Pedagogical Approaches to Promote Meaningful Participation in Primary Physical Education

Ciara Ann Griffin

Masters of Arts in Education

Mary Immaculate College

University Limerick

Research Supervisors: Dr Déirdre Ní Chróinín and Dr Timothy Fletcher

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Masters of Arts in Education to Mary Immaculate College (University of Limerick).

September 2016

Declaration

I declare that this dissertation – **'Pedagogical Approaches to Promote Meaningful Participation in Primary Physical Education'** is my own work. All quotations from other sources are duly referenced and acknowledged.

Ciara Griffin

_____   _____

Author   Date

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this thesis to my family and my boyfriend Damien. Their continual encouragement and support throughout the past two years has been deeply appreciated.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Acknowledgements

Abstract

This research was undertaken (1) to identify pedagogies that support children's meaningful participation in primary physical education (PE) and (2) to investigate one teacher's experience of implementing the meaningful approach through self-study. Given the dearth of research focused on meaningful experiences in primary PE to date this study will augment the limited body of research on the topic of pedagogies that facilitate meaningful participation.

The study was conducted in two Limerick primary schools and involved 60 participants (aged 9-10) from fourth class. Across a nine week period the children participated in a tag rugby unit. Data collection involved both pupil generated data and researcher generated data. The children took part in individual interviews (n=3) and focus group interviews (n=6) of four children, both during and post activity. Both focus group and individual interviews took place after lessons in weeks three, six and nine. The groups also took part in written reflections (n=345) after each tag rugby lesson apart from in week three. Researcher generated data involved engaging in weekly critical friend reflections (n=18) where planning and reflection documents were completed for each lesson. These documents were then shared with a critical friend who challenged and/or questioned my assumptions. Researcher data was also collected through the use of an independent lesson observer in week seven and a research journal (n=7,500 words) that documented my thoughts and feelings throughout the research process. Overall a thematic approach to data analysis was employed using Braun and Clarke's (2013) thematic analysis guidelines while multiple methods were used to inform the research to ensure for the element of trustworthiness.

Seven pedagogies to support children's meaningful participation were identified: personal goal setting; Learning with the head, the heart and hands; the spirit points score sheet; reflections; the play-teach-play pedagogy; teaching by invitation; and making learning personally relevant. The facilitation of meaningful experiences were supported when a combination of the identified pedagogies were used in lessons. This research also indicates the value for newly qualified teachers (NQT) of engaging in self-study research and the benefits it holds for supporting innovation in teaching practices.

Sharing the actions of this study and the resulting findings can also inform future teachers by offering support for educators when engaging in self-study research. Identifying specific pedagogies associated with meaningful PE and sharing these pedagogies will enable other teachers to plan for and implement strategies to enhance the quality of children's physical activity experiences through meaningful engagement.

Glossary of Abbreviations

CF   Critical Friend

S-S   Self-Study

NQT   Newly Qualified Teacher

CPD   Continual Professional Development

TGfU   Teaching Games for Understanding

HHH   Head, Heart and Hands

PE   Physical Education

FYP   Final Year Project

1 Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This thesis explores pedagogies to facilitate children's meaningful participation in primary Physical Education (PE). This qualitative self-study is based on my own experiences of teaching PE lessons which had meaningful learning as its prioritised goal. In this chapter I outline the research rationale and the purpose of the study. I will also give a personal narrative explaining my connection to the study, the significance of this research and the approach to the research design will also be discussed.

1.2 Research Rationale

This research is part of an ongoing drive to make learning experiences in PE more personally meaningful for participants (Chen, 1998). According to Chen (1998) *"more investigation is needed to understand the subtlety and sophistication of meaning, if personally meaningful curricula are to be developed"* (p.304). This research seeks to respond to the call for more investigation into meaningful learning posed by Chen (1998). This is important as it provides pupils with an environment where they are given the opportunity to discover what is of personal significance to them, allowing them to develop more as individuals. It allows pupils an opportunity to discover what they find meaningful, what they take special interest in and look forward to participating in. This may promote the development of lifelong participation in activity as *"...if physical education can be made more meaningful and satisfying, then greater physical activity through the lifespan, may be anticipated"* (Browne and Payne, 2006). Supporting Kretchmar's (2001) belief of how meaningful participation *"can serve as a valuable ally in promoting adherence"* to activity.

The approach to meaningful participation used in this research builds on arguments for the personal meaning and intrinsic elements of physical activity experiences to be prioritised in PE (e.g. Bulger and Housner, 2009; Kretchmar, 2008; 2013; Rintala, 2009; Thorburn and MacAllister, 2013). This view is built on the belief that much of the learning experienced during physical activity is personal and conceived by the individual (Nilges 2004). The research proposes that an approach which prioritises the personal meanings associated with participation in physical activity may result in deep intrinsic or affective states such as joy and delight being accessed. This may result in a lifelong commitment to physical activity. Current approaches to physical education and physical activity, largely

based on utilitarian reasons such as prevention of disease, do not seem to provide sufficient motivation for some young people to commit to physical activity participation as a part of their everyday lives. By placing a greater focus on intrinsic rather than utilitarian reasons, children's participation in, and commitment to physical activity may be increased (Johnson, 2012; Blankenship and Ayers, 2010).

Physical education in primary schools provides a significant opportunity to foster children's physical activity related to meaningful experiences. Often pupils who participate in a PE lessonare fully able to carry out the activity required but can often fail to fully care about or value their participation in activities (Kretchmar 2013). As PE activities often carry different meanings for and are perceived differently by pupils, this research opportunity has allowed for the development of pedagogies that provide for the learning needs and desires of pupils focused on their meaningful engagement (Metheny 1968).

1.3   Significance of the Study

In recent times there has been large interest *"in the meaning and meaning-making dimensions of the experience of movement in physical education"* (Browne and Payne 2009, p.418). The provision of meaningful opportunities by educators will not only provide for a joyful physical education experience, it may also aid in pupils *"developing an awareness, openness and understanding of self"* (Brown and Payne 2009, p.425). This research responds to the call for the need of a reconceptualisation of pedagogical approaches to teaching physical education.

This research will provide empirical evidence of pedagogies that support meaningful participation in primary PE. Given the dearth of research focused on meaningful experiