Ongoing reflective learning in practice supports the development and consolidation of an inquiring approach to professional practice (Thompson & Pascal 2012). Findings revealed that EPs assessed their growth in reflective practice when explaining the way their approach to their day-to-day work had changed. Further to this, professionally, the research findings suggest that reflective practice facilitates EPs' professional identity and internalisation of the role, linking with the research findings from the first two research questions. Hughes (2013) echoes this, noting that critical reflection can deepen understanding of the links between morality and profession

role/identity. Formal training in reflective practice could benefit from an increased focus on those links.

Over time, reflective practice can be strengthened by further learning when in the EP role, with EPs feeling confident in their skills and understanding. EPs can also move from reflecting on themselves, to reflecting on the process of the EP role. Findings suggest that reflective practice changing over time can be as a result of reflecting on when things have gone well, and when they have not gone well, questioning and trying to understand why that might be.

Finally, findings revealed that reflecting over time can be a way for EPs to find their unique way of being reflective in practice.

5.3 Barriers To Practice

The findings from this research suggest an overarching obstacle for reflection and reflective practice can be its often intangible quality. This can create challenges in a society where value is typically placed on more tangible goods and services. Beyond that, barriers to reflective practice were also identified at individual, group and organisational levels. This was also found in the reviewed literature.

On individual barriers, a common barrier described was competing demands on EPs' time. Research has also shown that stress can have a negative impact on areas like critical, creative and reflective thinking (Arnsten, 2009). Reflection plays a role in the self-care of psychologists (Fisher et al., 2015), which in turn could have an impact on the quality of care being delivered. Accordingly, the HCPC and the BPS emphasise the importance of self-care for practising psychologists (BPS, 2017; HCPC, 2015). The importance of this was also reflected in the findings of this research and the literature review, where participants described that effective practice should be seen in the context of personal resilience, for example, in the context of survival and Maslow's 'Hierarchy of Needs' (1943).

Reflecting with others/in groups was unanimously felt to be beneficial by participants. The findings did suggest that there could be barriers to reflecting here though, specifically vulnerability, lack of confidence and self-doubt, as compared to others in the group. Another barrier could be supervision. Supervision was generally seen as something to be highly valued and as a facilitator of reflective practice. But it could represent a barrier to reflection if supervision felt more like line management, especially for newly qualified EPs making the transition from academic and placement styles of supervision after graduation.

At an institutional level, this research found that wider systemic issues of not fully valuing reflective practice could also be a barrier to reflective practice. This would need addressing to help promote a safe and protected space for reflection (Nutt & Keville, 2016) as potential benefits to learning could be lost if reflective practice was not valued at an institutional level (Mann et al., 2009). EPs in managerial positions could find themselves becoming barriers to reflective practice, as the pressure for outcomes could present reduced opportunities for activities deemed less valuable. Different organisations appear to offer different opportunities for reflection. For example, Local Authority EPs appear to have more opportunities for reflective dialogues than EPs who are working independently. This could also be due to different perspectives of what the EP role means for the EP themselves, and how others understand it to be.

Using the theme 'Opportunities for Forthcoming Development' some participants said that EPs had an individual responsibility towards reflecting, but they also needed to have a protected space to be reflective. There was recognition of the need for learning about reflective tools, and that explicit training in reflection would support their practice. Psychologists agreed on the importance of having a positive role model, appearing to suggest Vygotsky's principle of Appropriation and Transformation (Peck et al., 2009). There was a strong sense amongst participants that reflection needed to have a prioritised status at both

local and national levels. Supervision remained crucial for EPs as a space for reflection.

Participants wanted more training in reflective supervision, and further explicit training to

support their reflective practice in terms of tools, frameworks and ideas. Finally, the research

findings suggested an optimistic outlook for reflective practice in the future, with a sense that

it will grow further, especially as more training courses explore reflective practice.

5.4 Change Theory

In order to appropriately consider factors for possible implications for EP practice,

and to propose future avenues for research in reflective practice in the EP context, I

considered a method called Force Field Analysis, developed by Kurt Lewin in 1947

(Cummings, Bridgman & Brown, 2016). Lewin proposed a staged model of change: apparent

equilibrium; unfreeze; change; refreeze (Lewin, 1947). Lewin used an analogy of changing

the shape of ice from a cube to a cone to describe the model. To do this, you must first melt

the ice cube (unfreeze); then mould the new shape (change); before finally solidifying the

cone (refreeze) (McGrath & Bates, 2013).

Figure 10

Change Model

(Source: https://www.sharonmwasco.com/home/three-stages-of-community-change)
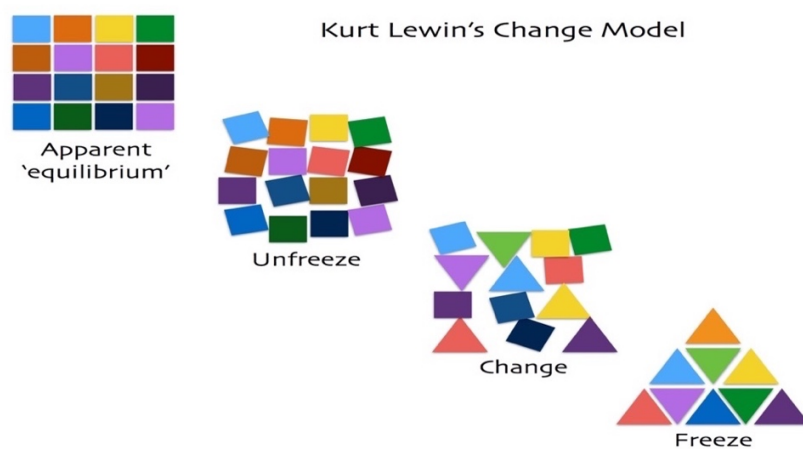
During the process of change, there can be both 'forces for' and 'forces against' that change (White, 2016), affecting a situation in a particular direction. 'Forces for' drive desired change and are considered to be drivers of change. 'Forces against' are forces acting to restrain or decrease the driving forces. Driving forces tend to initiate a change and keep the change going. Restraining forces should be reduced so that desirable change can happen naturally (Bozak, 2003). Prior to change occurring, the equilibrium, which was previously maintained practice, needs to be disturbed by either introducing a greater number of driving forces or reducing the restraining forces (Lewin, 2005). Introduction of driving forces is a "high-tension" approach, whilst reducing restraining forces is "low-tension" (Lewin, 2005, p. 41). Low tension is usually the preferred approach to change and is typically achieved through a group decision making process (Lewin, 2005). A new equilibrium is reached when the sum of the driving forces equals the sum of the restraining forces (Kritsonis, 2004). The equilibrium can be raised or lowered by changes in the relationship between the driving and the restraining forces (Bozak, 2003).

For reflective practice, to effect change and develop practice in Educational Psychology, a low-tension process could be achieved by introducing reflection as a valued approach to practice through a whole-service approach, and with some consistency in training approaches to reflective practice. Figure 12 below illustrates the unresolved balance of factors that might be influencing the capacity of EPs in their practice. Figure 12 is my own conceptualisation of the forces for and against, produced by synthesising the findings and the available literature. Also in Figure 12, I have summarised each driving force for and against, and linked them to a relevant section in this thesis.

Figure 11

Force Field Analysis

Forces for Change	Proposed Change	Forces Against Change
Highly valued in EP role		Ambiguity in the conceptualisation
Fits with EP practice		Status at local/national level
Model for professional practice	Embedding reflective practice in Educational Psychology	Gap and inconsistency of training
Internalisation of EP role		Current barriers
Having more time and context for reflection due to COVID-19		Pre-COVID-19 opportunities and space for reflection

The impact of each driving force can be summarised as follows:

1. Highly valued in EP role: by seeing as central, and foundational to the EP role, and through inclusion in some doctoral programmes (see sections 2.3.2, 4.2.1.1, 4.2.1.2)

2. Fits with EP practice and has status at a National and Local level (see sections 1.3, 2.3.2, 4.2.1.1, 4.2.1.2, 4.4.1.1,4.4.3.3)

3. Model for professional practice, significance of Supervision and CPD (see sections 2.3.2, 4.4.1.1**,** 4.2.1.2, 4.4.1.3, 4.4.1.4**,** 4.4.1.2, 4.4.1.3, 4.4..2.2, 4.4.2.3, 4.4.3.3, 4.5.2.3)

4. Internalisation of EP role and the effect on personal and professional development (see sections 2.3.2, 4.2.1.1, 4.5.1.2, 4.2.1.2, 4.3.1.1, 4.3.1.2)

5. COVID-19 provided context by highlighting unanticipated events for reflection, societal changes and movement, and more time for reflection, for example participants reflected on their role and their professional identity (see section 4.4.2.3)

The impact of each restraining force can be summarised as follows:

1. Ambiguity in the conceptualisation of reflective practice, heterogeneity in its practice and evidence base for reflection in the EP context is still developing (see sections 2.4.1*, 4.2.1.3, 4.4.3.3)*

2. Status of Reflection at the Local and National Level: a held value of reflection to the individual EP Role and within organisations (see sections 2.4.2*, 4.2.1.1, 4.4.3.3, 4.5.2.2, 4.5.2.4)*

3. Gap and inconsistency of training for EPs: in the type of reflective practice training EPs receive and different approaches to the curriculum (see sections 2.3.2*, 4.2.1.2)*

4. Current barriers, including time, agreed definition, opportunities, cognitive effort and confidence in using with others (see sections 2.3.2, 4.2.1.3, 4.4.3.2, 4.4.3.4, 4.4.3.1)

5. Pre-COVID-19 presented a loss space for reflection with others, loss of incidental opportunities, and feeling stressed as COVID-19 national restrictions may prevent reflection (see sections 4.4.3.4)

The overall balance of these forces depends on their relative weighting. A scaling method can be used to demonstrate the level of force and the likelihood of change to occur. With regards to reflective practice, it appears that the restraining factors currently balance those which could positively influence change. Therefore, until these barriers can be overcome, the growth of reflection in educational psychology may remain limited. The opportunity for change is there, it just has not been taken yet. To help develop reflective practice in the EP context, it will be important to promote and develop its understanding and more clearly communicate how it is used in practice, supported by the development of a robust evidence base. This will help to contribute understanding and commitment and to help realise meaningful transformation through reflection and opportunities for CPD. It will also be important for EPs to receive more training, and harmonise that training, so that EPs are better equipped to support each other.

5.5 Overview of Findings

Overall, it appears that there is a significant professional interest in reflection and reflective practice. This includes nationally, by the HCPC and BPS, and locally within some Educational Psychology services and amongst individual EPs. EPs are generally positive in their views and experiences of reflective practice and are optimistic about its future growth. Findings from this research suggest that EPs experiences in reflection practice supported their professional knowledge, enhanced their professional practice and provided them with personal growth and wellbeing. Reflective practice has provided EPs with a mechanism for ongoing development in order to maintain competence and ethical practice in the context of evolving and shifting work. Despite being greatly valued by practitioners, there remain barriers to the effective use of reflective practice. These include the time available to EPs to reflect, a lack of a clear definition and heterogeneity of approach, uneven training opportunities, non-uniform systemic value and professional confidence, and cognitive efforts constraining its development.

Burton (2000) notes that while reflective theory and practice has not been adequately tested, neither has it been rejected. This research provides an opportunity to do that by exploring existing perceptions and experiences of reflective practice in the EP context. This is currently one of the few studies to look at this issue in this context.

5.6 Critique of the Research - Strengths and Limitations

The research findings offer an account of largely unexplored areas, especially in the EP context. The findings provided some originality in not only exploring what reflective practice means to EPs, but also provided clarity on how EPs practically apply reflective practice, including models, approaches and barriers. EPs participating in the research also provided some views for future implications and research opportunities. These will be discussed later in this chapter.

This study has started to address a key criticism of the research literature, by trying to understand how reflective practice is being understood and used in Educational Psychology practice, as opposed to reporting on general views of reflective practice (Burgess et al., 2013). This greater clarity about its use in practice can support in the application and development of a greater evidence base for reflective practice, and provide ideas for integrating it further into Educational Psychology practice.

One of the strengths of this research is that it has a different focus of sample than previous research. That previous research primarily focused on trainee development of reflective practice.

A potential limitation of this research is its sample size. That sample size makes generalising qualitative findings difficult, and means that these results should be seen as indicative. However, this research was exploratory, so the findings are intended to produce rich and meaningful data about reflective practice, rather than making any determinative or substantive claims. Therefore, a small sample was recruited in order to allow for this richness. This research's findings could be built upon through further investigation. This could be achieved by conducting a longitudinal study which focuses on how reflective practice is introduced, develops, and is evaluated over time. Alternatively, a follow up study using multiple research methods could be conducted.

This research also relied on the use of self-reporting, as all of the interview questions were open to subjective interpretation. Interview participants might have understood the questions, and subsequently structured their responses, in a way that differed from what was originally intended. To mitigate against this risk, prompts were added for each question to establish further clarity. Also, participants were given the opportunity to ask clarifying questions if, at any point, they did not understand something.

Another limitation of this research could be the possibility of positive bias, given the self-selecting sample. The method of recruiting for the study led to a sample made up of those with an existing interest in reflection. Thus, they may have presented a skewed view of the prevalence of reflection in the profession.

The heterogeneity of this research sample is a strength in terms of the difference amongst the participants' years of experience, training and the organisation in which they worked. This served to provide a rich and diverse understanding of the development of reflective practice in the EP field. But a limitation could be observed through the lack of homogeneity in terms of the training backgrounds of the participants, making it difficult to determine the extent to which training impacted on how the participants viewed reflective practice.

The semi-structured video interviews conducted for the research, while primarily a response to national COVID-19 restrictions, allowed for interviews that were less time consuming for participants, and more convenient for them in terms being conducted in a familiar space. This could have led to them providing richer contributions to the study. As with most interview-based data collection processes, though, the presence of the researcher can unintentionally influence participant responses (Ward, Gott & Hoare, 2015), even when present only over video.

It is important to remain curious and cautious when drawing conclusion from findings, as another possible limitation to this study could be the interviews being conducted by a trainee EP. This could have increased socially desirable responses from participants to the research questions. However, being trained in VIG and consultation skills supported me in quickly establishing rapport and gathering in-depth information.

A final consideration is that the data collected in this research was limited as it only reflected participants' perceptions or attitudes and views, and did not contain any directly

observed behaviours. As such, it is not possible to determine whether the findings show how participants behave in reality.

5.7 Implications for Educational Psychology Practice

The combination of the research findings and the literature review demonstrate some important implications for EP practice. They indicate what reflective practice has to offer Educational Psychology in practice, how reflective practice could be assimilated further into everyday practice, and what this means for EPs in terms of what is next.

5.7.1 What Does Reflective Practice Offer to Practice?

As with the literature review, the findings of this research identified reflective practice as being a foundational competency for professional and ethical practice (France et al., 2008; Kaslow et al., 2009; Rodolfa et al., 2005; Stucky, Bush, & Donders, 2010). Andrews (2018) reported that reflective practice provided a professional sense of agency (sense of control, autonomy) and mastery (competency, skills). Reflection helped participants understand their professional role, and helped them uphold professional and ethical standards. I previously discussed the use of the 'reflective scientist–practitioner' model in training psychologists (Lilienfeld & Basterfield 2020; Andrews, 2018; Kiemle, 2008; Fisher, et al., 2015). EP professional practice is more an art and craft, than a scientific or technical process (Thompson & Pascal, 2012). Reflective practice puts great emphasis on integrating theory and practice, based on the situation or circumstances encountered (Kiemle, 2008).

The research findings provide some indication that a key part of an EP's reflection is critical reflective practice. The critical approach to professional practice is an important part of promoting creativity and preventing stagnation (Christen, 2001). Adam (2002) noted that reflective practice "contributes to critical, transforming practice…. critical practice involves reflectiveness but transcends it" (p. 87). Traditionally, reflective practice involved being watchful about practice, learning from experience and being informed. These research

findings suggest that participants could be moving beyond the limitations of the traditional approach to a more critically informed reflective practice that provides a basis for emancipatory practice.

All professional practitioners think about their work (Bright, 1995). The difficulty is how to go about finding ways to understand professional practice that is always changing. The findings of this study suggest that a greater focus on reflective practice could support this. For example, while EPs were able to explain the content of their of reflection, and some of the approaches they take with others when doing supervision, they seemed to lack formal models and methods to facilitate their own reflection, or when doing reflection with others. Reflective practice offers a perspective more firmly rooted in the realities of practice, in which the high ground of the professional knowledge base offers helpful insights, but not simple or direct lines of action for dealing with the 'swampy lowlands of practice' (Schön, 1983).

This research supports the value of both reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action in Educational Psychology, with reflection-on-action being predominately applied, and reflection-in-action growing deeper with time and experience. Psychologists in this study valued reflection in their role, where it helped with greater self-knowledge, helped to overcome feelings of uncertainty, helped to enhance their service delivery by making it bespoke for their client, and provided a source of ongoing development and confidence in the changing context of their work.

The research findings have implications for how reflective practice can have an impact on everyday practice by enhancing competencies such as perspective-taking abilities and interpersonal skills. The notion of the personal-self helping the professional-self was also observed when participants said that reflections had helped them take a different perspective (Carmichael et al., 2020).

The findings of this study suggest that there is high value placed in reflecting with others in formal and informal supervision. Supervision that provides a reflecting space, and that is interactive and has reciprocity, can inspire interest, connection and meaning. This may provide a means to change thinking and practice. This facilitates 'turning the gaze to the self' in a way that offers deeper understanding around how issues of practice and professional life are co-constructed (Beal et al., 2017).

Current models of reflection have typically only captured the role of reflection in learning and skills. The findings of this study suggest that we should also be seeking to understand reflective practice in the context of personal resilience. Marshall (2019) has shown that stress can have a negative impact on higher-order cognitive abilities (e.g., critical, creative and reflective thinking) (see Arnsten, 2009). The HCPC and BPS emphasise the importance of self-care for practising psychologists (BPS, 2017; HCPC, 2015).

5.7.2 How is Reflective Practice Assimilated into Practice?

Reflection and reflective practice were highly valued by the psychologists in this study, and were used on a day to day basis. But, as previously highlighted, there remains ambiguity regarding the practice of reflective practice in Educational Psychology. This has significant implications for the future of reflective practice when considering the development of an evidence base and how it can be introduced to EP training and practice.

Gersch (2009) argued that, in order for the work of EPs to be considered of value, clear language is needed to communicate the nature of their role. The findings of this study suggest a variation of what is understood of reflective practice, and how it is practiced, could be related to EPs understanding of their role. This could be also due to the lack of a clear definition of reflective practice, making it hard for professionals to discuss and describe themselves engaging in reflection. These difficulties appear to be exacerbated by the range of terms used to describe similar processes, and range of practices creating misunderstanding

(Black & Plowright, 2010; Atkins & Murphy 1993; Heneghan et al., 2014). This could serve to further hinder the development of a workable definition and integration of reflection.

Training programmes emphasise the important role of reflection in Personal Professional Development (PPD) but these programmes have been unclear about how it is linked to PPD, with many programmes not providing a definition of PPD (Gilmer & Marckus, 2003). All of this could have significant implications for the use reflective practice for the role of the EPs, especially attempts to further embed it within the EP profession.

In this research, EPs reported that reflective practice was often not perceived as a priority for investment by individuals or organisations. Barriers to engaging in reflective practice and linked to this, wider systemic issues of institutions not fully valuing reflective practice, may need addressing to help promote a safe and protected space for reflection (Nutt & Keville, 2016). Potential benefits to learning can be lost if reflective practice is not valued by the culture and environment of the organisation (Mann et al., 2009). It could be argued that reflective practice is a potential mechanism for change (Cameron, 2006).

5.7.3 Where Next for Reflective Practice in Educational Psychology?

Reflective practice is understood to be an important factor for practicing EPs. By examining the literature on definitions, and moving away from their own definitions and methods for exploring reflective process, EPs will be able to gain a deeper sense of reflective practice.

For EPs who are already mindful and engage in reflective practice, a change in doing, rather than just thinking, might help to spark further reflective practice. When practitioners embrace a new approach, they have an opportunity to learn something about themselves and others.

The need for clarity and greater awareness of reflective practice could be mediated by introducing an agreed definition of reflective practice to doctoral training programmes, as

well as establishing some homogeneity across trainings courses. There is need of a leveller for the EPs who were trained before reflective practice was formally introduced to university programmes. There are also implications for EPs' ongoing training after qualification. The role for national guiding organisations like the BPS, DCEP and HCPC is crucial in further documenting and creating opportunities for reflection for EPs. This research, and the literature review, highlight the benefits of reflective practice across various fields of psychology (Andrews, 2018; Marshall 2019). Having opportunities to engage and reflect with other psychological fields will provide continuing development and opportunities for reflection for EPs.

5.8 Researcher's Reflections

The theoretical underpinning of qualitative research means that subjectivity is part of the research process (Braun & Clark, 2013). Participants and researchers' own histories, culture, language and assumptions shape and influence the research (Braun & Clark, 2013). Qualitative research therefore requires reflexivity throughout the research process in order to be transparent about how the research has been influenced by the researcher (Finlay, 1998). This has been a key consideration for me throughout this study.

The reason for this study was due my interest in exploring views and experience of reflective practice in EPs' practice. This was enhanced by a positive view of the conceptual and theoretical aspects of reflective practice. These motivating factors introduce potential bias when considering the validity of reflective practice. Whilst the purpose of the research was not to evaluate reflective practice, researcher bias still had the potential for the over inclusion of findings that present a positive picture of reflective practice for EPs. My reflective diary, and the research questions for this study, assisted in me remaining consciously aware of my potential bias and minimising the impact of it. For example, themes and subthemes without systemic relevance were added as complementary to the other themes,

and discussion of the Dunning-Kruger Effect was added to demonstrate the opposite effect of reflective practice.

5.8.1 Reflection on Specific Research Areas Included from Researcher's Diary

My experience in reflection has helped me in seeing the importance early on of a piloting stage to help me spend time thinking, planning and assessing how to help participants feel comfortable, in order to access more meaningful reflections. Use of my experiences of reflection with my cohort in university, and in placement settings, provided me with an insight into some of the challenges with reflection, for example, where I observed feelings of being judged and anxiety impacting on genuine reflection. The findings from this study, and the literature review, showed that some of the obstacles to reflective practice were performance pressures and fears of being judged (Kiemle 2008; Heneghan et al., 2014; Carmichael et al., 2020; Andrews, 2018). To combat this, I tried to create a comfortable environment for my research participants, by demonstrating an interest through genuine curiosity, using VIG and VERP skills, and maintaining positive interactions from the initial recruitment interaction via email. I also spent time before the interview trying to understand how participants felt on the day, including how they were coping with COVID-19 restrictions.

It was interesting to note that, even though sharing reflections can be anxiety provoking, participants in this study were able to express the vulnerability they felt in their reflective practice. For example, when participants described their experience at the end of interview, most said it was enjoyable. Some said it was encouraging, as it had validated their reflective practice, their motivation had gone up, and that it felt like CPD. For some, it made them think of gaps in their reflective practice, and for some it highlighted the value of using models. Finally, for some it was like reconnecting to something that was important for them.

It was important that I observed my influence on the participants by not revealing too much of my own views. This was a not easy, as I am passionate about the use of reflective practice in the EP role. My research diary was helpful in separating some of this, by enabling me to reflect on each interview. My learning as a qualitative researcher assisted me in acknowledging and recognising my subjectivity in the research process, including my influence in the semi-structured interviews through the questions I asked, which were influenced by my own experiences and views of reflective practice.

I was guided throughout this study by taking a pragmatic philosophical position. This was in great part because I was exploring an issue that had little existing research on it. By taking an exploratory approach, without trying to fit it into a pre-existing coding frame, I was able to shift from a position of trying to validate the merits of reflective practice (validation), to one more focused on exploring the issue in a way that could be useful to the EP profession (value). Pragmatism helped me in using methods best suited to the research questions. This provided me with an opportunity to plan intelligently, ask for support, explore, learn and then take the actions needed. It also helped in acknowledging my subjectivity as a researcher.

My motivation for this study was through an interest in exploring underlying, implicit or unidentified opportunities and challenges with the ongoing development of reflective practice. The completion of a research diary has helped me to map this journey, whilst serving as a reminder of where it began.

Use of the NVivo software analysis tool aided my ability to classify, sort and arrange data, while allowing me to consciously remain aware that the data could provide potential bias. NVivo was an aid to keep me close to the data, and subsequently help provide objectiveness and observations on how it changed over time.

5.9 Opportunities for Future Research

The process of disentangling terms related and interrelated to reflective practice in the literature (Erlandson & Beach, 2008; Epstein, Siegel & Silbermann, 2008; Kinsella, 2007), requires active, committed and iterative efforts, and is a process in of itself (Cheng, 2010). This research highlighted the issue of the definition of reflective practice and, more importantly, brought out the importance of EPs being critically reflective in their work.

Reflective practice is a complex, multi-layered issue. Therefore, continued research of this concept would improve our understanding, especially if subsequent research design could capture specific experiences of reflection as they occur. This, combined with further in-depth reflection on these reflections, using moment-by-moment and phase-by-phase guidelines in reflective practice, could lead to a more comprehensive integration of the reflective-practitioner model. Other opportunities for future research could include looking into the links between reflection and its theoretical underpinning. The experiences of psychologists will need to be better understood to enable the development of a theory in the area, and to facilitate the incorporation of reflective practice into the training of psychologists.

The provisional, but growing, body of research on debiasing methods should be drawn on to inform the development of reflective practice techniques to be investigated in future work. Potential effects of such methods should be examined. It may ultimately prove more important to ask, 'which reflective practice methods are you using?'. An exploration of the proposition that the quality of the supervisory relationship and exploring facilitators' characteristics that enhance reflective functioning, and an examination of any related impact on outcomes, would also be useful.

While this research did indicate a number of barriers to reflective practice, including from an individual, group and organisational standpoint, the participants were all broadly

supportive of it. For a future study, it would be helpful to identify more professionals who hold contrary views to understand reflective practice from other perspectives.

In addition to the point above, findings in this study suggest that one of the barriers appeared to be due to reflective practice being considered intangible. Evaluations of reflective practice tools and approaches might help in articulating the effectiveness of reflective practice. This might also help in providing scaffolding tools for reflective practice. Further evaluations would be needed, including a focus on the systemic implications of reflective practice, in order to understand the barriers and facilitators that are beyond the control of individual EPs.

5.10 Conclusion

This thesis explored EPs' experiences and perceptions of reflective practice. Consistent with previous studies, this research found that there is still not a common definition of reflective practice. Having a common definition or understanding would help standardise the training of reflective practice for both trainees and existing practitioners. It would also enable a better articulation of the tangible value that reflective practice adds to EP practice, helping to remove some of the existing barriers such as time and opportunities for reflection.

If a definition was to be agreed now, with the above mention associated outcomes, it might benefit from not drawing too heavily of the various definitions offered in the past. Reflective practice is evolving and changing over time. Any agreed and standardised definition would have to take that into account.

Overall, this study showed how much value participants placed in reflective practice. It is hoped that this research will support the continued use of reflective practice and inform the future work of EPs who may be interested in further diversifying their practice.

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Appendix A

Literature Review: Detailed Record of Systematic Literature Search

Search Term	Search Limit and Subject Index	Database	Results
s1. DE "Reflectiveness"	**Language:** English **Year:** 1653-2020	**Interface:** EBSCOhost Research Databases **Search Screen**: Advanced Search **Search mode:** Boolean/phrase **Database:** PsycINFO	2,735
s2. DE "Reflectiveness"	**Language:** English **Year:** 1653-2020 **Major heading**: reflectiveness	**Interface:** EBSCOhost Research Databases **Search Screen**: Advanced Search **Search mode:** Boolean/phrase **Database:** PsycINFO	1,898
s3. DE "Reflectiveness"	**Language:** English **Year:** 1653-2020 **Major heading**: reflectiveness Professional development Professional supervision	**Interface:** EBSCOhost Research Databases **Search Screen**: Advanced Search **Search mode:** Boolean/phrase **Database:** PsycINFO	179
s4. (DE "EDUCATIONAL psychology" OR DE "EDUCATIONAL psychologists") AND ("reflective practice" OR reflection)	**Language:** English **Year:** 1653-2020 **Major heading**: reflectiveness Educational psychology Educational psychologists	**Interface:** EBSCOhost Research Databases **Search Screen**: Advanced Search **Search mode:** Boolean/phrase **Database:** PsycINFO	283
s5. (Reflection OR reflective OR "reflective practice") AND (DE "EDUCATIONAL psychology" OR DE "EDUCATIONAL psychologists" OR DE "CLINICAL psychologists" OR DE "COUNSELLING")	**Language**: English **Year** 1653- 2020 **Major heading:** professional supervision, reflectiveness clinical psychology professional development educational psychologists clinical psychologists educational psychology	**Interface:** EBSCOhost Research Databases **Search Screen**: Advanced Search **Search mode:** Boolean/phrase **Database:** PsycINFO	428
s6.(Reflection OR reflective OR "reflective practi*") AND	**Language**: English	**Interface:** EBSCOhost Research Databases	239

(DE "EDUCATIONAL psychology" OR DE "EDUCATIONAL psychologists" OR DE "CLINICAL psychologists" OR DE "COUNSELLING") AND (perceptions OR attitudes OR opinion OR experience OR view OR beliefs)	**Year** 1653- 2020 **Major heading:** Reflectiveness professional competence professional supervision clinical psychology professional development educational psychologists clinical psychologists educational psychology psychology	**Search Screen**: Advanced Search **Search mode:** Boolean/phrase **Database:** PsycINFO	
s7. (DE "Reflectiveness") AND (supervision) AND ("education* psycholog*")	**Year:** 1653-2020	**Interface:** EBSCOhost Research Databases **Search Screen**: Advanced Search **Search mode:** Boolean/phrase **Database:** PsycINFO	9
s8. ("Educational psychologist") AND (supervision) AND ("reflect* practi*") AND ("education* psycholog*") AND ("professional development")	**Language**: English **Year:** 1653-2020	**Interface:** EBSCOhost Research Databases **Search Screen**: Advanced Search **Search mode:** Boolean/phrase **Database:** PsycINFO	2
s9. ("Reflective practice")	**Language**: English **Year:** 1985-2020 **Subject term: Thesaurus** Psychology Reflective learning Reflection philosophy	**Interface:** EBSCOhost Research Databases **Search Screen**: Advanced Search **Search mode:** Boolean/phrase **Database:** Academic search complete and Eric	1723
s10. ("reflect* practi*") AND ("education* psycholog*")	**Language**: English **Year:** 1985-2020	**Interface:** EBSCOhost Research Databases **Search Screen**: Advanced Search **Search mode:** Boolean/phrase **Database:** Academic search complete and Eric	91
s11. ("reflect* practi*") AND ("education* psycholog*")	**Language**: English **Year:** 1985-2020 **Subject term: Thesaurus** Reflection (philosophy) Reflective learning Educational psychology Educational psychologists	**Interface:** EBSCOhost Research Databases **Search Screen**: Advanced Search **Search mode:** Boolean/phrase **Database**: Academic search complete and Eric	40

s12. ("Educational psychologist") AND (supervision) AND ("reflect* practi*") AND ("education* psycholog*") AND ("professional development")	**Year:** 1985-2020	**Interface:** EBSCOhost Research Databases **Search Screen**: Advanced Search **Search mode:** Boolean/phrase **Database:** Academic search complete and Eric	1
s13. (Reflection OR reflective OR "reflective practice") AND (theory OR tool OR model OR framework) AND ("educational psychology" OR "educational psychologists" OR "clinical psychologists" OR counselling) AND (perceptions OR attitudes OR opinion OR experience OR view OR beliefs)	**Language**: English **Year:** 1984-2020 **Subject term: Thesaurus** clinical psychology counsellors psychologists professional practice psychotherapy educational psychology psychology reflection (philosophy) counselling	**Interface:** EBSCOhost Research Databases **Search Screen**: Advanced Search **Search mode:** Boolean/phrase **Database:** Academic search complete and Eric	222
s14. ("Reflective practice")	**Language**: English **Year:** 1980-2020 **Subject term: Thesaurus** Reflective learning **Subject** reflections reflection (philosophy) psychology reflective learning reflexivity	**Interface:** EBSCOhost Research Databases **Search Screen**: Advanced Search **Search mode:** Boolean/phrase **Database:** British Education Index and Education Research Complete	39
s15. ("reflect* practi*") AND ("education* psycholog*")	**Language**: English **Year:** 1980-2020	**Interface:** EBSCOhost Research Databases **Search Screen**: Advanced Search **Search mode:** Boolean/phrase **Database:** British Education Index and Education Research Complete	73
s16. ("reflect* practi*") AND ("education* psycholog*")	**Language**: English **Year:** 1980-2020 **Subject term: Thesaurus** Educational psychologist	**Interface:** EBSCOhost Research Databases **Search Screen**: Advanced Search **Search mode:** Boolean/phrase **Database:** British Education	39

	Educational psychology Reflecting learning	Index and Education Research Complete	
s17. ("Educational psychologist") AND (supervision) AND ("reflective practi*") AND ("education* psycholog*") AND ("professional development")	**Year:** 1980-2020	**Interface:** EBSCOhost Research Databases **Search Screen**: Advanced Search **Search mode:** Boolean/phrase **Database**: British Education Index and Education Research Complete	1
s18. (Reflection OR reflective OR "reflective practice") AND (theory OR tool OR model OR framework) AND ("educational psychology" OR "educational psychologists" OR "clinical psychologists" OR counselling) AND (perceptions OR attitudes OR opinion OR experience OR view OR beliefs)	**Language**: English **Year:** 1980-2020	**Interface:** EBSCOhost Research Databases **Search Screen:** Advanced Search **Search mode:** Boolean/phrase **Database:** British Education Index and Education Research Complete	326
s19. (Reflection OR reflective OR "reflective practice") AND (theory OR tool OR model OR framework) AND ("educational psychology" OR "educational psychologists" OR "clinical psychologists" OR counselling) AND (perceptions OR attitudes OR opinion OR experience OR view OR beliefs)	**Language**: English **Year:** 1980-2020 **Subject thesaurus:** Reflective learning Clinical psychology Educational psychologists Counseling Educational psychology **Subject:** counseling practice Clinical psychologist Reflexivity Psychologists -psychology Clinical supervision Professional practice Psychologists Psychology Reflection (philosophy)	**Interface:** EBSCOhost Research Databases **Search Screen**: Advanced Search **Search mode:** Boolean/phrase **Database:** British Education Index and Education Research Complete	40
s20. ("Reflective practice")	**Language**: English **Limited to exact keywords:** Reflective practice Reflection Critical reflection Reflective learning	**Interface** Scopus Research Databases **Search Screen:** Advanced Search **Journal:** Reflective Practice	438

s21. (Reflection OR reflective OR "reflective practice") AND ("educational psychology" OR "educational psychologists" OR "clinical psychologists" OR counselling)	**Language**: English	**Interface** Scopus Research Databases **Search Screen:** Advanced Search **Journal:** Reflective Practice	172
s22. ("reflective practi*") AND ("education* psycholog*")	**Language**: English	**Interface** Scopus Research Databases **Search Screen:** Advanced Search **Journal:** • Reflective Practice • Educational psychology in practice • Journal of educational psychology • British journal of educational psychology Educational and child psychology • Electronic journal of educational psychology	176
s23. ("reflective practi*") AND ("education* psycholog*")	**Language**: English	**Interface** Scopus Research Databases **Search Screen:** Advanced Search	7, 580
s24. ("educational psychologist") AND ("supervision") AND (reflect* practi*) AND (education* psycholog*) AND ("professional development")	**Language**: English	**Interface** Scopus Research Databases **Search Screen:** Advanced Search	268
s25. ("Reflective practice") AND ("clinical psychologists")	**Language**: English	**Interface** Scopus Research Databases **Search Screen:** Advanced Search	257
s26. ("Reflective practice") AND (counselling psychologist)	**Language**: English	**Interface** Scopus Research Databases	1324

		Search Screen: Advanced Search	
s27. (Reflective practice in educational psychology)	**Language**: English	**Ethos**	304
		Hand search and UEL's repository	6

Appendix B

1. **Literature Review: Critical Summary of Preliminary Synthesis**

Author, Year Title & Country	Methodology and study design	Key findings	Strengths and Limitations	Implications & future research	Definition	Critical appraisal skills programme (CASP) 2018
Carmichael et al. (2020). You're opening yourself to new and different ideas' Clinical psychologists' understandings and experiences of how they use reflective practice in their clinical work: an interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA). UK. **Keywords:** Reflective practice; reflection; psychological therapist; counsellor; psychotherapist; personal and professional development	Qualitative research, data analysis of transcripts was done using IPA. Reflective diary was completed by seven clinical psychologists to facilitate semi-structured interviews.	The findings suggest that reflective processes can help manage the influence of biases, create awareness of more possibilities and determine the direction that clinicians take in practice. Questioning, making sense of one's own thoughts and feelings were keyways. Participants' experiences of reflection showed an openness to uncertainty and a willingness to question and challenge one's own assumptions.	**Strengths:** The study started to address a key criticism of the research literature by understanding how reflective practice is being used in clinical practice as opposed to reporting clinicians' general views of reflective practice (Burgess et al, 2013). **Limitations:** Small scale study, might not be generalisable.	**Implications:** It is important to consider the variety of ways in which reflection is being used in different contexts and how this is contributing to the development and maintenance of competency. This research has implications for how to support psychologists' perspective-taking abilities. This is not only an important skill in the direct work but also in their indirect work. **Future Research:** The findings suggest we should also be seeking to understand reflective practice in the context of personal resilience.	Not specified	The author was judged to have met 11 quality criteria
Andrews (2018). The Role of Reflective Practice for	Qualitative research. The study used a	The findings suggested that reflective practice supports EPs' sense of agency, and	**Strengths:** Andrews' research offers a narrative	**Implications:** A possible mandatory allocation for EP	Reflective practice was defined as the	The author was judged to have 10 strengths, 9

Author, Year Title & Country	Methodology and study design	Key findings	Strengths and Limitations	Implications & future research	Definition	Critical appraisal skills programme (CASP) 2018
Educational Psychologists. UK. **Keywords not mentioned**	grounded theory methodology. It consisted of nine semi-structured interviews, with eight EPs and one final year Trainee EP.	mastery of skills. The author also explained risks and protected factors. Risk factors included how participants identified that supervision and peer supervision was not being prioritised, as well as a lack of supervision models and lack of time. Protective factors included a reversal of some of the risk factors (i.e., supervision and a lack of reflective practice in initial EP training).	of a largely unexplored area of EP practice. This is the beginning of a dialogue which invites further exploration of the role of Reflective practice for EPs. **Limitations:** The research attempted to capture the voice of those who hold viewpoints on Reflective Practice, while using a prescribed definition. The mix of eight EPs and one final year Trainee EP could also have skewed the results	supervision might be included within BPS policy. Opportunities for collaborative reflective practice might be developed in initial EP training (possibly with clinical psychologists) and peer supervision. The potential inclusion of a reflective practice element in the selection process may provide insight and elevate its importance in the recruitment process for Trainee EPs. Use of technology and its further incorporation into reflective practice . **Future Research**: Reflective Practice is a complex, multi-layered issue. A further research in eliciting views of EPs would beneficial. As well as attempts to capture the voice of those who hold different definitions or viewpoints may provide a more balanced insight and	process of learning through and from experiences towards gaining new insights of self-and/or practice (Boud, Keogh & Walker, 1985).	of which were fully satisfactory

Author, Year Title & Country	Methodology and study design	Key findings	Strengths and Limitations	Implications & future research	Definition	Critical appraisal skills programme (CASP) 2018
				further clarity on the role of reflective practice for EPs.		
Kiemle, UK (2008). Clinical psychologists' experience of reflective practice and how this relates to their continuing professional development. UK **Keywords not mentioned**	Qualitative research, data analysis using interpretive phenomenological analysis. It consisted of 16 individual interviews with qualified clinical psychologists.	Suggestion that for many participants, their professional identity is commensurate with a value system that includes critical reflection as an essential part of continuous professional development. Reflective practice aided these participants in theoretical and skills-based reflection. It also enhanced service provision. Participants referred to supervision as the formal space for reflection concerning all aspects of their practice.	**Strengths:** There was clear reference to theories, practice, national and local context, and to CPD. **Limitations:** it would have been helpful to understand reflection and reflective practice with participants' own definition to support further inference of their experiences. It would also have been helpful to have summaries of all of the outcomes.	**Implications:** The study provides evidence of the importance of a safe and supportive space for formal reflection. For example supervision within its role of reflection on action, as well as in the context of trainee EPs. The development of reflective abilities is important in professionals where there is an emphasis on reflective scientist practitioners. Consideration for development opportunities of reflective practice during psychologists' training has implications on post-qualification practice. **Future Research**: The link between reflection and theoretical orientation could be furthered by comparing the difference between psychodynamic, systemic and cognitive behavioural	A mode that integrates or links thoughts and action with reflection. It involves thinking about and critically analysing one's actions with the goal of improving one's professional practice (Imel, 1992)	The author was judged to have 11 quality criteria

Author, Year Title & Country	Methodology and study design	Key findings	Strengths and Limitations	Implications & future research	Definition	Critical appraisal skills programme (CASP) 2018
				orientation. Thematic analysis of psychologists' views may help in widening understanding of that supported and hindered their practice.		
Lilienfeld and Basterfield (2020). Reflective practice in clinical psychology: Reflections from basic psychological science. USA

Keywords: Bias blind spot, cognitive biases, debiasing, Dunning–Kruger effect, introspection, reflective practice | Systemic Literature review. Review question: Is reflective practice consistent with findings derived from basic psychological science, such as social cognition? Data analysis method not discussed. | The review tackles core assumptions of reflective practice. It explores local and national context of professions. Authors acknowledge reflective practice's significance across psychology fields. Review takes a critical stance. It explains that the literature has remained largely disconnected from basic psychological science, especially work on the limitations of (a) introspection as a means of becoming aware of one's biases, (b) self-assessment, and (c) acquiring expertise from experience. | **Strengths:** The authors offer several recommendations to realise potential reflective practice for example conceptualising and operationalising reflective practice research and theorising, including forging closer connections with basic research on social cognition, learning, and clinical judgment/prediction.

Limitations: Method of systemic literature was not clear from the literature review | **Implications:** The provisional but growing body of research on debiasing methods should be drawn on to inform the development of reflective practice techniques to be investigated in future work.
Future Research: Controlled trials of the effectiveness of reflective practice methods should be conducted. Potential effects of such methods should be examined. It may ultimately prove more important to ask, "which reflective practice methods are you using?" | Not specified | The authors were judged to have met 8 quality criteria. |
| Beal et al. (2017). Critical reflection on peer supervision underpinning inter-agency work: EPs working experientially | Qualitative research. Three Educational Psychologists' reflections on the use of reflective teams to provide | Reflection on how reflecting within an inter-agency stimulated and illuminated further reflections for psychologists' supervision. The process of reflective practice in a team prompted | **Strengths:** The study explicitly related reflective practice to supervision. Findings involved implications for both psychologists and the inter-agency. | **Implications:** Peer supervision can be constructed as a method to facilitate and support inter-agency work. Theoretically informed reflections support thinking around the future | Refers to both Lavender (2003) and Schön's reflection | The study was judged to have 8 satisfactory strengths. |

Author, Year Title & Country	Methodology and study design	Key findings	Strengths and Limitations	Implications & future research	Definition	Critical appraisal skills programme (CASP) 2018
with a Youth Offending Service. UK **Keywords:** Inter-agency work; reflective practice; peer supervision; professional identity.	inter-agency work between two EP services and Youth Offending Service (YOS). Data analysis method not discussed.	further reflection-in-action about psychologists' own peer supervision. It also provided reflections on personal and professional engagement with reflective practice.	**Limitations:** The generalisability of findings was limited by the small scale sampling strategy. It would have been helpful if the researchers had given explicit details in relation to the data collection process and recruitment.	practice of EPs engaged with inter-agency work. Proposed model for reflecting teams (Hornstrup et al., 2008) could provide positive reflective space to support relationships, connections and the development of professional practice. **Future Research:** Further work around the role of reflective practice in service delivery in other contexts.		
Kennedy et al. (2018). A relational model of supervision for applied Psychology practice: professional growth through relating and reflecting. UK **Keywords**: Theory-to-practice connections; supervision theory and process; supervisory relationship; relational approaches	Qualitative research. A case study of EPs using the relational model of supervision. Reflective model in inter-agency supervision context. Data analysis method not discussed.	Reflection in this context refers to how aware practitioners are of their own personal feelings, thoughts, values and attitudes, and the degree to which they appreciate how these affect their behaviours and responses when relating to others (Tomlin, Weatherston, & Pavkov, 2014). Use of systemic, psychodynamic and attachment lenses supported the quality of relationship between supervisee and supervisor.	**Strengths:** Demonstration of reflective practice model in supervision. **Limitation:** Methodology processes were not clear. The model may present significant challenges associated with implementing. It requires, on the part of the supervisor, a meaningful degree of self-awareness and insight	**Implications:** Use of Burnham developed the acronym Social Graces (GRRAACCEESS) to represent aspects of difference in beliefs, as well as benefits of psychodynamic ideas **Future Research:** Empirical exploration of the proposition that the quality of the supervisory relationship enhances reflective functioning, and an examination of any related impact on outcomes	Not specified	The study was judged to have 5 satisfactory strengths

Author, Year Title & Country	Methodology and study design	Key findings	Strengths and Limitations	Implications & future research	Definition	Critical appraisal skills programme (CASP) 2018
Fisher et al. (2015). Clinical Psychologists' use of reflection and reflective practice within clinical work. Singapore **Keywords:** Clinical psychology; Professional development; Reflection; Reflective practice; Training	Qualitative interviews with six clinical psychologists currently practicing in Singapore. The interviews were analysed using interpretative phenomenological analysis.	Reflective practice was useful for participants to: better understand themselves; work more closely with their clients; manage challenging clinical situations; be able to be aware of their professional roles; and to maintain appropriate profession and ethical standards.	**Strengths**: Clear description of methodology, and theory and practice **Limitation**: Self-selecting sample and the generalisability of findings is inevitably limited by the small scale sampling strategy used There was a lack of homogeneity in terms of the training backgrounds of the sample, making it difficult to determine the extent to which training impacted on how the participants viewed their current experience of reflective practice.	**Implications:** Reflection and reflective practice were highly valued by the psychologists in this study and were used on a day to day basis. Authors found a focus on training in the development of reflective practice, designed to improve psychologists' practice, was important and highlighted ways that psychologists experience reflection. The experiences of psychologists will need to be better understood to enable the development of theory in the area, and to facilitate the incorporation of reflective practice into the training of psychologists. **Future research:** A focus on the client's experience of these processes would further demonstrate its impact.	Refers to both Lavender (2003) and Schön's (1983) models of reflection	The study was judged to have 10 strengths fully satisfactory.
Marshall (2019). The concept of reflection: a systematic review and thematic synthesis	Systematic review of 14 sources. Data analysis using thematic synthesis. Review question: How	Cognition considered to be the core theme, as it is used to make sense of complex problems and ambiguities. Reflection explores and synthesises multiple ideas and	**Strengths:** Contribution to unexplored area. Provided definition based on synthesis of existing literature.	**Implication:** Provided professionals a definition to explore their process of RP. **Future Research**: Empirical research to validate and	Reflection is careful examination and a bringing together of ideas to create	The author was judged to have 10 strengths satisfactorily met.

Author, Year Title & Country	Methodology and study design	Key findings	Strengths and Limitations	Implications & future research	Definition	Critical appraisal skills programme (CASP) 2018
across professional context. UK **Keywords**: Reflection; synthesis; concept; process; qualitative; definition	does the existing literature explain the concept of reflection across professional context?	perspectives, providing a vehicle through which practitioners explore personal subjectivity e.g., beliefs, meaning, perspective and emotions.	**Limitations:** It would have been useful to have seen all the outcomes considered more.	explain findings from the studies.	new insight through ongoing cycles of expression and re-evaluation.	
Ferreira et al. (2017). Guidelines for reflective practice in psychotherapy: a reflection on the benefits of combining moment-by-moment and phase-by-phase mapping in clinical decision making. USA **Keywords:** reflective practice, therapeutic process, tracking and sequencing	Qualitative research. Three case studies including three female clients over five years by a clinical psychologist. Use of integrating guiding methods including paradigmatic complementarity metamodel and developmental analysis of the psychotherapy process method.	Participants felt moment-by moment and phase-by-phase reflective practice helped them to appreciate that their relationships with clients were dynamic, not static. This helped them to relate to participant capacities and vulnerabilities, as well as psychologists. It looked for structural changes, consolidated gains, and looked at what clients were already capable of. Through the understanding of the developmental and sequential process, there were gains for both clients and the therapist's ability to support them.	**Strengths:** The authors relate to reflective practice in a unique lens - integrating moment-by-moment and phase-by-phase into their practice and seeing how their work and client development evolved. **Limitations:** Authors felt it would have been helpful to have more clear guidance. Linking of findings with discussion more would have been helpful.	**Implications**: The study explains the use of guidelines for reflective practice based on the integration of moment-by-moment and phase-by-phase. This helps in gaining an understanding and change for both the client and the therapist's practice by allowing coordination between a more micro and macro level in the process. **Future Research**: Direct exploration of therapists' experience of using moment-by-moment and phase-by-phase guidelines in reflective practice.	Not specified	The study was judged to have 6 strengths. .
Henegan et al. (2014). Clinical Psychologists' experiences of reflective staff groups	Mixed methodology involving an online	The findings indicated the common practice for psychologists in facilitating reflective staff groups. It	**Strengths:** The large sample size in this study illustrated the commonality	**Implications:** RPG Facilitating psychologists and attendees experiencing similar positive outcomes.	Not specified	The study demonstrated, from the authors' opinion, 8

Author, Year Title & Country	Methodology and study design	Key findings	Strengths and Limitations	Implications & future research	Definition	Critical appraisal skills programme (CASP) 2018
in inpatient psychiatric settings: a mixed methods study. UK . **Keywords:** Reflective Practice Group, Reflection, Staff Groups, Mental Health, Inpatient Psychiatric, Therapeutic Milieu	questionnaire and follow up interviews. The sample consisted of 73 clinical psychologists working in the UK, six of whom were interviewed. Data was analysed using descriptive statistics, content analysis and thematic analysis.	reported similarities between their perceptions of positive outcomes and those of the attendees. Shifts in attitudes included increased compassion and empathy for patients, being more proactive, increased psychological thinking, psychologically informed care plans, more positive interactions with patients. Noted links to psychodynamic, attachment and group theories. Challenges included the group not finding time, space, and management support for reflection when they were overwhelmed	of experience across clinical psychologists **Limitation:** There are limits to the extent to which qualitative themes from a small number of interviews can be generalized and used to explain the questionnaire data. Some of the themes were not explored in depth. It would have helpful to have further details on qualitative methodology for the study. Further explanation of clinicians unwilling and unable to engage would have been helpful.	RPG is supporting psychologists to support other professionals that can help recreate for the patients with whom they work. Implications for further addressing facilitating RPG in training and post qualifications. Training and supervision could be helpful for sharing experiences, emphasizing the relevance of psychodynamic, systemic and group theories, and supporting facilitator reflexivity. **Future Research:** More research is recommended to explore facilitator characteristics, the views of staff teams on reflective staff groups and the impact of these groups on patients.		fully satisfied strengths.

Appendix B

2. Critical Appraisal Skills Programme

Below is the checklist utilised for the assessment of identified papers. I added one additional criterion: Did the researcher provide a definition of reflection/ reflective practice for the purposes of their research?

CASP

Critical Appraisal
Skills Programme

www.casp-uk.net
info@casp-uk.net
Summertown Pavilion, Middle
Way Oxford OX2 7LG

CASP Checklist: 10 questions to help you make sense of a Systematic Review

How to use this appraisal tool: Three broad issues need to be considered when appraising a systematic review study:

- Are the results of the study valid? (Section A)
- What are the results?   (Section B)
- Will the results help locally?   (Section C)

The 10 questions on the following pages are designed to help you think about these issues systematically. The first two questions are screening questions and can be answered quickly. If the answer to both is "yes", it is worth proceeding with the remaining questions. There is some degree of overlap between the questions, you are asked to record a "yes", "no" or "can't tell" to most of the questions. A number of italicised prompts are given after each question. These are designed to remind you why the question is important. Record your reasons for your answers in the spaces provided.

About: These checklists were designed to be used as educational pedagogic tools, as part of a workshop setting, therefore we do not suggest a scoring system. The core CASP checklists (randomised controlled trial & systematic review) were based on JAMA 'Users' guides to the medical literature 1994 (adapted from Guyatt GH, Sackett DL, and Cook DJ), and piloted with health care practitioners.

For each new checklist, a group of experts were assembled to develop and pilot the checklist and the workshop format with which it would be used. Over the years overall adjustments have been made to the format, but a recent survey of checklist users reiterated that the basic format continues to be useful and appropriate.

Referencing: we recommend using the Harvard style citation, i.e.: *Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (2018). CASP (insert name of checklist i.e. Systematic Review) Checklist. [online] Available at: URL. Accessed: Date Accessed.*

CASP
Critical Appraisal
Skills Programme

Section A: Are the results of the review valid?

1. Did the review address a clearly focused question?

Yes ☐
Can't Tell ☐
No ☐

HINT: An issue can be 'focused' In terms of
- the population studied
- the intervention given
- the outcome considered

Comments:

2. Did the authors look for the right type of papers?

Yes ☐
Can't Tell ☐
No ☐

HINT: 'The best sort of studies' would
- address the review's question
- have an appropriate study design (usually RCTs for papers evaluating interventions)

Comments:

Is it worth continuing?

3. Do you think all the important, relevant studies were included?

Yes ☐
Can't Tell ☐
No ☐

HINT: Look for
- which bibliographic databases were used
- follow up from reference lists
- personal contact with experts
- unpublished as well as published studies
- non-English language studies

Comments:

CASP
Critical Appraisal
Skills Programme

4. Did the review's authors do enough to assess quality of the included studies?

Yes ☐
Can't Tell ☐
No ☐

HINT: The authors need to consider the rigour of the studies they have identified. Lack of rigour may affect the studies' results ("All that glisters is not gold" Merchant of Venice – Act II Scene 7)

Comments:

5. If the results of the review have been combined, was it reasonable to do so?

Yes ☐
Can't Tell ☐
No ☐

HINT: Consider whether
• results were similar from study to study
• results of all the included studies are clearly displayed
• results of different studies are similar
• reasons for any variations in results are discussed

Comments:

Section B: What are the results?

6. What are the overall results of the review?

HINT: Consider
• If you are clear about the review's 'bottom line' results
• what these are (numerically if appropriate)
• how were the results expressed (NNT, odds ratio etc.)

Comments:

CASP
Critical Appraisal
Skills Programme

7. How precise are the results?

HINT: Look at the confidence intervals, if given

Comments:

Section C: Will the results help locally?

8. Can the results be applied to the local population?

Yes ☐
Can't Tell ☐
No ☐

HINT: Consider whether
- the patients covered by the review could be sufficiently different to your population to cause concern
- your local setting is likely to differ much from that of the review

Comments:

9. Were all important outcomes considered?

Yes ☐
Can't Tell ☐
No ☐

HINT: Consider whether
- there is other information you would like to have seen

Comments:

10. Are the benefits worth the harms and costs?

Yes ☐
Can't Tell ☐
No ☐

HINT: Consider
- even if this is not addressed by the review, what do you think?

Comments:

Appendix C

Interview Questions

Introduction

Thank you for being willing to give your time and insightful contributions to this research!

Opening scripts: really looking forward to hearing your understanding of reflective practice, your general experience and view of RP. I have two Pre-reflection questions to ask following seven descriptive questions are with a view to contextualising the research.

Pre-reflection

Q1 What interested you in taking part in this research?

Q2 What's your view/experience of reflective practice?

RQ	Research question	Semi-structured interview question
1	**What do the terms reflection and Reflective Practice mean to EPs?**	**Q1: How would you describe term reflective practice in EP role?** *Prompt:* what is your experience of using reflective practice in your professional practice? Do use the term reflective practice?
		Q2: What professional importance does reflective practice have for you? *Prompts:* Is there usefulness of reflective practice to the service/ organisation within which you work? Do you think your use of reflective practice will/has changed in your role as an EP?
2	**What part do reflection and Reflection Practice play in EP's practice?**	**Q3: What are some facilitative factors influenced you to use reflective practice in your EP role?** *Prompt:* When did you notice yourself reflecting? Was RP something you considered when become EP or something that was important to you before?
		Q2 What professional importance does reflective practice have for you? *Prompt:* Where have/do your personal ideas about RP come from? Is there usefulness of reflective practice to the service/ organisation within which you work?

3	**What approach to reflection and Reflective Practice do EPs take?**	**Q5 Is there a particular model/framework or tool of reflective practice or reflective practice process that you use?** *Prompts:* What method do you use to reflect on your work? When do you find yourself reflecting?
4	**Does reflective practice change over time for individual EPs?**	**Q4 How has reflective practice influenced your development over the years?** *Prompts:* Has there been influence to your professional development? Has there been influence to your EP practice/client work? How do you think your client experience your reflection?
		Q6 What helps and hinders your professional reflective practice?
		Q7 What would further help you to develop your reflective practice? *Prompts:* Do you think reflective practice could be further developed within the profession?

Finally: Anything you would like to add that's not been covered?

Debrief: What's it been like reflecting back over your experience of reflection?

Ending: I will send a debrief letter for further information via email

Appendix D

Development of Interview Scripts Created Using the Review of Existing Literature

	Item	Reference
1.	How would you describe term reflective practice in the EP role?	*Reflective practice is not easily defined* (Lilienfeld & Basterfield, 2020; Carmichael et al., 2020; Andrews, 2018; Kiemle, 2008; Fisher, et al., 2015, 2015; Heneghan et al., 2014 & Marshal 2019).
2.	What professional importance does reflective practice have for you?	*Reflection is regarded as relevant for psychologists in training and everyday practice* (BPS 2008, 2019, HCPC, 2015 2019 Anderson, Knowles, & Gilbourne, 2004; Fisher et al, 2015; Gates & Senediak, 2017; Lavender, 2003)
3.	What are some facilitative factors that influenced you to use reflective practice in your EP role?	*Reflection supported both professional and personal experiences* (BPS 2008, 2019, HCPC 2019) Shotter & Gergen, 1989 and Winslade 2002 in Beal et al., 2017)
4.	How has reflective practice influenced your development over the years?	*Literature suggested reflection occurs in all timeframes* (Andrews, 2018)
5.	Is there a particular model/framework or tool of reflective practice or reflective practice process that you use?	*It is not clear how reflective practice is practiced by psychologists in everyday situations. Limited research to date.* (Lilienfeld & Basterfield, 2020; Marshall, 2019; Carmichael, 2018; Andrews, 2018).
6.	What helps and hinders your professional reflective practice?	*There is a need for wider understanding of what supports and hinders reflection* (Kiemle 2008).
7.	What would further help you to develop your reflective practice?	*Lack of studies to date* (Andrews, 2018, Marshall, 2019)

Appendix E

Pilot Interview Feedback Form

<u>**Comments/Feedback on the interview (pilot)**</u>

- Did you find the interview too long/too short/ about right? **45 minutes to an hour was a little difficult to find time for in my diary but was about right to discuss the interview questions.**

- Did you have sufficient information about the aims of the research study prior to asking part in the interview? **Yes**

- Was the procedure clearly explained to you? If no, please comment.
  Yes – in writing and verbally again at the beginning of the interview.

- Were you able to answer the question in sufficient depth?
  Yes

- Space is provided below for any other personal feedback
  It may be helpful to have a visual /print out of the interview questions as a reminder whilst answering. Use of professional more.

Thank you for your time and participation!

If you any concerns about your interview today please do not hesitate to contact me or alternatively raise your concerns with a colleague or your supervisor. As a student at University of East London, I am working under the supervision of Dr Mary Robinson and any concerns could also be raised with her.

Contacts for further information:
Sherly O'Hara: U1816817@uel.ac.uk
Dr Mary Robinson: Email: M.Robinson@uel.ac.uk
or
Chair of the School of Psychology Research Ethics Sub-committee: Dr Tim Lomas, School of Psychology, University of East London, Water Lane, London E15 4LZ.
(Email: t.lomas@uel.ac.uk)

Appendix F

Information Sheet

Title of the Study:
Educational Psychologists' Experience and Perceptions of Reflective Practice

Researcher:

Sherly O'Hara, trainee Educational Psychologist in University of East London
E-mail: u1816817@uel.ac.uk
Date: 12.06.2020

Invitation to participate in this research

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others, if you wish. Do not hesitate to ask for clarification or further information, if necessary. Thank you for reading this.

What is the purpose of the study?

The proposed study aims to explore qualified Educational Psychologists' experiences and perceptions of Reflective Practice (RP).

Primary purpose of research

a) Given the lack of research exploring RP from the perspective of an EP, it is hoped that this study can make insightful contributions to the existing body of literature and provide a further understanding of the phenomenon of RP.
b) To contribute to EP training objectives in structuring input on the most useful approaches to RP in the profession.

What will taking part in interview portion of the study involve?

It will involve a confidential interview (approximately 45 minutes of your time in total), on one occasion. The interviews will be recorded, transcribed, and completely anonymised. In the interview, you will be asked open questions to explore your experiences and perceptions of reflective practice, and how this may link to your continuing professional development. This research is focused on learning from the experiences of practising EPs. The interviews will take place at a time and day that best suits you.

All information collected from your interview will be fully anonymised and kept under the guidance of GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation)

What will happen to the results of the study?

The findings will be written up and submitted to the University of East London as a thesis for a Professional Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology and an academic journal for potential publication. Your data will be completely anonymised. You will be asked if you would like to receive a summary of the results. All the findings will be reported anonymously. As evidence for this research, and in order to allow them to potentially contribute to future research, transcripts will be kept in a locked filing cabinet for up to five years after completion of thesis under University guidelines and in accordance with GDPR potentially contribute to future research. It is anticipated that the findings will be available by spring 2021. The researcher would also be willing to attend team meetings to feedback the results.

How do I agree to participate?

If you would like to confirm your participation, please complete the attached demographic and written consent forms.

Any other questions?

Please do not hesitate to get in touch if you have any other questions about the study. You will have time to ask questions before and after the interviews. Alternatively, you can ask questions by e-mail. Contact details are given above. If you email personal information, please be aware the email addresses are not secure.

Best wishes,
Sherly O'Hara (Trainee EP Year Two)
University of East London
Stratford Campus
Water Lane London, E15 4LZ
email: u1816817@uel.ac.uk

Appendix G

Consent Form

Title of the project: Educational Psychologist Experiences and Perceptions of Reflective Practice.

Name of researcher: Sherly O'Hara
Affiliation: University of East London
Name of the research supervisor: Mary Robinson
Affiliation: Dept of Professional Doctorate in Educational and
Child Psychology

Please tick

♦ I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet dated 12/06/20 for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

♦ I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.

♦ I understand that the study will be written up for potential publication in an academic journal, but only in an anonymous form, from which no individual or psychology services can be identified.

♦ I understand that the outcome of this research may be offered to educational psychology services but that there is no obligation in terms of any actions identified as appropriate.

♦ I can receive a summary of the findings if I wish.

I agree to take part in the above study
Name of participant (print)　　　　　Date　　　　　　　　　　signature

Statement by Researcher
I have explained this project and the implications of participation in it to this participant without bias and I believe that the consent is informed and that they understand the implications of participation.   Name of Researcher (print)　　　Date　　　　　　　　signature

Appendix H

Demographics Form

Educational Psychologists' Experience and Perceptions of Reflective Practice
Thank you for being willing to give your time and insightful contributions to this research!

Your Information

Please select your highest level of experience in Educational Psychology:	
	Educational Psychologist
	Senior Educational Psychologist
	Principal Educational Psychologist
	Retired/Semi-Retired Educational Psychologist
	Other (please specify)
Comment:	

What form of qualification in Educational Psychology do you have?	
	Master's Degree
	Professional Doctorate (completed)
	Other (please specify)
Comment:	

How many years have you worked as an Educational Psychologist?	
	0-2 years qualified
	3-5 years qualified
	6-8 years qualified
	9-12 years qualified
	13-15 years qualified
	More than 15 years qualified

What is the nature of your Educational Psychologist practice ? (please select multiple, if require)	
	LA
	NHS
	Locum
	Independent company
	Other (please specify)
	Part time
	Full time
Comment:	

Other

I am happy to be contacted about participation in the above study

Name:……………………………………….

Email:……………………………………..

Contact no:……………………………..

The best time to contact me is ……………….

 I would prefer to be contacted via phone/e-email (please delete)

Thank you!

Appendix I

Reflection Using Braun & Clarke's (2013) Reflective Questioning

Pre-reflection : my own preparation involved by revising attuned principles, reviewing semi structured questions and ensuring technology set up. Sending a reminder to participant and checked consent and demographic form. Used scripts for the start of the interview to give consistency of opening to all participant including asking for any further question they might have about interview and research, as well as time available to us.				
Celebration (What pleases me about this event?): planning helped me to devise the interview. It helped me to feel confident about the structure of question and the interaction I am going to have. I loved hearing about participant experience and learned so much about reflection. It helped me realise that I chose a topic of interest for research				
How does the participant make sense of their experience? *Why might they be making sense their experience in this way (and not another way)?*	*In what different ways do they make sense of the topic discussed?* *How 'common sense' is their story?*	*How would I feel if I was in that situation? (is this same or different to how participant feel, and why that might be)*	*What assumption they make in talking about the world?*	*What kind of world is revealed through their account?*
Donald's many years of experience, being part of RPG, supervising multi-professionals and his personality, appeared to be playing a role in his current thoughts. Contributed factors could be him feeling that his experiences were distinctive and wide ranging in his EP role. Donald also explained that his training on reflective practice had, so far, been implicit As a researcher, I was really interested in the links he made. Although they did make me wonder if it was the kind of work someone did that may dominate their reflection.	There are common themes that relate with other EPs that I interviewed. However, dominant themes came from his current role and experience as part of RPG, as well as challenges he appears to face. That does make sense as reflection was a great part of his EP role.	I felt there was a lot of description of one kind of practice of reflection. I would have liked more examples. I would have liked Donald to talk more about his personality and how that's influencing him. Donald gave far more I anticipated. Even so, we are different from each other in how we approach and learn about reflection. It was incredible how much I learned and felt inspired by his learning and growth in reflection.	Donald has a leadership role. He described how his management role has given him a responsibility to model reflective practice. If people are always thinking from their context, how can I as a professional truly. listen, experience and get the best out it?	He spoke enthusiastically and gave good examples. He explained that his reflective practice is more of state of mind for him. He anticipated the future growth of reflective practice in the EP profession due to research like mine. He related uniquely to the EP role and phases that he gone through in his practice. Donald's interview definitely inspired me to seek to be different in my role.

Appendix J

Participant Debrief Letter

School of Psychology
University of London
London

Date 2/07/2020
Subject: Debrief Letter

Thank you for your willingness to participate and giving your valuable time to explore further research in reflective practice. The aim of the study is to explore 'Educational Psychologists Experiences and Perceptions of Reflective Practice'.
Please know all the information collected from your interview will be kept confidentially using GDPR policy. The data will be transcribed and fully anonymised so that nothing can be identified. You have up right to withdraw up until the point of transcription (three weeks after the interview date).

The research findings will be written up and submitted to the University of East London as a thesis for the Professional Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology. It will also be submitted to a relevant academic journal for consideration. Anonymised data will be kept secured for five year as evidence and to contribute towards future studies on the same topic. It is anticipated that the findings will be available by autumn 2021. I will also be willing to attend meetings with research participants and their teams to feedback the results.

If you would like to discuss any issues that may have arisen as a result of the research I would be willing to explore these with you. If you have any concerns about your interview today please do not hesitate to contact me or alternatively raise your concerns with a colleague. As a student at University of East London, I am working under the supervision of Dr Mary Robinson and any concerns could also be raised with her. You may also want to contact relevant services like the Association of Educational Psychologists (AEP), the Division of Educational and Child Psychologists (DECP), the British Psychological Society (BPS) and Mind (a general mental health organisation).

Contacts for further information:

Sherly O'Hara: U1816817@uel.ac.uk
Dr Mary Robinson: M.Robinson@uel.ac.uk **or**
Chair of the School of Psychology Research Ethics Sub-committee: Dr Tim Lomas, School of Psychology, University of East London, Water Lane, London E15 4LZ.
(Email: t.lomas@uel.ac.uk)

Appendix K

Interview Transcript

1   **Educational psychologists' Experience and Perception of Reflective practice**

2   *participant three: 16th June 2020 12:30-1:30 pm*

3   **Donald's transcript**

4

5   00:00 – 00:40

6   **Researcher**: You will get a message on your screen saying you're being recorded. Of course, if you

7   want to see the privacy policy, you go ahead and see it. Don't press 'dismiss' because that message

8   will remain for the whole time.

9

10   [*pause to fix frozen video image problem*]

11

12   **Donald**: Alright, yeah I can hear you

13

14   00:55 – 02:23

15   **Researcher**: I have seven semi-structured questions. But we can be flexible with them. Before I ask

16   them, I do have a kind of pre-questions to create a space for reflective practice. **The first question is**

17   **what interested you in taking part in this project?**

18

19   **Donald**: Because *I am part of a reflective practice group among a few colleagues here at work* and

20   prior to C19 we met once a month and we would, we would have kind of a semi structured format to

21   the the meeting where we would just discuss, not, we wouldn't discuss case work but *we would*

22   *discuss kind of more how organization issues would impact in our work and our emotional and*

23   *psychological aspects of our of ourselves.* And having to support each other and *we would find*

24   *ourselves supporting each other in terms of looking at the things that we can change, that, the things*

25   *that we can't and kind of the wisdom to know the difference as it were.* But *many of the issues we will*

26   *discuss in our reflective practice, they would be kind of ongoing issues because their ongoing issues*

27   *in the organization as a whole.*

28

29   02:23 – 05:02

30   **Researcher**: So it's your experience of reflective practice and being part of a reflective practice group

31   that motivated you to contact me. Thank you for that. Is there anything else that you

32   thought?

33

34   **Donald**: *I would have an interest in thinking about why I do things and the way I do them, also the*

35   *fact that I my role* is the role I have here is I would support, *I don't have a generic role like working*

36   *through a case waiting list,* I would have more of a kind of a consultant at advice role where I give

37   clinical advice and clinical direction to about four or five different teams of workers who will be at

38   kind of social care worker level, who will be doing family work in the home, and I will do a lot of

39   joint work with them. Joined home visits, consultation advice to them, around clinical advice and

40   cynical directional cases. *It's worth having so many contacts with people, it has prompted me to think*

41   *about the way I work versus how maybe more generic colleagues work or colleagues in more generic*

42   *roles because very often my colleague, the people I support would say that my input are kind of an*

43   *early stage would help them to to kind of shortcut the work that they do an rather than going through*

44   *ABC? They might go from A-Z much faster, so that has prompted me to kind of reflect on the value of*

45   *a more front loaded psychology important role.*

46

47   **Researcher**: I think you already talked about the next the preamble question I had, which is about

48   **your views and experience of reflective practice and how you see that**. I can already hear that you

49   said that it's to do with experience and a different approach, working with different people.

50

51   **Donald**: But it's also *it's also about being part of reflective practice group, and validates among*

52   *peers what you're maybe thinking yourself*. Because of the fact that we are solo operators, we manage

53   our own caseload and we're kind of in danger of kind of working in a little silo all by ourselves. *Being*

54   *part of reflective practice group helps to validate the kind of the feelings and the reactions that*

55 *organizational idiosyncrasies can have, how they can impact on you. You're kind of, you know you*
56 *come away from the group thinking well, I'm not going crazy, it's just the impact of the organization*
57 *because everybody else is feeling the same.*

59 05:02 – 08:11
60 **Researcher**: Yeah. Yeah, OK, I think you already starting to us on some of the questions that I'm
61 gonna ask. Even though you have answered, I will still ask the question in case there's something else
62 that you wanted to say. The first question is, how do you describe term reflective practice in your
63 EP role?

65 [*pause because of sound problems*]

67 **Donald**: How would I describe the term reflective practice? *First of all I would see it as a necessity. I*
68 *see it as part of CPD. It would be it is valid to record it as for CPD points as it is, or the CPD points*
69 *in your BPS kind of register.* It's well, it's not personal therapy. *It certainly contributes towards*
70 *personal development and professional development, but I feel that being part of a group, the element*
71 *of feeling validated is very important in a reflective practice group and, because I work not an EP*
72 *setting like, this could be a setting,* I work as part of the [*redacted to protect anonymity*], which is like
73 [*redacted to protect anonymity*] *I feel that the issue in reflective practice are common across many*
74 *settings that they were to do with the profession right or the the type of work that we do. So I think*
75 *that if I was to join a reflective practice group, say in any team in* [*redacted to protect anonymity*] *or*
76 *any EP team in* [*redacted to protect anonymity*], *similar issues would arise.*

78 *Organization organizational variables and how they impact on the work but also kind of the eternal*
79 *struggle between say the professional aspect of a big organization and the background administrative*
80 *aspects of an organization.* The more, I just feel sometimes that the bigger at the organization is there
81 more,, the more gaps there are between farm and fork between the likes of us, on the frontline,
82 frontline practitioners and people in kind of backroom backroom background rolesm *even though they*
83 *are important, that they can lose touch with the realities of what they professionals on the ground.*
84 Because they are more concerned with kind of budgetary issues or administrative issues, or forward
85 planning issues where they are very important, they can sometimes cloud the importance or the
86 impact of frontline work.

88 08:11 – 09:00
89 **Researcher**: So you would describe reflective practice in terms of the nature of the EP role
90 and office use in EP roles.

92 **Donald**: *In the group* I'm in in there would be a mixture of an EPs and clinical people cause after the
93 recruitment here [*redacted to protect anonymity*] allows for the recruitment, the criteria, so you can
94 have clinical education and counselling. *So I supervise a counselling psychologist and many of my*
95 *colleagues are both educational and clinical, so there's a more of a mixture.* But that's why I'm saying
96 that the issues are the same. *It's not just pertaining to be an EP. It's how the organizational variables*
97 *impact on psychology, whether it's clinical counsellor or educational.*

99 09:00 – 11:11
100 **Researcher**: OK, the next one is, what are some facilitative factors influence you to use reflective
101 practice in your EP roll?

103 **Donald**: What are the factors that influence it? First of all, *the need for, as I said already, the need for*
104 *validation. The need to separate, help you separate, how the work impacts on you personally and to*
105 *separate then the demands of the you* know the, how can I put it, *the gap between the demands of the*
106 *organization and the resources that are made available to meet those demands. But I keep coming*
107 *back to feeling validated. For me it has been a major benefit of being part of a reflective practice*
108 *group.* Not only that, but *validation both in terms of my professional practice in terms of validated in*
109 *terms of the experience of a psychologist,* again because of it's a mixed group and not necessarily EP

110 or clinical, but *being validated in that role and validated then in terms of kind of on a personal level*
111 *and in terms of the experience that I have and also to add that the reflective practice group that I'm*
112 *part of would be a mixture of, it's a technical and educational. But also clinical people working in*
113 *both child and on the other mental health side. It's reassuring to see that sometimes that they have the*
114 *same issues that we have even though they work as part of a kind of team* and a team that's headed up
115 by a psychiatrist and they're more kind of protected because they're not a walk-in service in the same
116 way as that as the same way is that we are here in our community [*redacted to protect anonymity*] as
117 in anybody can make a referral parent, school, social worker. Anybody.

118

119 11:11 – 12:17
120 **Researcher**: The next one is just, you know you already talked about, when you use
121 reflective practice, but I'm just wondering, when did you more notice yourself using reflective
122 practice? When would be the time when you use reflective practice?

123

124 **Donald**: Well, like I said, *we scheduled reflective practice meeting every month,* but what that is, the
125 validation impact of that kind of almost has an nearly lasts until the next meeting. *So the coming away*
126 *with the feelings of being validated and being able to have that in mind when coming when dealing*
127 *with a difficult case or a difficult situation at work. Being able to reflect back as it were on the*
128 *reflective practices session is helpful in terms of being like a shot in the arm too help keep going as it*
129 *were.* If you know what I mean.

130

131 12:17 – 13:08

132

133 **Researcher**: <u>Is reflective practice is something you considered when you became an EP or is it</u>
134 <u>something that was always important to you?</u>

135

136 **Donald**: *It's always been important to me,* but I suppose, until it was more *formally organized here*
137 where I work, the nearest I would have got to more formally *reflective practice would being kind of*
138 *peer relations, having supportive colleagues here.* So again, just as in every organization, every team,
139 some people kind of click more with others, so there would be one or two people I would be would be
140 kind of would have clicked with well, both as colleagues and on a personal level and we would have
141 a mixture of reflective practice and peer support. *So, that is continued in parallel with the schedule of*
142 *reflective practice meetings* that we have every month or six weeks or something. Until C19 started.

143

144 *[Pause for 5 seconds]*

145

146

147 13:08 – 15:43
148 **Researcher**: That makes sense. My next question is <u>how is reflective practice influenced your</u>
149 <u>development over the years?</u>

150

151 Donald: *[redacted to protect anonymity]*

152

153 15:43 – 18:48
154 **Researcher**: Is there anything else that has influenced your reflective practice over the years?

155

156 **Donald**: Well, *it's always just experience, just the issues that come up with the longer I'm in*
157 *their job and I suppose the fact that I've kind of taken on different roles over the years. I've moved*
158 *kind of organically, the post I've had kind of developed organically over the role over the years.* It's
159 not a generic post, as in working through a waiting list is more of a clinical advice and consultant role.

160

161 So my approach would be more of a kind of a consultant / clinical advice role *[redacted to protect*
162 *anonymity].* So because I'm working in a different way than a generic role and I have to be mindful of
163 how the advice *I'm giving impacts on people who are colleagues, just giving advice to their parents*
164 *and children who are more directly clients. And been mindful of the realities of their work, the*

165 *realities of the constraints on their work*, either through legislative stuff like social workers and
166 maybe the constraints that they have on their work. *So having to be mindful of how I give advice to*
167 *them so that it maintains credibility with them*. But *also I have to be realistic about the context and*
168 *the constraints that they work in*. I don't know if that makes sense to you?
169
170 **Researcher**: It does make sense what you're saying, because I think you linked with working with
171 different professionals.
172
173 **Donald**: I I wanted wanted also added to *my reflective practice, it is is it influences and shapes not the*
174 *advice I gave but how I give the advice*. I could be working with a young social worker who may be
175 very good and so on, but they're relatively new and the profession and I might know from my
176 experience how a particular case is going to go that they have working right there there, there, there,
177 there, the caseworker. *So I have to be mindful of not of having to give advice to them in a way that*
178 *doesn't make them feel overwhelmed by the fact that I am around longer than they are, and I know*
179 *how the case is going to*. I know, *can guess the direction of at the case from previous experience, so*
180 *we have to be mindful or reflective about how I give advice or that they're not overwhelmed and also*
181 *that they will value the advice I gave that they will come back to me again because, they may not be*
182 *ready for a particular piece of advice*. Or if I overload them, they may not come near me again,
183 whereas I have to kind of give it to them in bits and pieces.
184
185 18:48 – 21:14
186 **Researcher**: Has your reflective practices been influenced by the context and you being part of a
187 reflective group where you get the validation?
188
189 **Donald**: *The context would be both organizational and would also be the people, the people I work*
190 *With*. But it would also be related to the discipline and working with as well and the level of the
191 person within the discipline, so if there is social worker, a basic grade social worker or other team
192 leader or whether there is a social care worker who is brand new or very experienced. So I have to be
193 mindful of *when I'm giving my clinical advice that I'm not I don't allow myself to slip into the role of*
194 *being the line manager with that person because they would have their own separate line*
195 *management structure I have to reflect on what's their stuff and what's my stuff, to put it very bluntly*.
196
197 Again where reflective practice comes in where where I give advice to say a case worker and I would
198 have to kind of add in a little rider to that to say, '*well the advice I'm giving you, your line manager*
199 *may not agree with this, but I'm still giving you the advice anyway*', so they would have to go back
200 and discuss, they may discuss the advice I gave with their line manager in their own supervision. So I
201 have to be mindful, just because I gave advice does not mean it will be acted on in the way I gave it,
202 *and to be able to reflect on that that's not me. It's them*.
203
204 **Researcher**: So the way you give advice has also changed. Like you said, you would have a caveat,
205 and give the opportunity for them to think. So when you give advice to the other profession, that's
206 kind of like supervision role? Or is it just as a peer?
207
208 **Donald**: With the other workers it would be, kind of social care worker level, that would be, I would
209 be giving clinical advice in clinical directional cases, I wouldn't have any line manager
210 supervision there.
211
212 21:15 – 23:11
213 **Researcher**: My next question is about, uhm, you, are there any particular models or frameworks
214 or tools of reflective practice you use for reflective practice and reflective process
215
216 **Donald**: One model that I would I suppose, I can't think of any names at the moment, but I suppose I
217 would just dip in and out of things and because *I suppose I've been around for a number of years, I*
218 *might read something I would identify with, say particular parts off of a model, but not*

219 *actually maybe adopt the whole thing. So maybe having that supports in the collective approach to*
220 *supervision and mixture or reflective practice a mixture of you know* whatever *I've read online and*
221 *choose bits and pieces from that and that kind of a la carte approach. Together, with I suppose my*
222 *own life experiences, both personal and professional. So its like a mixture of everything. It's not a*
223 *kind of very conscious, deliberate activity on my part,* but it's more just when I talk to somebody like
224 yourself, better, *I realize how much I do without thinking about it.* But *I see just as being part of good*
225 *practice and part of just being maybe an experienced EP.* That is something that comes with
226 experience, but I mightn't just I mightn't name it particularly, separately as reflective practice, but it's
227 there. *Coming back to what I said earlier about the the validation aspect of the peer support, the*
228 *reflective practice group. I mean it helps to validate the experience experience part of my what I was*
229 *describing earlier.*
230
231 23:11 – 25:13
232 **Researcher:** It's kind of related to and you might have already given me this answer, Uhm, are there
233 any particular tools that you find yourself using most? How often do you use these tools?
234
235 **Donald:** Can you give me example of of some kind of tools you might might be
236 thinking about?
237
238 **Researcher:** I think it is I think it would be tools that you're using. You spoke in terms of your
239 reflective practice group and you talked about how your experience is sort of a tool, and when you're
240 reading it helps you to reflect.
241
242 **Donald:** *It would be at the being a member of this group. My experience, my my training, my kind of*
243 *having worked in different different organizations and also in different jurisdictions as well so.* But I
244 suppose it's like experience, it just comes organically. And I suppose I suppose because I don't have a
245 like a generic waiting list the *the evidence of the value of my work will be in the fact that I'm in*
246 *constant demand* by four or five different teams of people at social care worker level and they come
247 back to me time and time again. *So I suppose to fact I'm in demand and caused me to reflect on I must*
248 *be doing something right.*
249
250 *[Pause for 10 seconds]*
251
252 **Donald:** That's it thank you.
253 25:13 – 26:56
254 **Researcher:** OK, so I have got three more questions. The next question is <u>what professional</u>
255 <u>importance does reflective practice have for you?</u>
256
257 **Donald:** *Well I think without reflective practice, either formally or informally, by not having being a*
258 *reflective practitioner, I suppose it would apply that there's very little learning going on, as if you*
259 *define learning as a change in behaviour. So, so the fact that my, the evidence that I would be a*
260 *reflective practitioner and would be the fact that when I look back on my career, work experience, I*
261 *have changed my way of working.* Not only in relation to what I've learned professionally, but also *in*
262 *terms of adapting to the different organizations I've been in all the different teams I work with. So I*
263 *suppose I've done almost reflective practice automatically.* But now that I'm talking about it here, I
264 would see the importance of reflective practice. *It has helped me in terms of learning and adaptation.*
265 Or if you if you think of you know, Jean, *Jean Piaget developmental psychology and he talked about*
266 *learning as assimilation accommodation of meditation,* so I'm always mindful of, I always have that
267 in my mind in terms of a lot of the kind of work I do, *not just reflective practice but also*
268 *organizational changes or getting used to a new way of working or a new person or a new family, or*
269 *whatever. So assimilation of kind of a kind of a common accommodation, and adaptation.*
270
271 26:56 – 27:59
272 **Researcher:** You speak with experience there as well as an interest, having experience and doing
273 different kind of roles in different organizations. I wonder <u>if reflective practice is something</u>

274 that you considered when you became an EP or was it something important to you before as
275 well?
276
277 **Donald**: *I suppose it was like the act of reflection was always important. But in terms of there being a*
278 *formal* as I said to you before, *joining the group has made it a more formal activity for me. But I*
279 *would have been always to reflective person anyway. And as well as the nature of our our roles cause*
280 *us to be reflective people, whether we articulate that or not to ourselves and more because of you*
281 *know, the notion of reflective practice has been gaining gain such important over the last number of*
282 *years.* It doesn't mean that it wasn't happening *before that on a more either an informal level or*
283 *individual practitioner level.*
284
285 27:59 – 30:59
286 **Researcher**: My next question kind of brings us a little bit closer to what you were just answering.
287 What helps you and what hinders your professional reflective practice?
288
289 **Donald**: *What helps is being able to, the organization not putting any barriers to me being part of,*
290 *our colleagues being able to set up and run this reflective practice group.* Yeah, uhm, I suppose the
291 barriers that are *kind of common to lots of professions across lots of different organizations in terms of*
292 *the administrative demands or the top down , the top down cascading off administrative stuff,*
293 *circulars, policy changes,* all of that kind of stuff that doesn't actually influence our change the way
294 we work as practitioners. But *can sometimes impact in terms of additional reading load into in terms*
295 *of taking up more mind space in your head.* And the frustration can be then that be because then
296 there's this kind of top down cascading of information, *it can cause frustration, as in there appears to*
297 *be a lack of awareness from by people at the very top about the realities of frontline work.*
298
299 **Donald**: I often think, I don't know *if you ever watched Fawlty Towers* or know the program Fawlty
300 Towers. It would be very un-PC now but it stared John Cleese. And there was a setup where they ran
301 a hotel somewhere in the South of England. It was funny in some ways, but there be a lot of stuff
302 would be very un-PC now. *But a line I always remember from that was that he used to say that the*
303 *hotel would run fine if it wasn't for the guests. In other words that they could get on with, you know*
304 *cleaning the place, making the plans, blah blah blah. But missing the point, of course, that the reality,*
305 *the purpose hotel is to have guests there and I often used that and use that as a reflective analogy*
306 *when thinking about the frustrations of the impact of top down and administrative decisions.* Some of
307 them seem to have the view that the place would run fine if it wasn't for clients or parents or patients,
308 or in your case schools and students. *So that people could get on with making their flow chart and*
309 *their plans and so on and so forth.* But that comes about where you have too many gaps between, as I
310 said before, farm and fork, between the people at the frontline like us and the people up at the top,
311 where there are too many too many links in between and the people at the top lose contact or often
312 lose sight of the realities of the demands of working on the ground like ourselves.
313
314 30:59 - 33:07
315 **Researcher**: Yeah, I think I think we talked about contacts and things being missed in
316 between. I think my next question is quite related to that again and we should think about what would
317 further help your development of reflective practice? And I think you've already touched on some
318 of these points before.
319
320 **Donald**: I think what would help my reflective practice is if it was given *recognition at an*
321 *organizational level. And I don't mean just within Department,* Department level, because we can
322 facilitate that ourselves as colleagues in this professional *All it takes is a decision or the imprimatur*
323 *from the head of Department or principle EP or principle psychologist to go ahead and do it. But in*
324 *terms of giving it and making space for it within an organization. It gives it a a deeper and wider*
325 *validation.*
326
327 **Donald**: That is, *that reflective practice can assume the importance of almost the level of eh, say,*
328 *professional external supervision or external personal development. If it's if it's recognized as an*

329   *organizational level that is part of your, almost, job description. It validates this, both in terms of it as*
330   *an activity in itself, but also in terms of the value that you get from it.* That's recognized by not only
331   within your own Department, but *it's recognized within the Department at kind of higher higher*
332   *administrative levels, and that if they if they if it's recognized at that level, then it's factored into*
333   *Organizational and Department of planning at senior administrative levels.* The planning, if it's
334   recognized that an organization level, *it can be factored in in terms of time to do it, but also in terms*
335   *of, you know, additional resources to do it. Maybe the financial or time away from work* or whatever,

337   33:07 – 35:47
338   **Researcher**: Is there anything else that we haven't covered but you want to speak about
339   reflective practice?

341   **Donald**: Well, *I do think it should be part of, is it part of training courses now. Because it certainly*
342   *wasn't when I was training.* Yeah, so I think yeah, so if it wasn't, that's what I would have added that
343   it should be part of a training course and that, when EPs, then when TEPs going placement, how did
344   they bring that into a placement? Like do they communicate that to their supervisor or how are they
345   able to operate that in placement rather than just having it in a lecture format in college.

347   **Researcher**: I think that one of the reasons I'm exploring this is because it wasn't clear to me, um,
348   and I think from your experience I'm getting some insights about it. But because I'm in the training,
349   there are some things that we have to do a part of our activities. One of the things that we talked about
350   was reflective groups. So we hold reflective groups with school professionals and other professionals.
351   We have peer supervision groups. I can see the importance, you talked about that. As well. And also
352   just in the conversation, how we're talking um, in consultation, is something that I see, and have been
353   inspired to do it with the University work.

355   **Donald**: OK and can I ask you then when you reflect, you know, you have to do like something a
356   placement log book or an activity book. Whatever you call it. Is there a, is there a recognized space in
357   that log book to record reflective practice activities, In other words, is, in other words, is it given that
358   level of importance by your course that it's it's looked for in your trainee logbook?

360   **Researcher**: Yes, there's are different kinds of placement activity, but there are some activities that
361   we do do which are University based. There's something called VERP, that's video enhanced
362   reflective practice related to VIG. In this case they're actually, uhm, helping us to become a
363   reflective practitioners

365   35:47 – 36:18
366   **Donald**: So reflective practice does have a status and acknowledged status by both the training
367   course and your Department that you're with. It has an acknowledged status on the same level as
368   Casework. *That to me would be the real leveller if reflective practice has the same status as fulfilling*
369   *casework, like variety of case work assignments on placement. That's the true measure of validating*
370   *reflective practice. Both organizationally, Departmentally and personally*

372   36:19 - 37:32
373   **Researcher**: I think you said that really well because I think we're not quite there. If I am being very
374   honest.

376   **Donald**: OK, *but I suppose, one thing that maybe your your research might point towards.* It's the
377   equivalent of the days when, say, men and women didn't have equal pay. OK, and the minute equal
378   pay came in it was a big leveller. It took, it solved a lot of issues rather than having to deal with them
379   individually. It wiped a lot of issues off the table overnight, as in, well of men and women are being
380   paid to equally for the same job, well then, a lot of issues that were were allowed to arise in between
381   that pay gap, they were wiped out overnight. And the same way with reflective practice. If that has an
382   equal status, in other words, if reflective practice, is given the same status as the need to develop

383 clinical skills through a variety of case work on placement, that to me is the pinnacle, and that means
384 that reflective practice has arrived.
385
386 37:33 – 39:43
387 **Researcher**: That that's one of my objectives. The purpose of our conversation today, and the
388 research is to also help give some insight about how we can structure University training, comparing
389 with the EP's role and how they see reflective practice, making a maximum connection to practice
390 that way. Hopefully that happens. We do a lot of essay writing and I think the emphasis is more about,
391 we becoming a reflective practitioner and, with that, we go and use different approaches to implement
392 those skills.
393
394 **Donald**: But there's also the issue then of, there's one, it's *one thing you becoming an individual*
395 *practitioner as an individual yourself or your or your training colleagues.* But *there's also the issue of*
396 *that, how that's modelled for you within your Department.* In the same way as you know, an watching
397 experienced practitioners doing clinical work and you're watching, that's been modelled for yet in the
398 same way that reflective practice needs to be modelled by experienced practitioners who may be
399 going through a learning process themselves about becoming reflective practitioners. *Because if they*
400 *are kind of my vintage, it wouldn't have been part of the scene back then, so it's it's a dyadic that's*
401 *going on there, a dyadic that's going on there that experienced people are both modellers and*
402 *learners themselves at the same time as yourselves are learning, being given the resources to be a*
403 *reflective practitioner.* If you know what I mean. And that that h*as resource implications in terms of*
404 *not just time, but also an encouraging a mindset among not only senior people* within a Department,
405 senior EPs or principles level, but also a senior administrative level *within the Department, because*
406 *that has to be factored into resource allocation or, to the Department.*
407
408 **Researcher**: Yeah yeah, I think you're saying that we need to see it as a top down measure.
409
410 39:43 – 41:59
411 **Donald**: Like when yourself, you're a trainee now, but when you are say at a principle or a senior
412 level in years to come, you will have brought all of this with you. *So I think because we're at a*
413 *transition point now at the moment between people like yourself automatically learning there being*
414 *exposed to opportunity for reflective practice in your training course, so you will bring that with you.*
415 But at the moment *we're in a transition point because there are lots of people out there for whom it*
416 *that opportunity wasn't available, formally, within the course, so they have to learn.*
417
418 **Donald**: *It's a bit like people who are digital tourists and digital natives. You would be reflective*
419 *practice native whereas I would be reflective practice tourist in that I've had to learn it formally.* So I
420 think that analogy might fit for people who come to the whole technology later in life, as a tourist like
421 me, but is the same with reflective practice. *I would see you as a reflective practice native because*
422 *you're coming to the work with having, with that as part of your training.* Whereas I've hard to kind
423 of do it in reverse. *I've always been like a reflective practitioner without knowing it, or in an*
424 *incidental way, but the need to make it more formal, you're on the negative side of that.*
425
426 **Researcher**: With that, are you saying that, you talked a little bit about in your experience how
427 context has shaped, uhm, you know, reflective practice for you. Is this context, the new context of the
428 transition that we are seeing and the significance of me doing this research.
429
430 **Donald**: *That is a sense, for me, that's another element of validation, if people like yourself are doing*
431 *this research,* then that's obviously being recognized and accepted by the course, the training course
432 that you're on. So therefore the fact that it's been accepted there, that's a validation of the nature of the
433 work itself, or validation of the activity of reflected practice. *So by you, the very fact that you're doing*
434 *this work is a validation of the nature of the thing that you're doing or that you're researching upon.*
435
436 [Pause for 10 seconds]
437 41:59 - 42:07

438 **Researcher**: Yeah, yeah, that makes sense. Thank you so much for that. I'm going to stop recording
439 and just do a little bit of debrief.

Appendix L

Sample of Initial Coding and Emergent Themes With Transcript

Educational Psychologists' Experience and Perception of Reflective practice		
participant three		
How does participant make sense of their experience? Why might they be making sense their experience this in this way (not another way)? In what different ways do they make sense of the topic discussed? How 'common sense' is their story? How would I feel if I was in that situation? (is this same or different to how participant feel, and why that might be) What assumption they make in talking about the world? What kind of world is revealed through their account?		
Donald's transcript	**Initial coding**	**Emergent themes**
00:00 – 00:40 **Researcher**: You will get a message on your screen saying you're being recorded. Of course, if you want to see the privacy policy, you go ahead and see it. Don't press 'dismiss' because that message will remain for the whole time. [*pause to fix frozen video image problem*] **Donald**: Alright, yeah I can hear you 00:55 – 02:23 **Researcher**: I have seven semi-structured questions. But we can be flexible with them. Before I ask them, I do have a kind of pre-questions to create a space for reflective practice. **The first question is what interested you in taking part in this project?** **Donald**: Because *I am part of a reflective practice group among a few colleagues here at work* and prior to C19 we met once a month and we would, we would have kind of a semi structured format to	Taking part of experience of being in RPG at work.	Own experience reflection in RPG influenced to participate.

the the meeting where we would just discuss, not, we wouldn't discuss case work but *we would discuss kind of more how organization issues would impact in our work and our emotional and psychological aspects of our of ourselves.* And having to support each other and *we would find ourselves supporting each other in terms of looking at the things that we can change, that, the things that we can't and kind of the wisdom to know the difference as it were.* But *many of the issues we will discuss in our reflective practice, they would be kind of ongoing issues because their ongoing issues in the organization as a whole.*	RPG discussion on organisation issues, impact, emotional and psychological aspect of selves. RPG experience of helping each other. Experience of having a wisdom to know the difference of thing can and can't change. RPG discussion ongoing issues of the organisations.	RPG experience of helping each other. RP experience on practice.
02:23 – 05:02 **Researcher**: So it's your experience of reflective practice and being part of a reflective practice group that motivated you to contact me. Thank you for that. Is there anything else that you thought? **Donald**: *I would have an interest in thinking about why I do things and the way I do them, also the fact that I my role* is the role I have here is I would support, *I don't have a generic role like working through a case waiting list,* I would have more of a kind of a consultant at advice role where I give clinical advice and clinical direction to about four or five different teams of workers who will be at kind of social care worker level, who will be doing family work in the home, and I will do a lot of joint work with them. Joined home visits, consultation advice to them, around clinical advice and cynical directional cases. *It's worth having so many contacts with people, it has prompted me to think about the way I work versus how maybe more generic colleagues work or colleagues in more generic roles because very often my colleague, the people I support would say that my input are kind of an early stage would help them to to kind of shortcut the work that they do an rather than going through ABC? They might go from A-Z much faster, so that has prompted me to kind of reflect on the value of a more front loaded psychology important role.* **Researcher**: I think you already talked about the next the preamble question I had, which is about **your views and experience of reflective practice and how you see that**. I can already hear that you said that it's to do with experience and a different approach, working with different people.	Interested in questioning own practice. Role helping other professionals helping RP. Consultant role of an EP helping to reflecting. Prompted to think about the way I work versus how maybe more generic colleagues work. Prompted to reflect on the value psychology based roles.	RP helps in questioning practice. EP role responsibility in helping other professional.

Donald: But it's also *it's also about being part of reflective practice group, and validates among peers what you're maybe thinking yourself*. Because of the fact that we are solo operators, we manage our own caseload and we're kind of in danger of kind of working in a little silo all by ourselves. *Being part of reflective practice group helps to validate the kind of the feelings and the reactions that organizational idiosyncrasies can have, how they can impact on you. You're kind of, you know you come away from the group thinking well, I'm not going crazy, it's just the impact of the organization because everybody else is feeling the same.*	Being part of RPG and validation among peers helps own RP. Being part of reflective practice group helps to validate the kind of the feelings and the reactions that organizational idiosyncrasies can have, how they can impact on you. RPG validates feeling when someone is feeling the same.	Reflection with others validates thinking. Valuing reflective practice with others.
05:02 – 08:11 **Researcher**: Yeah. Yeah, OK, I think you already starting to us on some of the questions that I'm gonna ask. Even though you have answered, I will still ask the question in case there's something else that you wanted to say. The first question is, **how do you describe term reflective practice in your EP role?** [*pause because of sound problems*] **Donald**: How would I describe the term reflective practice? *First of all I would see it as a necessity. I see it as part of CPD. It would be it is valid to record it as for CPD points as it is, or the CPD points in your BPS kind of register.* It's well, it's not personal therapy. *It certainly contributes towards personal development and professional development, but I feel that being part of a group, the element of feeling validated is very important in a reflective practice group and, because I work not an EP setting like, this could be a setting,* I work as part of the [*redacted to protect anonymity*], which is like [*redacted to protect anonymity*] *I feel that the issue in reflective practice are common across many settings that they were to do with the profession right or the the type of work that we do. So I think that if I was to join a reflective practice group, say in any team in* [*redacted to protect anonymity*] or *any EP team in* [*redacted to protect anonymity*], *similar issues would arise.* *Organization organizational variables and how they impact on the work but also kind of the eternal struggle between say the professional aspect of a big organization and the background administrative aspects of an organization.* The more, I just feel sometimes that the bigger at the organization is there more,, the more gaps there are between farm and fork between the likes of us, on the frontline, frontline	RP is a necessity, as part of CPD. It contributes to professional and personal development. Being part of group, the element of feeling validated is very important in RP. The issue of RP are common across many settings. Joining RPG in another profession may have similar issue would arise. Organizational variables impact RP.	RP is a necessity, part of CPD. It contributes to professional and personal development. The common issue for Reflecting across many settings.

practitioners and people in kind of backroom backroom background rolesm *even though they are important, that they can lose touch with the realities of what they professionals on the ground*. Because they are more concerned with kind of budgetary issues or administrative issues, or forward planning issues where they are very important, they can sometimes cloud the importance or the impact of frontline work.	Organisation may lose touch of realities what professional do on the ground.	Organizational variables impact RP.
08:11 – 09:00 **Researcher**: So you would describe reflective practice in terms of the nature of the EP role and office use in EP roles. **Donald**: *In the group* I'm in in there would be a mixture of an EPs and clinical people cause after the recruitment here [*redacted to protect anonymity*] allows for the recruitment, the criteria, so you can have clinical education and counselling. *So I supervise a counselling psychologist and many of my colleagues are both educational and clinical, so there's a more of a mixture*. But that's why I'm saying that the issues are the same. *It's not just pertaining to be an EP. It's how the organizational variables impact on psychology, whether it's clinical counsellor or educational.* **09:00 – 11:11** **Researcher**: OK, the next one is, **what are some facilitative factors influence you to use reflective practice in your EP roll?** **Donald**: What are the factors that influence it? First of all, *the need for, as I said already, the need for validation. The need to separate, help you separate, how the work impacts on you personally and to separate then the demands of the you* know the, how can I put it, *the gap between the demands of the organization and the resources that are made available to meet those demands.* But *I keep coming back to feeling validated. For me it has been a major benefit of being part of a reflective practice group*. Not only that, but *validation both in terms of my professional practice in terms of validated in terms of the experience of a psychologist,* again because of it's a mixed group and not necessarily EP or clinical, but *being validated in that role and validated then in terms of kind of on a personal level and in terms of the experience that I have and also to add that the reflective practice group that I'm part of would be a mixture of, it's a technical and educational.* But also clinical people working in both child and on the other mental health side. *It's reassuring to see that sometimes that they have the same issues that we have even though they work as part of a kind of team* and a team that's headed up by a psychiatrist and they're more kind of protected because they're not a walk-in service in the same way as that as the same	Impact of organisation for group of professions. EP supervising group profession making think wider RP issue. It's not just pertaining to be an EP. It's how the organizational variables impact on psychology, whether it's clinical counsellor or educational. Having someone validate feeling supports RP. Reflection helps you to separate personal impact and professional demand. Reflecting helps on understanding gap between demands of the organisation and resources. Reflection by validation in RPG. Benefit being part RPG feeling are validated.	Supervising multi-profession helping RP Wider RP issue. Valuing RP in personal and professional perspectives. Reflection by validation in RPG.

way is that we are here in our community [*redacted to protect anonymity*] as in anybody can make a referral parent, school, social worker. Anybody.	Validation in terms of being psychologist role and personal level in the experience. Reassurance seeing similar issues faced in RPG.	
11:11 – 12:17 **Researcher**: The next one is just, you know you already talked about, when you use reflective practice, but I'm just wondering, when did you more notice yourself using reflective practice? When would be the time when you use reflective practice? **Donald**: Well, like I said, *we scheduled reflective practice meeting every month,* but what that is, the validation impact of that kind of almost has an nearly lasts until the next meeting. *So the coming away with the feelings of being validated and being able to have that in mind when coming when dealing with a difficult case or a difficult situation at work. Being able to reflect back as it were on the reflective practices session is helpful in terms of being like a shot in the arm too help keep going as it were.* If you know what I mean. 12:17 – 13:08 **Researcher**: <u>Is reflective practice is something you considered when you became an EP or is it something that was always important to you?</u> **Donald**: *It's always been important to me*, but I suppose, until it was more *formally organized here* where I work, the nearest I would have got to more formally *reflective practice would being kind of peer relations, having supportive colleagues here*. So again, just as in every organization, every team, some people kind of click more with others, so there would be one or two people I would be would be kind of would have clicked with well here, both those colleagues and on a personal level and we would have kind of provided a mixture of reflective practice and peer support. *So, that is continued in parallel with the schedule of reflective practice meetings* that we have every month or six weeks or something. Until C19 started. [Pause for 5 seconds]	Reflecting on scheduled RPG. Reflection feeling being validated. Using reflection in another different difficult situation. Keep going on reflection by reflecting back on process of RPG. RP always been important to me. Formally organised at work. RP would be being in peer relation and supportive colleagues. RP with someone who you click more with. On a personal level of reflection and professional. Mixture of RP with Peer support and colleagues.	Reflecting on scheduled RPG. Transferring knowledge Gaining a different perspective. Element of personality. Reflection formally and personally. Mixture of RP opportunities.

13:08 – 15:43 **Researcher**: That makes sense. My next question is **how is reflective practice influenced your development over the years?** Donald: *[redacted to protect anonymity]*		
15:43 – 18:48 **Researcher**: Is there anything else that has influenced your reflective practice over the years? **Donald**: Well*, it's always just experience, just the issues that come up with the longer I'm in their job and I suppose the fact that I've kind of taken on different roles over the years*. *I've moved kind of organically, the post I've had kind of developed organically over the role over the years.* It's not a generic post, as in working through a waiting list is more of a clinical advice and consultant role. So my approach would be more of a kind of a consultant / clinical advice role *[redacted to protect anonymity]*. So because I'm working in a different way than a generic role and I have to be mindful of how the advice *I'm giving impacts on people who are colleagues, just giving advice to their parents and children who are more directly clients. And been mindful of the realities of their work, the realities of the constraints on their work,* either through legislative stuff like social workers and maybe the constraints that they have on their work. *So having to be mindful of how I give advice to them so that it maintains credibility with them.* But *also I have to be realistic about the context and the constraints that they work in*. I don't know if that makes sense to you? **Researcher**: It does make sense what you're saying, because I think you linked with working with different professionals. **Donald**: I I wanted wanted also added to *my reflective practice, it is is it influences and shapes not the advice I gave but how I give the advice.* I could be working with a young social worker who may be very good and so on, but they're relatively new and the profession and I might know from my experience how a particular case is going to go that they have working right there there, there, there, the caseworker. *So I have to be mindful of not of having to give advice to them in a way that doesn't make them feel overwhelmed by the fact that I am around longer than they are, and I know how the case is going to.* I know, *can guess the direction of at the case from previous experience, so we have to be mindful or reflective about how I give advice or that they're not overwhelmed and also*	RP influenced by experience in the role. Having taken different roles over the years helped in RP. EP organically developed in RP over the years. Reflecting on impact colleagues and being mindful of their realities constraints of their work helped reflection. Reflection helps in maintains credibility of advice. Reflection consider realistic context and constrains of their work. RP influences and shapes not the advice I gave but how I give the advice. Helping to give advice according to experience of professional. Helping professionals reflections when they're ready for particular piece of advice.	EP organically developed in RP. New insight. EPs' value RP as a collaborative process Reflecting on own capacity and abilities of reflection

that they will value the advice I gave that they will come back to me again because, they may not be ready for a particular piece of advice. Or if I overload them, they may not come near me again, whereas I have to kind of give it to them in bits and pieces.		
18:48 – 21:14 **Researcher**: Has your reflective practices been influenced by the context and you being part of a reflective group where you get the validation? **Donald**: *The context would be both organizational and would also be the people, the people I work With.* But it would also be related to the discipline and working with as well and the level of the person within the discipline, so if there is social worker, a basic grade social worker or other team leader or whether there is a social care worker who is brand new or very experienced. So I have to be mindful of *when I'm giving my clinical advice that I'm not I don't allow myself to slip into the role of being the line manager with that person because they would have their own separate line management structure I have to reflect on what's their stuff and what's my stuff, to put it very bluntly.* Again where reflective practice comes in where where I give advice to say a case worker and I would have to kind of add in a little rider to that to say, '*well the advice I'm giving you, your line manager may not agree with this, but I'm still giving you the advice anyway', so they would have to go back and discuss, they may discuss the advice I gave with their line manager in their own supervision.* So I have to be mindful, just because I gave advice does not mean it will be acted on in the way I gave it, *and to be able to reflect on that that's not me. It's them.* **Researcher**: So the way you give advice has also changed. Like you said, you would have a caveat, and give the opportunity for them to think. So when you give advice to the other profession, that's kind of like supervision role? Or is it just as a peer? **Donald:** With the other workers it would be, kind of social care worker level, that would be, I would be giving clinical advice in clinical directional cases, I wouldn't have any line manager supervision there.	Context of organisation and people help RP. EP supporting RP of other discipline and working with as well. Reflection highlight different role responsibilities. RP helping in giving advice to reflect and explore further.	Context of organisation and people helped RP. Boundaries of advice in RP. RP to explore further.
21:15 – 23:11 **Researcher**: My next question is about, uhm, you**, are there any particular models or frameworks or tools of reflective practice you use for reflective practice and reflective process**	Collective approach to RP like supervision and mixture RP.	Collective approach to RP

Donald: One model that I would I suppose, I can't think of any names at the moment, but I suppose I would just dip in and out of things and because *I suppose I've been around for a number of years, I might read something I would identify with, say particular parts off of a model, but not actually maybe adopt the whole thing. So maybe having that supports in the collective approach to supervision and mixture or reflective practice a mixture of you know* whatever *I've read online and choose bits and pieces from that and that kind of a la carte approach.* Together, with I *suppose my own life experiences, both personal and professional. So its like a mixture of everything. It's not a kind of very conscious, deliberate activity on my part,* but it's more just when I talk to somebody like yourself, better, *I realize how much I do without thinking about it.* But *I see just as being part of good practice and part of just being maybe an experienced EP.* That is something that comes with experience, but I mightn't just I mightn't name it particularly, separately as reflective practice, but it's there. *Coming back to what I said earlier about the the validation aspect of the peer support, the reflective practice group. I mean it helps to validate the experience experience part of my what I was describing earlier*.	I've read online and choose bits and pieces from that and that kind of a la carte approach. RP with own life experiences, both personal and professional. RP approach not very conscious, deliberate. RP without thinking about it. Part of good practice and maybe experienced EP. Use of RPG as a model for validating experiences.	A la carte approach to RP model Unconscious use of RP models . Use of RPG as a model for validating experiences.
23:11 – 25:13 **Researcher**: It's kind of related to and you might have already given me this answer, Uhm, are there any particular tools that you find yourself using most? How often do you use these tools? **Donald**: Can you give me example of of some kind of tools you might might be thinking about? **Researcher:** I think it is I think it would be tools that you're using. You spoke in terms of your reflective practice group and you talked about how your experience is sort of a tool, and when you're reading it helps you to reflect. **Donald**: *It would be at the being a member of this group. My experience, my my training, my kind of having worked in different different organizations and also in different jurisdictions as well so.* But I suppose it's like experience, it just comes organically. And I suppose I suppose because I don't have a like a generic waiting list the *the evidence of the value of my work will be in the fact that I'm in constant demand* by four or five different teams of people at social care worker level and they come back to me time and time again. *So I suppose to fact I'm in demand and caused me to reflect on I must be doing something right.* *[Pause for 10 seconds]*	Being member of RPG supports reflection. Working in different organisations and jurisdictions. Other finding value in EP work help reinforce RP.	Experiences helps RP Bridging of identity

Donald: That's it thank you.		
25:13 – 26:56 **Researcher**: OK, so I have got three more questions. The next question is **what professional importance does reflective practice have for you?** **Donald**: Well I think *without reflective practice, either formally or informally, by not having being a reflective practitioner,* I suppose it would apply that there's very little learning going on, as if you define learning as a change in behaviour. *So, so the fact that my, the evidence that I would be a reflective practitioner and would be the fact that when I look back on my career, work experience, I have changed my way of working.* Not only in relation to what I've learned professionally, but also *in terms of adapting to the different organizations I've been in all the different teams I work with. So I suppose I've done almost reflective practice automatically.* But now that I'm talking about it here, I would see the importance of reflective practice. *It has helped me in terms of learning and adaptation.* Or if you if you think of you know, Jean, *Jean Piaget developmental psychology and he talked about learning as assimilation accommodation of meditation,* so I'm always mindful of, I always have that in my mind in terms of a lot of the kind of work I do*, not just reflective practice but also organizational changes or getting used to a new way of working or a new person or a new family, or whatever. So assimilation of kind of a kind of a common accommodation, and adaptation*. 26:56 – 27:59 **Researcher**: You speak with experience there as well as an interest, having experience and doing different kind of roles in different organizations. I wonder **if reflective practice is something that you considered when you became an EP or was it something important to you before as well?** **Donald**: *I suppose it was like the act of reflection was always important. But in terms of there being a formal* as I said to you before, *joining the group has made it a more formal activity for me.* But *I would have been always to reflective person anyway. And as well as the nature of our our roles cause us to be reflective people, whether we articulate that or not to ourselves and more because of you know, the notion of reflective practice has been gaining gain such important over the last number of years.* It doesn't mean that it wasn't happening *before that on a more either an informal level or individual practitioner level.*	Without reflective practice, either formally or informally, by not having being a reflective practitioner. Evidence of RP would be change of way working. RP evidence when adapting different teams and organisations. RP helped in terms of learning and adaptation. RP by learning as assimilation and accommodation of meditation. Use of learning as assimilation accommodation of meditation for reflection on work. Act of reflection always been important. Formally being part of a RPG. Always been reflective anyway. Nature of EP role require us to be reflective. Notion of RP was always present even before.	If not reflecting very little learning. RP learning as a change in behaviour Parallel attunement in service delivery RP helped in terms of learning and adaptation. Assimilation and accommodation of meditation in RP. Act of reflection always been important. Always been reflective anyway. Nature of EP role require us to be reflective.

	RP gaining importance last number of years. Before that on a more either an informal level or individual practitioner level.	RP over the years
27:59 – 30:59 **Researcher**: My next question kind of brings us a little bit closer to what you were just answering. **What helps you and what hinders your professional reflective practice?** **Donald**: *What helps is being able to, the organization not putting any barriers to me being part of, our colleagues being able to set up and run this reflective practice group.* Yeah, uhm, I suppose the barriers that are *kind of common to lots of professions across lots of different organizations in terms of the administrative demands or the top down , the top down cascading off administrative stuff, circulars, policy changes,* all of that kind of stuff that doesn't actually influence our change the way we work as practitioners. But *can sometimes impact in terms of additional reading load into in terms of taking up more mind space in your head.* And the frustration can be then that be because then there's this kind of top down cascading of information, *it can cause frustration, as in there appears to be a lack of awareness from by people at the very top about the realities of frontline work.* **Donald**: I often think, I don't know *if you ever watched Fawlty Towers* or know the program Fawlty Towers. It would be very un-PC now but it stared John Cleese. And there was a setup where they ran a hotel somewhere in the South of England. It was funny in some ways, but there be a lot of stuff would be very un-PC now. *But a line I always remember from that was that he used to say that the hotel would run fine if it wasn't for the guests. In other words that they could get on with, you know cleaning the place, making the plans, blah blah blah. But missing the point, of course, that the reality, the purpose hotel is to have guests there and I often used that and use that as a reflective analogy when thinking about the frustrations of the impact of top down and administrative decisions.* Some of them seem to have the view that the place would run fine if it wasn't for clients or parents or patients, or in your case schools and students. *So that people could get on with making their flow chart and their plans and so on and so forth.* But *that comes about where you have too many gaps between, as I said before, farm and fork, between the people at the frontline like us and the people up at the top, where there are too many too many links in between and the people at the top lose contact or often lose sight of the realities of the demands of working on the ground like ourselves.*	Organisation not putting barriers to being part RPG. Organisation supporting RPG. Administrative demands of work presents barriers to RP. Taking up mind space for reflection. Frustration that lack of awareness from managers about frontline realities. Manager understanding the professional role. Too many links in between and the people at the top lose contact or often lose sight of the realities of the demands of working on the ground like ourselves.	Organisation supporting RPG. Reduces work demands facilitate RP Managerial understanding the professional frontline role.

30:59 - 33:07 **Researcher**: Yeah, I think I think we talked about contacts and things being missed in between. I think my next question is quite related to that again and we should think about **what would further help your development of reflective practice**? And I think you've already touched on some of these points before. **Donald**: I think what would help my reflective practice is if it was given *recognition at an organizational level. And I don't mean just within Department*, Department level, because we can facilitate that ourselves as colleagues in this professional. *All it takes is a decision or the imprimatur from the head of Department or principle EP or principle psychologist to go ahead and do it. But in terms of giving it and making space for it within an organization. It gives it a a deeper and wider validation.* **Donald**: That is, *that reflective practice can assume the importance of almost the level of eh, say, professional external supervision or external personal development. If it's if it's recognized as an organizational level that is part of your, almost, job description. It validates this, both in terms of it as an activity in itself, but also in terms of the value that you get from it.* That's recognized by not only within your own Department, but *it's recognized within the Department at kind of higher higher administrative levels, and that if they if they if it's recognized at that level, then it's factored into Organizational and Department of planning at senior administrative levels.*The planning, if it's recognized that an organization level, *it can be factored in in terms of time to do it, but also in terms of, you know, additional resources to do it. Maybe the financial or time away from work* or whatever,	RP recognition at an organizational level would support EP reflection. In terms of giving it and making space for it within an organization. Support gives it a deeper and wider validation. RP can assume the importance in the level external professional and or external personal development. RP part of job description. It validates RP as an activity and value you get from it. Recognition from higher level of organisational and departmental planning for RP. Recognition from that level factored in time, resources or financial support for RP.	RP recognition at an organizational level Support gives it a deeper and wider validation. Anticipation of RP future
33:07 – 35:47		Anticipation of the future of training

Researcher: <u>Is there anything else that we haven't covered but you want to speak about reflective practice?</u> **Donald**: Well, *I do think it should be part of, is it part of training courses now. Because it certainly wasn't when I was training.* Yeah, so I think yeah, so if it wasn't, that's what I would have added that it should be part of a training course and that, when EPs, then when TEPs going placement, how did they bring that into a placement? Like do they communicate that to their supervisor or how are they able to operate that in placement rather than just having it in a lecture format in college. **Researcher**: I think that one of the reasons I'm exploring this is because it wasn't clear to me, um, and I think from your experience I'm getting some insights about it. But because I'm in the training, there are some things that we have to do a part of our activities. One of the things that we talked about was reflective groups. So we hold reflective groups with school professionals and other professionals. We have peer supervision groups. I can see the importance, you talked about that. As well. And also just in the conversation, how we're talking um, in consultation, is something that I see, and have been inspired to do it with the University work. **Donald**: OK and can I ask you then when you reflect, you know, you have to do like something a placement log book or an activity book. Whatever you call it. Is there a, is there a recognized space in that log book to record reflective practice activities, In other words, is, in other words, is it given that level of importance by your course that it's it's looked for in your trainee logbook? **Researcher**: Yes, there's are different kinds of placement activity, but there are some activities that we do do which are University based. There's something called VERP, that's video enhanced reflective practice related to VIG. In this case they're actually, uhm, helping us to become a reflective practitioners	RP added as part of training course.	
35:47 – 36:18 **Donald**: So reflective practice does have a status and acknowledged status by both the training course and your Department that you're with. It has an acknowledged status on the same level as Casework. *That to me would be the real leveller if reflective practice has the same status as fulfilling casework, like variety of case work assignments on placement. That's the true measure of validating reflective practice. Both organizationally, Departmentally and personally*	Real leveller if reflective practice has the same status as fulfilling with variety casework assignment. Validating reflection both organizationally,	Real leveller if reflective practice

36:19 - 37:32 **Researcher**: I think you said that really well because I think we're not quite there. If I am being very honest. **Donald**: OK, *but I suppose, one thing that maybe your your research might point towards*. It's the equivalent of the days when, say, men and women didn't have equal pay. OK, and the minute equal pay came in it was a big leveller. It took, it solved a lot of issues rather than having to deal with them individually. It wiped a lot of issues off the table overnight, as in, well of men and women are being paid to equally for the same job, well then, a lot of issues that were were allowed to arise in between that pay gap, they were wiped out overnight. And the same way with reflective practice. If that has an equal status, in other words, if the if the professional, if they need for reflective practice, is given the same status as the need to develop clinical skills through a variety of case work on placement, that to me is the pinnacle, and that means that reflective practice has arrived.	Departmentally and personally. Research finding may support RP. RP given same status as clinical skills for cases then RP will grow.	
37:33 – 39:43 **Researcher**: That that's one of my objectives. The purpose of our conversation today, and the research is to also help give some insight about how we can structure University training, comparing with the EP's role and how they see reflective practice, making a maximum connection to practice that way. Hopefully that happens. We do a lot of essay writing and I think the emphasis is more about, we becoming a reflective practitioner and, with that, we go and use different approaches to implement those skills. **Donald**: But there's also the issue then of, there's one, it's *one thing you becoming an individual practitioner as an individual yourself or your or your training colleagues.* But *there's also the issue of that, how that's modelled for you within your Department.* In the same way as you know, an watching experienced practitioners doing clinical work and you're watching, that's been modelled for yet in the same way that reflective practice needs to be modelled by experienced practitioners who may be going through a learning process themselves about becoming reflective practitioners. *Because if they are kind of my vintage, it wouldn't have been part of the scene back then, so it's it's a dyadic that's going on there, a dyadic that's going on there that experienced people are both modellers and learners themselves at the same time as yourselves are learning, being given the resources to be a reflective practitioner.* If you know what I mean. And that that h*as resource implications in terms of not just time, but also an encouraging a mindset among not only senior people* within a Department, senior EPs or principles level, but also a senior administrative level *within the Department, because that has to be factored into resource allocation or, to the Department.*	Issue of RP being modelled within Departments. Experienced EP as both modeller and learners of RP will support RP for TEPs. Providing resources and time. Changes in not senior level but departmental for factors of resources allocation.	Experienced EP as both modeller and learners of RP Changes at the departmental level.

Researcher: Yeah yeah, I think you're saying that we need to see it as a top down measure.		
39:43 – 41:59 **Donald**: Like when yourself, you're a trainee now, but when you are say at a principle or a senior level in years to come, you will have brought all of this with you. *So I think because we're at a transition point now at the moment between people like yourself automatically learning there being exposed to opportunity for reflective practice in your training course, so you will bring that with you.* But at the moment *we're in a transition point because there are lots of people out there for whom it that opportunity wasn't available, formally, within the course, so they have to learn.* **Donald**: *It's a bit like people who are digital tourists and digital natives. You would be reflective practice native whereas I would be reflective practice tourist in that I've had to learn it formally.* So I think that analogy might fit for people who come to the whole technology later in life, as a tourist like me, but is the same with reflective practice. *I would see you as a reflective practice native because you're coming to the work with having, with that as part of your training.* Whereas I've hard to kind of do it in reverse. *I've always been like a reflective practitioner without knowing it, or in an incidental way, but the need to make it more formal, you're on the negative side of that.* **Researcher**: With that, are you saying that, you talked a little bit about in your experience how context has shaped, uhm, you know, reflective practice for you. Is this context, the new context of the transition that we are seeing and the significance of me doing this research. **Donald**: *That is a sense, for me, that's another element of validation, if people like yourself are doing this research,* then that's obviously being recognized and accepted by the course, the training course that you're on. So therefore the fact that it's been accepted there, that's a validation of the nature of the work itself, or validation of the activity of reflected practice. *So by you, the very fact that you're doing this work is a validation of the nature of the thing that you're doing or that you're researching upon.* [Pause for 10 seconds]	RP in transition point now at the moment exposed in training. Automatic interest learning about RP. For whom RP opportunity wasn't available, formally, within the course, so they have to learn. Reflective practice native and reflective practice tourist. RP part of training psychologists. Reflective practitioner without knowing it, or in an incidental way. Research as a element of validation RP significance.	RP in transition point Reflective practice native and reflective practice tourist. Opportunities to develop RP Incidental reflective practitioner

41:59 - 42:07 **Researcher**: Yeah, yeah, that makes sense. Thank you so much for that. I'm going to stop recording and just do a little bit of debrief.		

Appendix M

Organising and Cross Checking Codes and Themes Using NVivo

Educational psychologists' Experience and Perception of Reflective practice
participant three: 16th June 2020 12:30-1:30 pm
Donald's transcript

00:00 – 00:40
Researcher: You will get a message on your screen saying you're being recorded. Of course, if you want to see the privacy policy, you go ahead and see it. Don't press 'dismiss' because that message will remain for the whole time.

[pause to fix frozen video image problem]

Donald: Alright, yeah I can hear you

00:55 – 02:23
Researcher: I have seven semi-structured questions. But we can be flexible with them. Before I ask them, I do have a kind of pre-questions to create a space for reflective practice. The first question is what interested you in taking part in this project?

Donald: Because *I am part of a reflective practice group among a few colleagues here at work* and prior to C19 we met once a month and we would, we would have kind of a semi structured format to the the meeting where we would just discuss, not, we wouldn't discuss case work but *we would discuss kind of more how organization issues would impact in our work and our emotional and psychological aspects of our of ourselves.* And having to support each other and *we would find ourselves supporting each other in terms of looking at the things that we can change, that, the things that we can't and kind of the wisdom to know the difference as it were.* But *many of the issues we will discuss in our reflective practice, they would be kind of ongoing issues because their ongoing issues in the organization as a whole.*

02:23 – 05:02
Researcher: So it's your experience of reflective practice and being part of a reflective practice group that motivated you to contact me. Thank you for that. Is there anything else that you
thought?

Donald: *I would have an interest in thinking about why I do things and the way I do them, also the fact that I my role* is the role I have here is I would support, *I don't have a generic role like working through a case waiting list,* I would have more of a kind of a consultant at advice role where I give clinical advice and clinical direction to about four or five different teams of workers who will be at kind of social care worker level, who will be doing family work in the home, and I will do a lot of joint work with them. Joined home visits, consultation advice to them, around clinical advice and cynical directional cases. *It's worth having so many contacts with people, it has prompted me to think about the way I work versus how maybe more generic colleagues work or colleagues in more generic roles because very often my colleague, the people I support would say that my input are kind of an early stage would help them to to kind of shortcut the work that they do an rather than*

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going through ABC? They might go from A-Z much faster, so that has prompted me to kind of reflect on the value of a more front loaded psychology important role.

Researcher: I think you already talked about the next the preamble question I had, which is about your views and experience of reflective practice and how you see that. I can already hear that you said that it's to do with experience and a different approach, working with different people.

Donald: But it's also *it's also about being part of reflective practice group, and validates among peers what you're maybe thinking yourself.* Because of the fact that we are solo operators, we manage our own caseload and we're kind of in danger of kind of working in a little silo all by ourselves. *Being part of reflective practice group helps to validate the kind of the feelings and the reactions that organizational idiosyncrasies can have, how they can impact on you. You're kind of, you know you come away from the group thinking well, I'm not going crazy, it's just the impact of the organization because everybody else is feeling the same.*

05:02 – 08:11

Researcher: Yeah. Yeah, OK, I think you already starting to us on some of the questions that I'm gonna ask. Even though you have answered, I will still ask the question in case there's something else
that you wanted to say. The first question is, how do you describe term reflective practice in your EP role?

[pause because of sound problems]

Donald: How would I describe the term reflective practice? *First of all I would see it as a necessity. I see it as part of CPD. It would be it is valid to record it as for CPD points as it is, or the CPD points in your BPS kind of register.* It's well, it's not personal therapy. *It certainly contributes towards personal development and professional development, but I feel that being part of a group, the element of feeling validated is very important in a reflective practice group and, because I work not an EP setting like, this could be a setting,* I work as part of the *[redacted to protect anonymity]*, which is like *[redacted to protect anonymity]* *I feel that the issue in reflective practice are common across many settings that they were to do with the profession right or the the type of work that we do. So I think that if I was to join a reflective practice group, say in any team in [redacted to protect anonymity]* or *any EP team in [redacted to protect anonymity]*, similar issues would arise.

Organization organizational variables and how they impact on the work but also kind of the eternal struggle between say the professional aspect of a big organization and the background administrative aspects of an organization. The more, I just feel sometimes that the bigger at the organization is there more,, the more gaps there are between farm and fork between the likes of us, on the frontline, frontline practitioners and people in kind of backroom backroom background rolesm *even though they are important, that they can lose touch with the realities of what they professionals on the ground.* Because they are more concerned with kind of budgetary issues or administrative issues, or forward planning issues where they are very important, they can sometimes cloud the importance or the impact of frontline work.

08:11 – 09:00

Researcher: So you would describe reflective practice in terms of the nature of the EP role
and office use in EP roles.

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Donald: *In the group* I'm in in there would be a mixture of an EPs and clinical people cause after the recruitment here [*redacted to protect anonymity*] allows for the recruitment, the criteria, so you can have clinical education and counselling. *So I supervise a counselling psychologist and many of my colleagues are both educational and clinical, so there's a more of a mixture.* But that's why I'm saying that the issues are the same. *It's not just pertaining to be an EP. It's how the organizational variables impact on psychology, whether it's clinical counsellor or educational.*

09:00 – 11:11
Researcher: OK, the next one is, <u>what are some facilitative factors influence you to use reflective practice in your EP roll?</u>

Donald: What are the factors that influence it? First of all, *the need for, as I said already, the need for validation. The need to separate, help you separate, how the work impacts on you personally and to separate then the demands of the you* know the, how can I put it, *the gap between the demands of the organization and the resources that are made available to meet those demands.* But *I keep coming back to feeling validated. For me it has been a major benefit of being part of a reflective practice group.* Not only that, but *validation both in terms of my professional practice in terms of validated in terms of the experience of a psychologist,* again because of it's a mixed group and not necessarily EP or clinical, but *being validated in that role and validated then in terms of kind of on a personal level and in terms of the experience that I have and also to add that the reflective practice group* that I'm part of would be a mixture of, it's a technical and educational. But also clinical people working in both child and on the other mental health side. *It's reassuring to see that sometimes that they have the same issues that we have even though they work as part of a kind of team* and a team that's headed up by a psychiatrist and they're more kind of protected because they're not a walk-in service in the same way as that as the same way is that we are here in our community [*redacted to protect anonymity*] as in anybody can make a referral parent, school, social worker. Anybody.

11:11 – 12:17
Researcher: The next one is just, you know you already talked about, when you use reflective practice, but I'm just wondering, when did you more notice yourself using reflective practice? When would be the time when you use reflective practice?

Donald: Well, like I said, *we scheduled reflective practice meeting every month,* but what that is, the validation impact of that kind of almost has an nearly lasts until the next meeting. *So the coming away with the feelings of being validated and being able to have that in mind when coming when dealing with a difficult case or a difficult situation at work. Being able to reflect back as it were on the reflective practices session is helpful in terms of being like a shot in the arm too help keep going as it were.* If you know what I mean.

12:17 – 13:08

Researcher: <u>Is reflective practice is something you considered when you became an EP or is it something that was always important to you?</u>

Donald: *It's always been important to me,* but I suppose, until it was more *formally organized here* where I work, the nearest I would have got to more formally *reflective practice would being kind of peer relations, having supportive colleagues here.* So again, just as in every organization, every team, some people kind of

click more with others, so there would be one or two people I would be would be kind of would have clicked with well here, both those colleagues and on a personal level and we would have kind of provided a mixture of reflective practice and peer support. *So, that is continued in parallel with the schedule of reflective practice meetings* that we have every month or six weeks or something. Until C19 started.

[Pause for 5 seconds]

13:08 – 15:43
Researcher: That makes sense. My next question is <u>how is reflective practice influenced your development over the years?</u>

Donald: *[redacted to protect anonymity]*

15:43 – 18:48
Researcher: Is there anything else that has influenced your reflective practice over the years?

Donald: Well, *it's always just experience, just the issues that come up with the longer I'm in their job and I suppose the fact that I've kind of taken on different roles over the years. I've moved kind of organically, the post I've had kind of developed organically over the role over the years.* It's not a generic post, as in working through a waiting list is more of a clinical advice and consultant role.

So my approach would be more of a kind of a consultant / clinical advice role *[redacted to protect anonymity]*. So because I'm working in a different way than a generic role and I have to be mindful of how the advice *I'm giving impacts on people who are colleagues, just giving advice to their parents and children who are more directly clients. And been mindful of the realities of their work, the realities of the constraints on their work,* either through legislative stuff like social workers and maybe the constraints that they have on their work. *So having to be mindful of how I give advice to them so that it maintains credibility with them. But also I have to be realistic about the context and the constraints that they work in.* I don't know if that makes sense to you?

Researcher: It does make sense what you're saying, because I think you linked with working with different professionals.

Donald: I I wanted wanted also added to *my reflective practice, it is is it influences and shapes not the advice I gave but how I give the advice.* I could be working with a young social worker who may be very good and so on, but they're relatively new and the profession and I might know from my experience how a particular case is going to go that they have working right there there, there, there, there, the caseworker. *So I have to be mindful of not of having to give advice to them in a way that doesn't make them feel overwhelmed by the fact that I am around longer than they are, and I know how the case is going to. I know, can guess the direction of at the case from previous experience, so we have to be mindful or reflective about how I give advice or that they're not overwhelmed and also that they will value the advice I gave that they will come back to me again because,* they may not be ready for a particular piece of advice. Or if I overload them, they may not come near me again, whereas I have to kind of give it to them in bits and pieces.

18:48 – 21:14
Researcher: Has your reflective practices been influenced by the context and you being part of a reflective group where you get the validation?

Donald: *The context would be both organizational and would also be the people, the people I work With.* But it would also be related to the discipline and working with as well and the level of the person within the discipline, so if there is social worker, a basic grade social worker or other team leader or whether there is a social care worker who is brand new or very experienced. So I have to be mindful of *when I'm giving my clinical advice that I'm not I don't allow myself to slip into the role of being the line manager with that person because they would have their own separate line management structure I have to reflect on what's their stuff and what's my stuff, to put it very bluntly.*

Again where reflective practice comes in where where I give advice to say a case worker and I would have to kind of add in a little rider to that to say, 'well the advice I'm giving you, your line manager may not agree with this, but I'm still giving you the advice anyway', so they would have to go back and discuss, they may discuss the advice I gave with their line manager in their own supervision. So I have to be mindful, just because I gave advice does not mean it will be acted on in the way I gave it, and to be able to reflect on that that's not me. It's them.

Researcher: So the way you give advice has also changed. Like you said, you would have a caveat, and give the opportunity for them to think. So when you give advice to the other profession, that's kind of like supervision role? Or is it just as a peer?
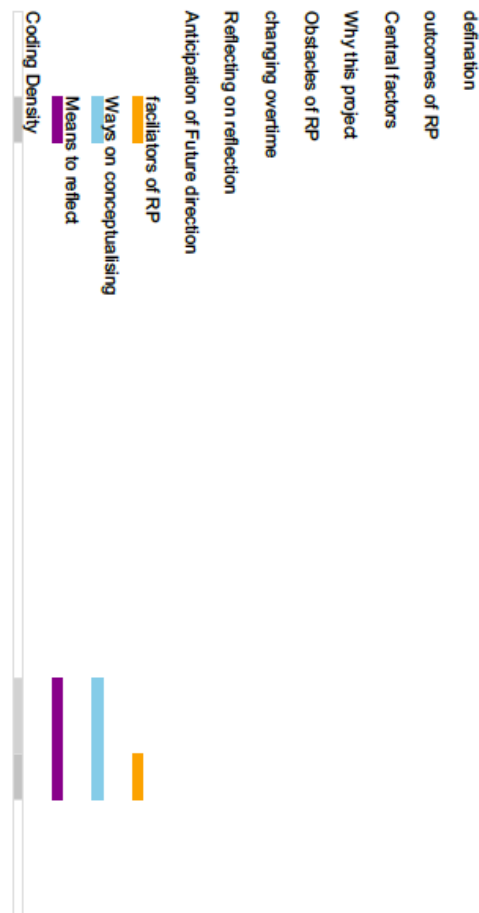
Donald: With the other workers it would be, kind of social care worker level, that would be, I would be giving clinical advice in clinical directional cases, I wouldn't have any line manager supervision there.
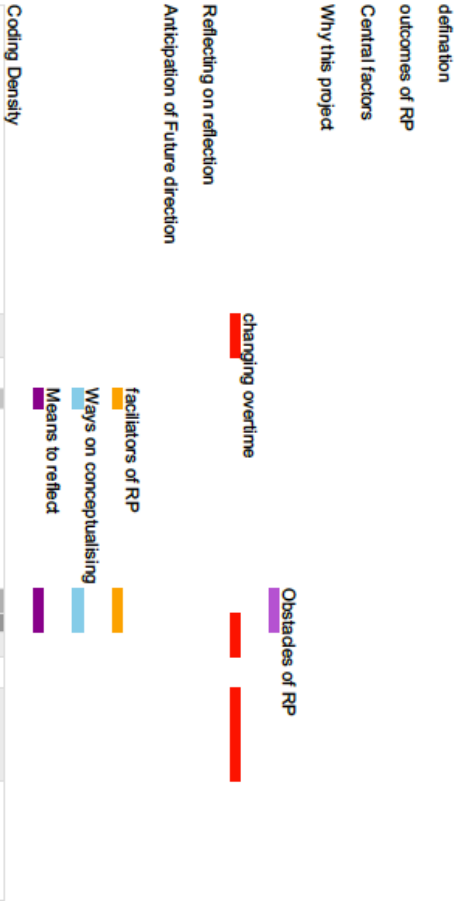
21:15 – 23:11
Researcher: My next question is about, uhm, you, are there any particular models or frameworks or tools of reflective practice you use for reflective practice and reflective process

Donald: One model that I would I suppose, I can't think of any names at the moment, but I suppose I would just dip in and out of things and because *I suppose I've been around for a number of years, I might read something I would identify with, say particular parts off of a model, but not actually maybe adopt the whole thing. So maybe having that supports in the collective approach to supervision and mixture or reflective practice a mixture of you know* whatever *I've read online and choose bits and pieces from that and that kind of a la carte approach.* Together, with I *suppose my own life experiences, both personal and professional. So its like a mixture of everything. It's not a kind of very conscious, deliberate activity on my part,* but it's more just when I talk to somebody like yourself, better, *I realize how much I do without thinking about it.* But *I see just as being part of good practice and part of just being maybe an experienced EP.* That is something that comes with experience, but I mightn't just I mightn't name it particularly, separately as reflective practice, but it's there. *Coming back to what I said earlier about the the validation aspect of the peer support, the reflective practice group. I mean it helps to validate the experience experience part of my what I was describing earlier.*

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23:11 – 25:13

Researcher: It's kind of related to and you might have already given me this answer, Uhm, are there any particular tools that you find yourself using most? How often do you use these tools?

Donald: Can you give me example of of some kind of tools you might might be thinking about?

Researcher: I think it is I think it would be tools that you're using. You spoke in terms of your reflective practice group and you talked about how your experience is sort of a tool, and when you're reading it helps you to reflect.

Donald: *It would be at the being a member of this group. My experience, my my training, my kind of having worked in different different organizations and also in different jurisdictions as well so.* But I suppose it's like experience, it just comes organically. And I suppose I suppose because I don't have a like a generic waiting list the *the evidence of the value of my work will be in the fact that I'm in constant demand* by four or five different teams of people at social care worker level and they come back to me time and time again. *So I suppose to fact I'm in demand and caused me to reflect on I must be doing something right.*

[Pause for 10 seconds]

Donald: That's it thank you.

25:13 – 26:56

Researcher: OK, so I have got three more questions. The next question is <u>what professional importance does reflective practice have for you?</u>

Donald: Well I think *without reflective practice, either formally or informally, by not having being a reflective practitioner,* I suppose it would apply that there's very little learning going on, as if you define learning as a change in behaviour. *So, so the fact that my, the evidence that I would be a reflective practitioner and would be the fact that when I look back on my career, work experience, I have changed my way of working.* Not only in relation to what I've learned professionally, but also *in terms of adapting to the different organizations I've been in all the different teams I work with. So I suppose I've done almost reflective practice automatically.* But now that I'm talking about it here, I would see the importance of reflective practice. *It has helped me in terms of learning and adaptation.* Or if you if you think of you know, Jean, *Jean Piaget developmental psychology and he talked about learning as assimilation accommodation of meditation,* so I'm always mindful of, I always have that in my mind in terms of a lot of the kind of work I do, *not just reflective practice but also organizational changes or getting used to a new way of working or a new person or a new family, or whatever. So assimilation of kind of a kind of a common accommodation, and adaptation.*

26:56 – 27:59

Researcher: You speak with experience there as well as an interest, having experience and doing different kind of roles in different organizations. I wonder <u>if reflective practice is something</u>

that you considered when you became an EP or was it something important to you before as well?

Donald: *I suppose it was like the act of reflection was always important. But in terms of there being a formal* as I said to you before, *joining the group has made it a more formal activity for me*. But *I would have been always to reflective person anyway. And as well as the nature of our our roles cause us to be reflective people, whether we articulate that or not to ourselves and more because of you know, the notion of reflective practice has been gaining gain such important over the last number of years*. It doesn't mean that it wasn't happening *before that on a more either an informal level or individual practitioner level*.

27:59 – 30:59

Researcher: My next question kind of brings us a little bit closer to what you were just answering. What helps you and what hinders your professional reflective practice?

Donald: *What helps is being able to, the organization not putting any barriers to me being part of, our colleagues being able to set up and run this reflective practice group*. Yeah, uhm, I suppose the barriers that are *kind of common to lots of professions across lots of different organizations in terms of the administrative demands or the top down , the top down cascading off administrative stuff, circulars, policy changes,* all of that kind of stuff that doesn't actually influence our change the way we work as practitioners. But *can sometimes impact in terms of additional reading load into in terms of taking up more mind space in your head*. And the frustration can be then that be because then there's this kind of top down cascading of information, *it can cause frustration, as in there appears to be a lack of awareness from by people at the very top about the realities of frontline work*.

Donald: I often think, I don't know *if you ever watched Fawlty Towers* or know the program Fawlty Towers. It would be very un-PC now but it stared John Cleese. And there was a setup where they ran a hotel somewhere in the South of England. It was funny in some ways, but there be a lot of stuff would be very un-PC now. *But a line I always remember from that was that he used to say that the hotel would run fine if it wasn't for the guests. In other words that they could get on with, you know cleaning the place, making the plans, blah blah blah. But missing the point, of course, that the reality, the purpose hotel is to have guests there and I often used that and use that as a reflective analogy when thinking about the frustrations of the impact of top down and administrative decisions*. Some of them seem to have the view that the place would run fine if it wasn't for clients or parents or patients, or in your case schools and students. *So that people could get on with making their flow chart and their plans and so on and so forth*. But *that comes about where you have too many gaps between, as I said before, farm and fork, between the people at the frontline like us and the people up at the top, where there are too many too many links in between and the people at the top lose contact or often lose sight of the realities of the demands of working on the ground like ourselves*.

30:59 - 33:07

Researcher: Yeah, I think I think we talked about contacts and things being missed in

between. I think my next question is quite related to that again and we should think about what would further help your development of reflective practice? And I think you've already touched on some of these points before.

Donald: I think what would help my reflective practice is if it was given *recognition at an organizational level. And I don't mean just within Department*, Department level, because we can facilitate that ourselves as colleagues in this professional. *All it takes is a decision or the imprimatur from the head of Department or principle EP or principle psychologist to go ahead and do it. But in terms of giving it and making space for it within an organization. It gives it a a deeper and wider validation.*

Donald: That is, *that reflective practice can assume the importance of almost the level of eh, say, professional external supervision or external personal development. If it's if it's recognized as an organizational level that is part of your, almost, job description. It validates this, both in terms of it as an activity in itself, but also in terms of the value that you get from it.* That's recognized by not only within your own Department, but *it's recognized within the Department at kind of higher higher administrative levels, and that if they if they if it's recognized at that level, then it's factored into Organizational and Department of planning at senior administrative levels.* The planning, if it's recognized that an organization level, *it can be factored in in terms of time to do it, but also in terms of, you know, additional resources to do it. Maybe the financial or time away from work* or whatever,

33:07 – 35:47
Researcher: Is there anything else that we haven't covered but you want to speak about reflective practice?

Donald: Well, *I do think it should be part of, is it part of training courses now. Because it certainly wasn't when I was training*. Yeah, so I think yeah, so if it wasn't, that's what I would have added that it should be part of a training course and that, when EPs, then when TEPs going placement, how did they bring that into a placement? Like do they communicate that to their supervisor or how are they able to operate that in placement rather than just having it in a lecture format in college.

Researcher: I think that one of the reasons I'm exploring this is because it wasn't clear to me, um, and I think from your experience I'm getting some insights about it. But because I'm in the training, there are some things that we have to do a part of our activities. One of the things that we talked about was reflective groups. So we hold reflective groups with school professionals and other professionals. We have peer supervision groups. I can see the importance, you talked about that. As well. And also just in the conversation, how we're talking um, in consultation, is something that I see, and have been inspired to do it with the University work.

Donald: OK and can I ask you then when you reflect, you know, you have to do like something a placement log book or an activity book. Whatever you call it. Is there a, is there a recognized space in that log book to record reflective practice activities, In other words, is, in other words, is it given that level of importance by

your course that it's it's looked for in your trainee logbook?

Researcher: Yes, there's are different kinds of placement activity, but there are some activities that we do do which are University based. There's something called VERP, that's video enhanced reflective practice related to VIG. In this case they're actually, uhm, helping us to become a reflective practitioners

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35:47 – 36:18
Donald: So reflective practice does have a status and acknowledged status by both the training course and your Department that you're with. It has an acknowledged status on the same level as Casework. *That to me would be the real leveller if reflective practice has the same status as fulfilling casework, like variety of case work assignments on placement. That's the true measure of*
validating reflective practice. Both organizationally, Departmentally and personally

36:19 - 37:32
Researcher: I think you said that really well because I think we're not quite there. If I am being very honest.

Donald: OK, *but I suppose, one thing that maybe your your research might point towards*. It's the equivalent of the days when, say, men and women didn't have equal pay. OK, and the minute equal pay came in it was a big leveller. It took, it solved a lot of issues rather than having to deal with them individually. It wiped a lot of issues off the table overnight, as in, well of men and women are being paid to equally for the same job, well then, a lot of issues that were were allowed to arise in between that pay gap, they were wiped out overnight. And the same way with reflective practice. If that has an equal status, in other words, if the if the professional, if they need for reflective practice, is given the same status as the need to develop clinical skills through a variety of case work on placement, that to me is the pinnacle, and that means that reflective practice has arrived.

37:33 – 39:43
Researcher: That that's one of my objectives. The purpose of our conversation today, and the
research is to also help give some insight about how we can structure University training, comparing with the EP's role and how they see reflective practice, making a maximum connection to practice that way. Hopefully that happens. We do a lot of essay writing and I think the emphasis is more about, we becoming a reflective practitioner and, with that, we go and use different approaches to implement those skills.

Donald: But there's also the issue then of, there's one, it's *one thing you becoming an individual practitioner as an individual yourself or your or your training colleagues*. But *there's also the issue of that, how that's modelled for you within your Department*. In the same way as you know, an watching experienced practitioners doing clinical work and you're watching, that's been modelled for yet in the same way that reflective practice needs to be modelled by experienced practitioners who
may be going through a learning process themselves about becoming reflective practitioners. *Because if they are kind of my vintage, it wouldn't have been part of the scene back then, so it's it's a dyadic that's going on there, a dyadic that's going on there that experienced people are both modellers and learners themselves at the*

Coding Density

Means to reflect

Ways on conceptualising

faciliators of RP

Reflecting on reflection

changing overtime

Obstacles of RP

Why this project

Central factors

outcomes of RP

defination

Anticipation of Future direction

same time as yourselves are learning, being given the resources to be a reflective practitioner. If you know what I mean. And that that h*as resource implications in terms of not just time, but also an encouraging a mindset among not only senior people* within a Department, senior EPs or principles level, but also a senior administrative level *within the Department, because that has to be factored into resource allocation or, to the Department.*

Researcher: Yeah yeah, I think you're saying that we need to see it as a top down measure.

39:43 – 41:59

Donald: Like when yourself, you're a trainee now, but when you are say at a principle or a senior level in years to come, you will have brought all of this with you. *So I think because we're at a transition point now at the moment between people like yourself automatically learning there being exposed to opportunity for reflective practice in your training course, so you will bring that with you.* But at the moment *we're in a transition point because there are lots of people out there for whom it that opportunity wasn't available, formally, within the course, so they have to learn.*

Donald: *It's a bit like people who are digital tourists and digital natives. You would be reflective practice native whereas I would be reflective practice tourist in that I've had to learn it formally.* So I think that analogy might fit for people who come to the whole technology later in life, as a tourist like me, but is the same with reflective practice. *I would see you as a reflective practice native because you're coming to the work with having, with that as part of your training.* Whereas I've hard to kind of do it in reverse. *I've always been like a reflective practitioner without knowing it, or in an incidental way, but the need to make it more formal, you're on the negative side of that.*

Researcher: With that, are you saying that, you talked a little bit about in your experience how context has shaped, uhm, you know, reflective practice for you. Is this context, the new context of the transition that we are seeing and the significance of me doing this research.

Donald: *That is a sense, for me, that's another element of validation, if people like yourself are doing this research,* then that's obviously being recognized and accepted by the course, the training course that you're on. So therefore the fact that it's been accepted there, that's a validation of the nature of the work itself, or validation of the activity of reflected practice. *So by you, the very fact that you're doing this work is a validation of the nature of the thing that you're doing or that you're researching upon.*

[Pause for 10 seconds]

41:59 - 42:07

Researcher: Yeah, yeah, that makes sense. Thank you so much for that. I'm going to stop recording and just do a little bit of debrief.

Coding Density

Means to reflect

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faciliators of RP

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changing overtime

Obstacles of RP

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outcomes of RP

defination

Reflecting on reflection

Appendix N

Sample of Initial Coding and Emergent Themes Without Transcript
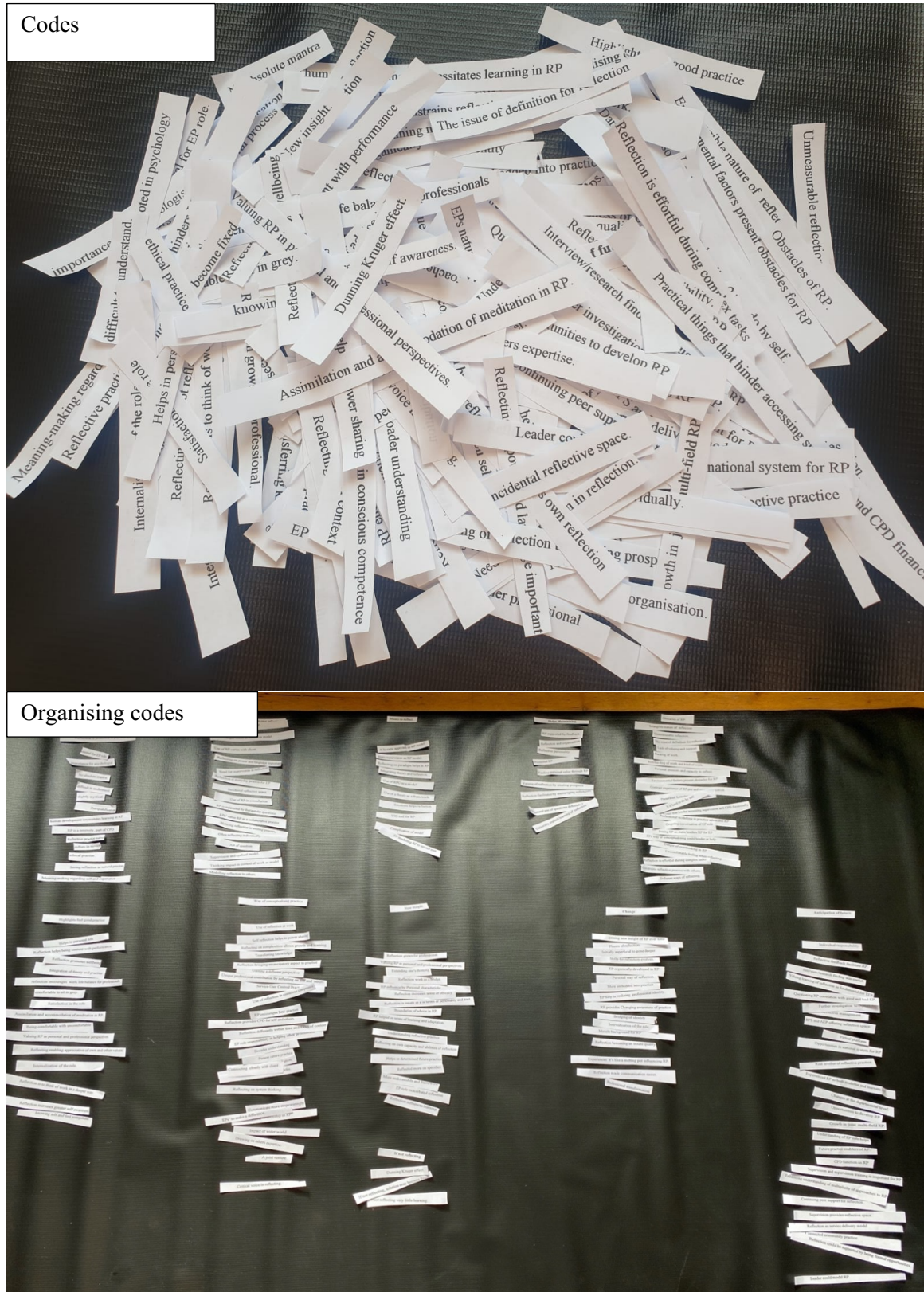
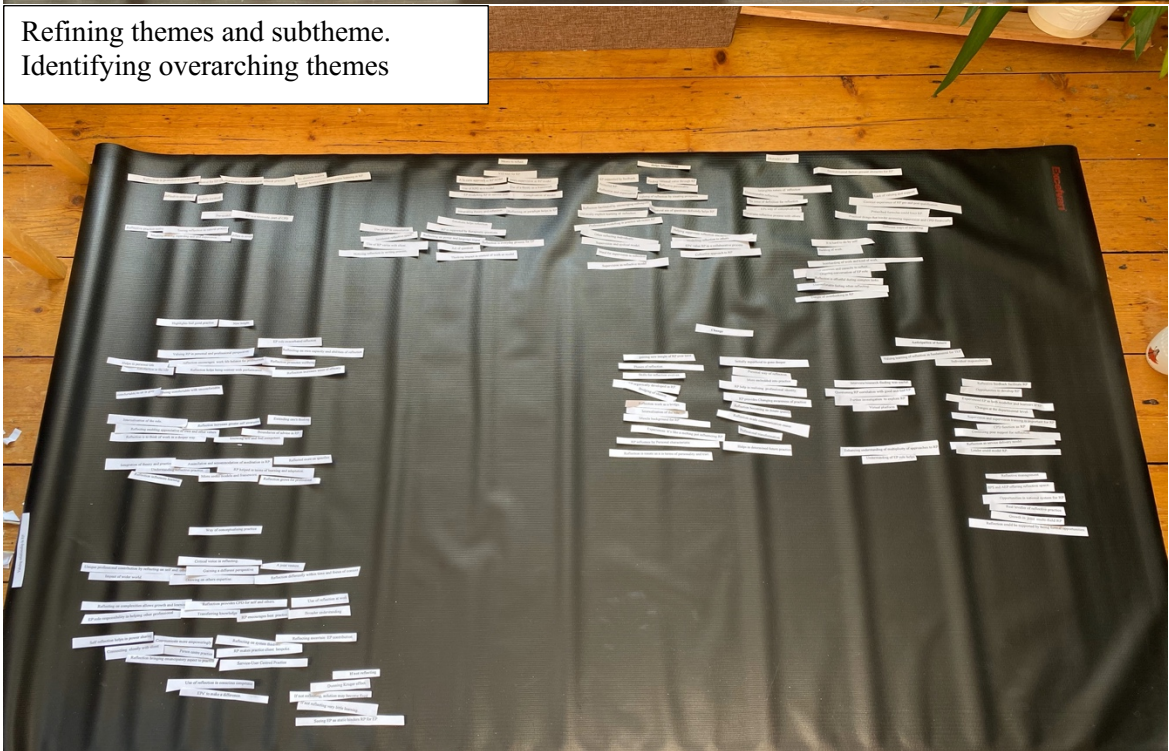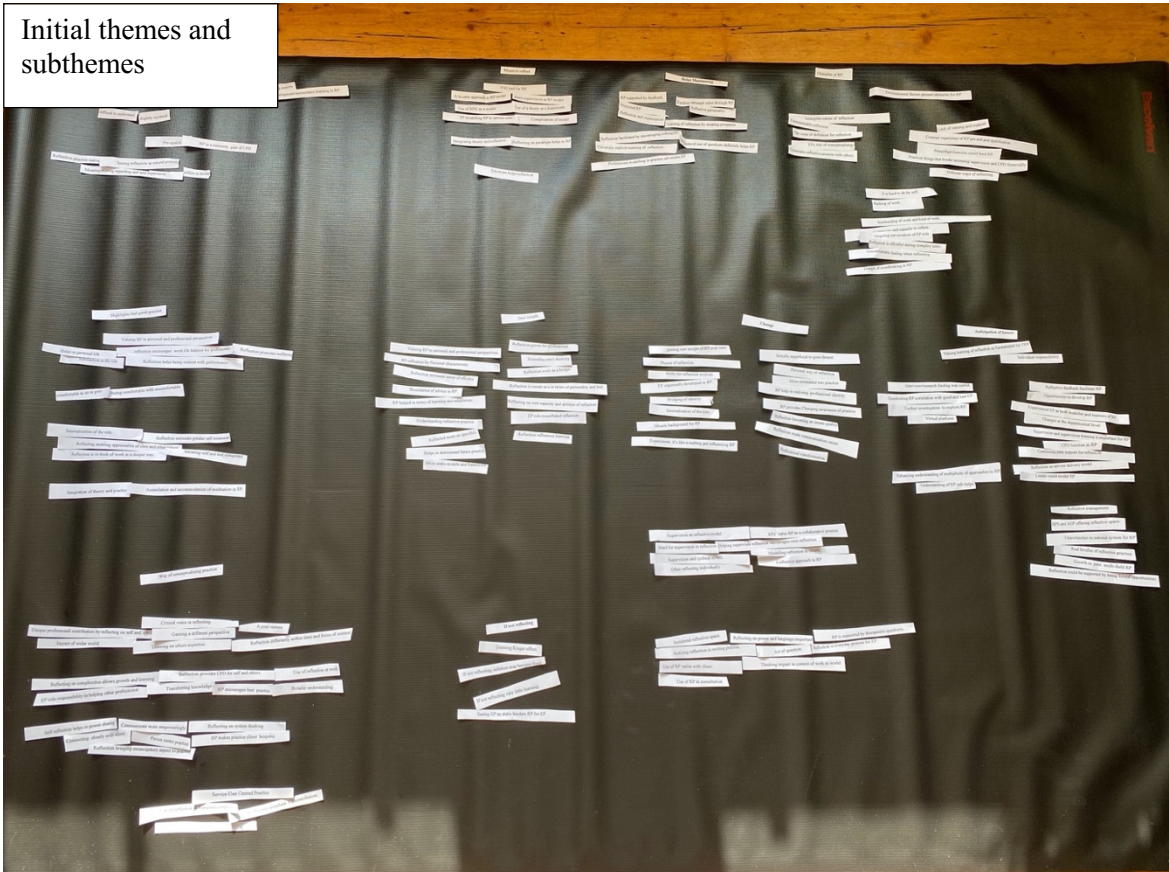| Donald	
Codes	Themes
Taking part of experience of being in RPG at work. RPG discussion on organisation issues, impact, emotional and psychological aspect of selves. RPG experience of helping each other. Experience of having a wisdom to know the difference of thing can and can't change. RPG discussion ongoing issues of the organisations.	Own experience reflection in RPG influenced to participate. RPG experience of helping each other. RP experience on practice.
Interested in questioning own practice. Role helping other professionals helping RP. Consultant role of an EP helping to reflecting. Prompted to think about the way I work versus how maybe more generic colleagues work. Prompted to reflect on the value psychology based roles. Being part of RPG and validation among peers helps own RP. Being part of reflective practice group helps to validate the kind of the feelings and the reactions that organizational idiosyncrasies can have, how they can impact on you. RPG validates feeling when someone is feeling the same.	RP helps in questioning practice. EP role responsibility in helping other professional. Reflection with others validates thinking. Valuing reflective practice with others.
RP is a necessity, as part of CPD. It contributes to professional and personal development. Being part of group, the element of feeling validated is very important in RP. The issue of RP are common across many settings. Joining RPG in another profession may have similar issue would arise. Organizational variables impact RP. Organisation may lose touch of realities what professional do on the ground.	RP is a necessity, part of CPD. It contributes to professional and personal development. The common issue for Reflecting across many settings. Organizational variables impact RP.
Impact of organisation for group of professions. EP supervising group profession making think wider RP issue. It's not just pertaining to be an EP. It's how the organizational variables impact on psychology, whether it's clinical counsellor or educational. Having someone validate feeling supports RP. Reflection helps you to separate personal impact and professional demand. Reflecting helps on understanding gap between demands of the organisation and resources. Reflection by validation in RPG.	Supervising multi-profession helping RP Wider RP issue. Valuing RP in personal and professional perspectives.

Benefit being part RPG feeling are validated. Validation in terms of being psychologist role and personal level in the experience. Reassurance seeing similar issues faced in RPG.	Reflection by validation in RPG.
Reflecting on scheduled RPG. Reflection feeling being validated. Using reflection in another different difficult situation. Keep going on reflection by reflecting back on process of RPG. RP always been important to me. Formally organised at work. RP would be being in peer relation and supportive colleagues. RP with someone who you click more with. On a personal level of reflection and professional. Mixture of RP with Peer support and colleagues.	Reflecting on scheduled RPG. Transferring knowledge Gaining a different perspective. Element of personality. Reflection formally and personally. Mixture of RP opportunities.
RP influenced by experience in the role. Having taken different roles over the years helped in RP. EP organically developed in RP over the years. Reflecting on impact colleagues and being mindful of their realities constraints of their work helped reflection. Reflection helps in maintains credibility of advice. Reflection consider realistic context and constrains of their work. RP influences and shapes not the advice I gave but how I give the advice. Helping to give advice according to experience of professional. Helping professionals reflections when they're ready for particular piece of advice.	EP organically developed in RP. New insight. EPs' value RP as a collaborative process Reflecting on own capacity and abilities of reflection
Context of organisation and people help RP. EP supporting RP of other discipline and working with as well. Reflection highlight different role responsibilities. RP helping in giving advice to reflect and explore further.	Context of organisation and people helped RP. Boundaries of advice in RP. RP to explore further.
Collective approach to RP like supervision and mixture RP. I've read online and choose bits and pieces from that and that kind of a la carte approach. RP with own life experiences, both personal and professional. RP approach not very conscious, deliberate. RP without thinking about it. Part of good practice and maybe experienced EP. Use of RPG as a model for validating experiences.	Collective approach to RP A la carte approach to RP model

	Unconscious use of RP models .
	Use of RPG as a model for validating experiences.
Being member of RPG supports reflection. Working in different organisations and jurisdictions. Other finding value in EP work help reinforce RP.	Experiences helps RP Bridging of identity
Without reflective practice, either formally or informally, by not having being a reflective practitioner. Evidence of RP would be change of way working. RP evidence when adapting different teams and organisations. RP helped in terms of learning and adaptation. RP by learning as assimilation and accommodation of meditation. Use of learning as assimilation accommodation of meditation for reflection on work. Act of reflection always been important. Formally being part of a RPG. Always been reflective anyway. Nature of EP role require us to be reflective. Notion of RP was always present even before. RP gaining importance last number of years. Before that on a more either an informal level or individual practitioner level.	If not reflecting very little learning. RP learning as a change in behaviour Parallel attunement in service delivery RP helped in terms of learning and adaptation. Assimilation and accommodation of meditation in RP. Act of reflection always been important. Always been reflective anyway. Nature of EP role require us to be reflective. RP over the years
Organisation not putting barriers to being part RPG. Organisation supporting RPG. Administrative demands of work presents barriers to RP. Taking up mind space for reflection. Frustration that lack of awareness from managers about frontline realities. Manager understanding the professional role. Too many links in between and the people at the top lose contact or often lose sight of the realities of the demands of working on the ground like ourselves.	Organisation supporting RPG. Reduces work demands facilitate RP Managerial understanding the professional frontline role.
RP recognition at an organizational level would support EP reflection. In terms of giving it and making space for it within an organization. Support gives it a deeper and wider validation. RP can assume the importance in the level external professional and or external personal development. RP part of job description.	RP recognition at an organizational level Support gives it a deeper and wider validation.

It validates RP as an activity and value you get from it. Recognition from higher level of organisational and departmental planning for RP. Recognition from that level factored in time, resources or financial support for RP.	Anticipation of RP future
RP added as part of training course.	Anticipation of the future of training
Real leveller if reflective practice has the same status as fulfilling with variety casework assignment. Validating reflection both organizationally, Departmentally and personally. Research finding may support RP. RP given same status as clinical skills for cases then RP will grow.	Real leveller if reflective practice
Issue of RP being modelled within Departments. Experienced EP as both modeller and learners of RP will support RP for TEPs. Providing resources and time. Changes in not senior level but departmental for factors of resources allocation.	Experienced EP as both modeller and learners of RP Changes at the departmental level.
RP in transition point now at the moment exposed in training. Automatic interest learning about RP. For whom RP opportunity wasn't available, formally, within the course, so they have to learn. Reflective practice native and reflective practice tourist. RP part of training psychologists. Reflective practitioner without knowing it, or in an incidental way. Research as an element of validation RP significance.	RP in transition point Reflective practice native and reflective practice tourist. Opportunities to develop RP Incidental reflective practitioner

Appendix O

Grouping of Codes and Overarching Themes, Themes and Subthemes

Codes

Organising codes

Initial themes and subthemes

Refining themes and subtheme.
Identifying overarching themes

Appendix P

Ethics Approval and Amendment Approval Email

NOTICE OF ETHICS REVIEW DECISION

For research involving human participants

BSc/MSc/MA/Professional Doctorates in Clinical, Counselling and Educational Psychology

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SUPERVISOR: Mary Robinson   **REVIEWER:** Tim Lomas

STUDENT: Sherly O'Hara

Title of proposed study: Educational Psychologists' Experiences and Perceptions of Reflective Practice

    1.1 **Course**: Professional Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology

DECISION *(Delete as necessary)***:**

---

*APPROVED, BUT MINOR CONDITIONS ARE REQUIRED <u>BEFORE</u> THE RESEARCH COMMENCES

APPROVED: Ethics approval for the above named research study has been granted from the date of approval (see end of this notice) to the date it is submitted for assessment/examination.

APPROVED, BUT MINOR AMENDMENTS ARE REQUIRED <u>BEFORE</u> THE RESEARCH COMMENCES (see Minor Amendments box below)**:** In this circumstance, re-submission of an ethics application is <u>not</u> required but the student must confirm with their supervisor that all minor amendments have been made <u>before</u> the research commences. Students are to do this by filling in the confirmation box below when all amendments have been attended to and emailing a copy of this decision notice to her/his supervisor for their records. The supervisor will then forward the student's confirmation to the School for its records.

NOT APPROVED, MAJOR AMENDMENTS AND RE-SUBMISSION REQUIRED (see Major Amendments box below)**:** In this circumstance, a revised ethics application must be submitted and approved before any research takes place. The revised application will be reviewed by the same reviewer. If in doubt, students should ask their supervisor for support in revising their ethics application.

Minor amendments required *(for reviewer)*:

- Given the current COVID-19 situation, all research (e.g., interviews) needs to take place online (using TEAMS)
- Check the participant letters for typos (e.g., bottom sentence on p.15)
- Include details of relevant support services on the debrief form

---

Major amendments required *(for reviewer)*:

Confirmation of making the above minor amendments *(for students)*:

I have noted and made all the required minor amendments, as stated above, before starting my research and collecting data.   Student's name *(Typed name to act as signature)*:   Sherly O'Hara   Student number: u1816817   Date: 16.05.2020

ASSESSMENT OF RISK TO RESEACHER *(for reviewer)*

If the proposed research could expose the <u>researcher</u> to any of kind of emotional, physical or health and safety hazard? Please rate the degree of risk:

☐ HIGH

☐ MEDIUM

☒ LOW

Reviewer comments in relation to researcher risk (if any):

Reviewer *(Typed name to act as signature)*:   Tim Lomas

Date: 15.5.20

This reviewer has assessed the ethics application for the named research study on behalf of the School of Psychology Research Ethics Committee (moderator of School ethics approvals)

PLEASE NOTE:
*For the researcher and participants involved in the above named study to be covered by UEL's insurance and indemnity policy, prior ethics approval from the School of Psychology (acting on

behalf of the UEL Research Ethics Committee), and confirmation from students where minor amendments were required, must be obtained before any research takes place.

*For the researcher and participants involved in the above named study to be covered by UEL's insurance and indemnity policy, travel approval from UEL (not the School of Psychology) must be gained if a researcher intends to travel overseas to collect data, even if this involves the researcher travelling to his/her home country to conduct the research. Application details can be found here: http://www.uel.ac.uk/gradschool/ethics/fieldwork/

Email
___

Mary Robinson
Mon 18/05/2020 12:23
To: Sherly OHARA

Good morning Sherly,

Thank you for the amendments to your Ethic Application.

I can now confirm that the changes made are acceptable and you may continue with your research,

Regards,

Mary

Dr Mary Robinson
Programme Director
Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology
University of East London
Stratford Campus
Water Lane
London E15 4LZ
Tel: 0208 223 4455; Email: m.robinson@uel.ac.uk

Appendix Q

Ethics Form

UNIVERSITY OF EAST LONDON
School of Psychology

APPLICATION FOR RESEARCH ETHICS APPROVAL
FOR RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN PARTICIPANTS
(Updated version: October 2019)

FOR BSc RESEARCH
FOR MSc/MA RESEARCH
FOR PROFESSIONAL DOCTORATE RESEARCH IN CLINICAL, COUNSELLING &
EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

2. **Completing the application**

2.1 Before completing this application please familiarise yourself with the British Psychological Society's Code of Ethics and Conduct (2018) and the UEL Code of Practice for Research Ethics (2015-16). Please tick to confirm that you have read and understood these codes:

2.2 Email your supervisor the c√eted application and all attachments as ONE WORD DOCUMENT. Your supervisor will then look over your application.

2.3 When your application demonstrates sound ethical protocol, your supervisor will submit it for review. It is the responsibility of students to check this has been done.

2.4 Your supervisor will let you know the outcome of your application. Recruitment and data collection must NOT commence until your ethics application has been approved, along with other research ethics approvals that may be necessary (see section 8).

2.5 Please tick to confirm that the following appendices have been completed. Note: templates for these are included at the end of the form.

- The participant invitation letter   √

- The participant consent form   √

- The participant debrief letter   √

2.6 The following attachments should be included if appropriate:

- Risk assessment forms (see section 6)
- A Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificate (see section 7)
- Ethical clearance or permission from an external organisation (see section 8)
- Original and/or pre-existing questionnaire(s) and test(s) you intend to use
- Interview protocol for qualitative studies
- Visual material(s) you intend showing participants.

3. **Your details**

3.1 Your name: Sherly O'Hara

3.2 Your supervisor's name: Dr Mary Robinson

3.3 Title of your programme: Professional Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology

3.4 UEL assignment submission date: 24th April 2021

4. Your research

Please give as much detail as necessary for a reviewer to be able to fully understand the nature and details of your proposed research.

4.1 **The title of your study:**
 Educational Psychologists' Experiences and Perceptions of Reflective Practice

4.2 **Your research question:**

- What do term reflection and Reflective Practice mean to EPs?
- What part do reflection and Reflection Practice play in EP's practice?
- What approach to reflection and Reflective Practice do EPs take?
- Does reflective practice change over time for individual EPs?

3.4 Participants:
The eligible participants for the study will be drawn from professional, qualified EPs working in UK. In total, it is hoped that the study will recruit 10 participants for individual face to face semi-structured interviews.

3.5 Recruitment:

Recruitment for qualitative Participants
A Recruitment advert will be sent to Local Authorities and EPNET ((an online open forum for EPs in UK to exchange ideas and information) inviting EPs to participate in the video/phone interviews. For the security of the data, and compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018, Microsoft Teams will be used for the research data collected remotely by the researcher**.** Attached will be an information sheet giving more information about the research. Interested participants will contact the Researcher directly (please see Appendix A).

All participants will be self-selected for participation in this research, and will be required to give their written consent to participate.

3.6 Measures, materials or equipment

Qualitative - measures, materials or equipment:
Individual Interviews will be conducted via video/phone. Prior to the start of the interview, participants will be re-issued with the participant information sheet as a reminder and given an invitation to ask any further questions they might have about the study. Two copies of the consent form will be signed by the participant and the Researcher (one copy each to keep) (please see Appendix C).
 The interview will consist of seven questions, which are generated from the researcher's review of existing literature and knowledge of reflective practice (please see Appendix D).

The researcher will conduct a pilot study for the questionnaire and interview schedules, both of which will be designed by the researcher. The researcher will also conduct anonymised feedback after the pilot study for participants to give their unbiased opinion (please see Appendix H).

The questions will then be revised following pilot testing. The researcher has also completed a Data Management Plan (DMP) according to the RDM (research data management) policy for UEL. This should apply for both of the data collection measures (please see Appendix F).

3.7 Data collection:

<u>Qualitative</u>
The research will seek to explore the experiences and perceptions of reflective practice. This study will involve 10 confidential interviews with the interviewees, for 45 minutes to an hour. In the interview, the interviewee will be asked open questions to explore their understanding and experience of reflective practice. Prompts will be added for each question to obtain further clarity (only if needed), however, the schedule is not intended to be prescriptive. Participants will be encouraged to talk spontaneously about reflective practice with an emphasis on the importance of their experience.

The interviews will be voice-recorded, transcribed, and anonymised. Each participant will be given a participant number and pseudo name (in interview chronological order) and all identifiable information (e.g., names, schools, locations, identifiable scenarios) anonymised in the transcripts. No sensitive data will be collected. No further data will be created in the process of analysing the transcripts.

Personal data will be collected on consent forms (names) and prior to the interview (email address and/or telephone number for purposes of arranging the interview, via the researcher's UEL email address). Consent forms will be scanned and uploaded in PDF format onto the researcher's UEL's H: encrypted drive space.

3.8 Data analysis:

4   Qualitative analysis

All interviews will be audio recorded and transcribed verbatim. Data will be analysed using Thematic Analysis in full. The audio files will be anonymised, manually transcribed and inputted into NVIVO software, a program that uses a coding system organized around different topics and themes identified within the interview transcripts.

Results from the data collection methods will be analysed using Thematic Analysis. This will be used to explore experience and perception of reflective practice in the Educational Psychologists' role . It is envisaged that this will lead to the identification and dissemination of examples of good practice, with resultant benefits for CPD and educational psychology practice.

An inductive analytical approach will be used to identify any themes and categories that emerge from the comments. The categories developed from this analysis will be independently checked by the Researcher's doctoral supervision team and, once agreed, the comments will be analysed numerically.

5   Confidentiality and security

It is vital that data are handled carefully, particularly the details about participants. For information in this area, please see the <u>UEL guidance on data protection</u>, and also the <u>UK government guide to data protection</u> regulations.

4.1 Will participants data be gathered anonymously?   No

4.2 If not (e.g., in qualitative interviews), what steps will you take to ensure their anonymity in the subsequent steps (e.g., data analysis and dissemination)?

The qualitative data collection will involve face to face video interviews. Following qualitative interviews, participants will be anonymised during transcription to protect confidentiality. Agreement will be made that no names will be used or any other identifiable information, including schools or local authorities. Each participant will be attributed a participant pseudonym and number in chronological interview order. Transcription files will be named e.g., Participant 1, pseudonym and date of the interview. No list will be kept of participant numbers linked to personal identifying information.

4.3 How will you ensure participants details will be kept confidential?

The researcher will transcribe all interviews (removing identifiable information in the process) and only the researcher, supervisor and examiners will have access to the transcripts.

Recordings from the Microsoft teams will be uploaded onto the researcher's password protected personal laptop immediately after the interview has ended. Recordings will then be deleted Microsoft teams and back up iPad. Audio files will be saved in a separate folder on the researcher's laptop and titled as follows: 'Participant 1: Date of interview'.

4.4 How will the data be securely stored?

As evidence for this research, and in order to allow them to potentially contribute to future research, tapes and transcripts will be kept in a secure personal server and physical copies in a locked filing cabinet for up to five years after completion of thesis under University guidelines and in accordance with GDPR.

4.5 Who will have access to the data?

The Researcher and UEL Doctoral supervisor.

4.6 How long will data be retained for?

Anonymised data will be held securely for five years as evidence of the study and to aid any future research in the same area.

5 Informing participants

Please confirm that your information letter includes the following details:

5.1 Your research title: √

5.2 Your research question: √

5.3 The purpose of the research: √

5.4 The exact nature of their participation. This includes location, duration, and the tasks etc. involved: √

5.5 That participation is strictly voluntary: √

5.6 What are the potential risks to taking part: √

5.7 What are the potential advantages to taking part: ☐√

5.8 Their right to withdraw participation (i.e., to withdraw involvement at any point, no questions asked): ☐√

5.9 Their right to withdraw data (usually within a three-week window from the time of their participation): ☐√

5.10   How long their data will be retained for: ☐√

5.11   How their information will be kept confidential: ☐√

5.12   How their data will be securely stored: ☐√

5.13   What will happen to the results/analysis: ☐√

5.14   Your UEL contact details: ☐√

5.15   The UEL contact details of your supervisor: ☐√

Please also confirm whether:

5.16   Are you engaging in deception? If so, what will participants be told about the nature of   the research, and how will you inform them about its real nature. ☐NO

Participants will be clearly will be told about the exact nature of their participation.

5.17   Will the data be gathered anonymously? If NO what steps will be taken to ensure confidentiality and protect the identity of participants? ☐NO

The quantitative data will be gathered anonymously. But the qualitative data will involve face to face interviews. Following qualitative interviews, participants will be anonymised during transcription to protect confidentiality. Agreement will be made that no names will be used or any other identifiable information including schools or local authorities. Each participant will be attributed a participant number, in chronological interview order. Transcription files will be named e.g., "Participant 1". No list will be kept of participant numbers linked to personal identifying information.

5.18 Will participants be paid or reimbursed? If so, this must be in the form of redeemable vouchers, not cash. If yes, why is it necessary and how much will it be worth? ☐NO

6   Risk Assessment

Please note: If you have serious concerns about the safety of a participant, or others, during the course of your research please see your supervisor as soon as possible. If there is any unexpected

occurrence while you are collecting your data (e.g., a participant or the researcher injures themselves), please report this to your supervisor as soon as possible.

6.1 Are there any potential physical or psychological risks to participants related to taking part? If so, what are these, and how can they be minimised?

Should any participant become distressed during the interviews, participants will be reminded that they are not required to answer all questions and are free to terminate the interview at any time. They will be offered breaks. They are also encouraged to speak to their supervisors if needed.

6.2 Are there any potential physical or psychological risks to you as a researcher? If so, what are these, and how can they be minimised?

There may be psychological distress. Psychological distress may appear during the process of recruitment, as I may not able to recruit participants. Distress may also appear due to the response from interviewees and when writing up my thesis. The researcher will minimise their distress by having on going supervision and keeping a reflective diary. The researcher will take into account exceptions and alternative plans to manage unforeseen circumstances.

6.3 Have appropriate support services been identified in the debrief letter? If so, what are these, and why are they relevant?

     N/A

6.4 Does the research take place outside the UEL campus? If so, where?

This research involves both an online questionnaire and face to face interviews. While the interviews being conducted will be done off campus, they will be done in secure Local Authority premises, so no hazards are anticipated.

If so, a 'general risk assessment form' must be completed. This is included below as appendix 4. Note: if the research is on campus, or is online only, this appendix can be deleted. If a general risk assessment form is required for this research, please tick to confirm that this has been completed:

6.5 Does the research take place outside the UK? If so, where?

     If so, in addition to the 'general risk assessment form', a 'country-specific risk assessment form' must be also completed (available in the Ethics folder in the Psychology Noticeboard), and included as an appendix. If that applies here, please tick to confirm that this has been included:

          | No |

     However, please also note:

- For assistance in completing the risk assessment, please use the AIG Travel Guard website to ascertain risk levels. Click on 'sign in' and then 'register here' using policy # 0015865161. Please also consult the Foreign Office travel advice website for further guidance.
- For *on campus* students, once the ethics application has been approved by a reviewer, all risk assessments for research abroad must then be signed by the Head of School (who may escalate it up to the Vice Chancellor).
- For *distance learning* students conducting research abroad in the country where they currently reside, a risk assessment must be also carried out. To minimise risk, it is recommended that such students only conduct data collection on-line. If the project is deemed low risk, then it is not necessary for the risk assessments to be signed by the Head of School. However, if not deemed low risk, it must be signed by the Head of School (or potentially the Vice Chancellor).

- Undergraduate and M-level students are not explicitly prohibited from conducting research abroad. However, it is discouraged because of the inexperience of the students and the time constraints they have to complete their degree.

7   Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) certificates

7.1 Does your research involve working with children (aged 16 or under) or vulnerable adults (*see below for definition)?

> No

7.2 If so, you will need a current DBS certificate (i.e., not older than six months), and to include this as an appendix. Please tick to confirm that you have included this:

Alternatively, if necessary, for reasons of confidentiality, you may email a copy directly to the Chair of the School Research Ethics Committee. Please tick if you have done this instead:

Also alternatively, if you have an Enhanced DBS clearance (one you pay a monthly fee to maintain) then the number of your Enhanced DBS clearance will suffice. Please tick if you have included this instead:

7.3 If participants are under 16, you need 2 separate information letters, consent form, and debrief form (one for the participant, and one for their parent/guardian). Please tick to confirm that you have included these:

7.4 If participants are under 16, their information letters consent form, and debrief form need to be written in age-appropriate language. Please tick to confirm that you have done this

* You are required to have DBS clearance if your participant group involves (1) children and young people who are 16 years of age or under, and (2) 'vulnerable' people aged 16 and over with psychiatric illnesses, people who receive domestic care, elderly people (particularly those in nursing homes), people in palliative care, and people living in institutions and sheltered accommodation, and people who have been involved in the criminal justice system, for example. Vulnerable people are understood to be persons who are not necessarily able to freely consent to participating in your research, or who may find it difficult to withhold consent. If in doubt about the extent of the vulnerability of your intended participant group, speak to your supervisor. Methods that maximise the understanding and ability of vulnerable people to give consent should be used whenever possible. For more information about ethical research involving children click here.

8   Other permissions

9   Is HRA approval (through IRAS) for research involving the NHS required? Note: HRA/IRAS approval is required for research that involves patients or Service Users of the NHS, their relatives or carers as well as those in receipt of services provided under contract to the NHS.

> No

9.1 If yes, please note:

- You DO NOT need to apply to the School of Psychology for ethical clearance if ethical approval is sought via HRA/IRAS (please see further details here).

- However, the school *strongly discourages* BSc and MSc/MA students from designing research that requires HRA approval for research involving the NHS, as this can be a very demanding and lengthy process.
- If you work for an NHS Trust and plan to recruit colleagues from the Trust, permission from an appropriate manager at the Trust must be sought, and HRA approval will probably be needed (and hence is likewise strongly discouraged). If the manager happens to not require HRA approval, their written letter of approval must be included as an appendix.
- IRAS approval is not required for NHS staff even if they are recruited via the NHS (UEL ethical approval is acceptable). However, an application will still need to be submitted to the HRA in order to obtain R&D approval. This is in addition to a separate approval via the R&D department of the NHS Trust involved in the research.
- IRAS approval is not required for research involving NHS employees when data collection will take place off NHS premises, and when NHS employees are not recruited directly through NHS lines of communication. This means that NHS staff can participate in research without HRA approval when a student recruits via their own social or professional networks or through a professional body like the BPS, for example.

9.2 Will the research involve NHS employees who will not be directly recruited through the NHS, and where data from NHS employees will not be collected on NHS premises?

> No

9.3 If you work for an NHS Trust and plan to recruit colleagues from the Trust, will permission from an appropriate member of staff at the Trust be sought, and will HRA be sought, and a copy of this permission (e.g., an email from the Trust) attached to this application?

> No

9.4 Does the research involve other organisations (e.g., a school, charity, workplace, local authority, care home etc.)? If so, please give their details here.

> The qualitative portion of interviewing involves individual Local Authority EPs.

> Furthermore, written permission is needed from such organisations if they are helping you with recruitment and/or data collection, if you are collecting data on their premises, or if you are using any material owned by the institution/organisation. If that is the case, please tick here to confirm that you have included this written permission as an appendix: √

> Please note that even if the organisation has their own ethics committee and review process, a School of Psychology SREC application and approval is still required. Ethics approval from SREC can be gained before approval from another research ethics committee is obtained. However, recruitment and data collection are NOT to commence until your research has been approved by the School and other ethics committee/s as may be necessary.

10. Declarations

Declaration by student: I confirm that I have discussed the ethics and feasibility of this research proposal with my supervisor.

Student's name (typed name acts as a signature): Sherly O'Hara

Student's number: u1816817   Date: 20/1/2020

Supervisor's declaration of support is given upon their electronic submission of the application.

Appendix R

UEL Risk Assessment Form

UEL University of East London	**UEL Risk Assessment Form**		
Name of Assessor:	**Sherly O'Hara**	**Date of Assessment**	NA
Event title:	**Research title:** Educational Psychologists' Experiences and Perceptions of Reflective Practice	**Date, time and location of activity:**	**Research duration:** September 2019 to April 2021 Online
Signed off by Manager (Print Name)	**Mary Robinson**		

Please describe the activity in as much detail as possible (include nature of activity, estimated number of participants, etc)
If the activity to be assessed is part of a fieldtrip or event please add an overview of this below:

The aim of this study is to explore Educational Psychologists' (EPs) experiences and perceptions of Reflective Practice (RP). For the study, in-depth interviews will be conducted with eight participants. All participants will be EPs in Local authorities (LA). All interviews will be conducted via video or phone. For the security of the data, and compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018, Microsoft Teams will be used for the research data collected remotely by the researcher.

Overview of FIELD TRIP or EVENT:

The main event of the research will be the interviews with the eight EP participants. These interviews, and my subsequent research, will contribute towards EP professional practice and toward my doctoral thesis.

Guide to risk ratings:

a) Likelihood of Risk	b) Hazard Severity	c) Risk Rating (a x b = c)
1 = Low (Unlikely)	1 = Slight (Minor / less than 3 days off work)	1-2 = Minor (No further action required)
2 = Moderate (Quite likely)	2= Serious (Over 3 days off work)	3-4 = Medium (May require further control measures)
3 = High (Very likely or certain)	3 = Major (Over 7 days off work, specified injury or death)	6/9 = High (Further control measures essential)

Which Activities Carry Risk?							
Hazards identified	Who is at risk?	Existing controls	Likelihood	Severity	Residual Risk Rating (Likelihood x Severity)	Additional control measures required (if any)	Final risk rating
Technological failure during interviews: audio recording not stored or clear.	The researcher	Researcher to have back-up recording equipment and test all equipment for clarity prior to use	1	1	1	The equipment and back up will be checked before conducting the interview.	1

Connection problems during video call	The researcher and participant	pre-agreement to the basic requirements of the video interview e.g., software downloaded, well lit room, internet connection and devices	1	1	1	Researcher and participant will know beforehand the plan in case of connection problems. Backup options will include calling on the phone while leaving the video camera on if the sound on the camera is not	1
Being aware of anything inappropriate that might be visible, including	The researcher and participant	Researcher and participant will review importance of privacy at their location.	1	1	1	None required.	1
Potential physical or psychological risks to participants related to taking part	Participant	Should any participant become distressed during the interviews, participants will be reminded that they are not required to answer all questions and are free to terminate the interview at any time. They will be offered breaks. They are also encouraged to speak to their supervisors if needed.	1	1	1	Regular checking after every 15 minutes of their understanding and how they might be feeling. Researcher being very transparent in what they will be doing and what can be expected. Ensuring breaks are offered and a debrief is provided. Researcher will offer appreciation and	1

Participant withdrawing from interview	The researcher	Prior to the start of the interview, participants will be re-issued with the participant information sheet as a reminder and given an invitation to ask any further questions they might have about the study. Two copies of the online consent form will be signed by the participant and the Researcher. The participant will be reminded they can withdraw anytime during the interview without giving reason.	1	1	1	The researcher would seek full consent before arranging interview. The researcher will monitor participants' responses and be vigilant of any distress. The researcher will initiate and ensure the above point during the interview.	1
Potential physical or psychological risks to the researcher	The researcher Psychological distress may appear during the process of recruitment, as I may not able to recruit participants. Distress may also appear due to the responses from interviewees and when	The researcher will minimise their distress by having on going supervision and keeping a reflective diary. The researcher will take into account exceptions and alternative plans to manage unforeseen circumstances	1	1	1	Researcher to note any difficulties in selection as a critique of the study and seek an alternative sample if it is not possible to obtain the sample sought.	1

Appendix S

Recruitment Emails to Local Authority EPs and EPNET

To Local Authority EPs

Dear Educational Psychology Department Head,

My name is Sherly O'Hara, and I am a second year Trainee Educational Psychologist at the University of East London. I would like to invite you and your team to take part in a research project which aims to explore qualified Educational Psychologists' experiences and perceptions of reflective practice in educational psychology.

Please see the attached information sheet for details of the research. I would appreciate this being forwarded to your team. I am looking for qualified Educational Psychologist volunteers to participate in individual video/phone interviews about reflective practice. For the security of the data, and compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018, Microsoft Team will be used for the research data collected remotely by the researcher.
The findings of this study will contribute towards to EP professional practice and my doctoral thesis research. I would be hugely grateful for anyone who is able to volunteer their time to participate.
If you, or anyone in your Service, would like to participate, please get in touch with me directly using the contact details below.
Thank you in advance, and if you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me

Best wishes,
Sherly O'Hara
(Trainee EP, Year two)
University of East London
Stratford Campus
Water Lane London, E15 4LZ
email: u1816817@uel.ac.uk

Sherly OHARA
Thu 11/06/2020 09:18

 EPNET@JISCMAIL.AC.UK

Hello everyone,

My name is Sherly O'Hara and I am a second-year trainee Educational Psychologist at the University of East London (UEL). I would like to invite you to be interviewed as part of a research project which aims to explore qualified Educational Psychologists' experiences and perceptions of reflective practice in educational psychology.

The findings of this project will contribute towards EP professional practice and my doctoral thesis. I would be hugely grateful for anyone who is able to volunteer their time to participate.

Everyone is welcome to participate, regardless of their years of experience and geographical location. The only inclusion criterion is that you are a qualified Educational Psychologist currently working in the UK and Northern Ireland. The interview will last around 45 to an hours minutes of your time and can be conducted either through Microsoft Teams or on the phone.

If you are interested in taking part, please email me and I will send you the participant information sheet and consent form. I will also be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best wishes,
Sherly
Sherly O'Hara
Trainee Educational Psychologist (Year Two)
University of East London
email: u1816817@uel.ac.uk

Appendix T

Relationship Between Research Questions and Themes

Theme	Subtheme	What Do Reflection and Reflective Practice mean to EPs?	What Part do Reflection and Reflective Practice Play in EPs' Practice?	What Approach to Reflection and Reflective Practice do EPs Take?	Does Reflective Practice Change Over Time for Individual EPs?
Professional interest in reflective practice	• Central to EP role • Reflection promoted in psychology • Slightly mystical	■			
Effect on EP role	• Influence on development • Internalisation of EP role		■		
Dunning-Kruger effect	• Opposite effect		■		
Means for reflection	• Reflection is not distinctive practice • Reflective space with others • Sources for reflection • Unconscious reflection			■	
Enabler of reflective practice	• Facilitating Personal factors • Factors that enabled reflection with others • Experiencing context			■	
Obstacles for reflection	• Emotions • Cognitive effort • Value of reflection in EP role • Demands of the role			■	
Observation of growth	• Trained reflective muscles • Adapting and learning professionally and personally				■

	• Reflection supporting the EP role				
Opportunities forthcoming development	• Individual responsibility • Equal status at the local and national level • Significance of supervision • Opportunities with other psychological fields • Training • Optimistic view of reflective practice				

Appendix U

Interview Transcripts for All Participants

See separate USB stick.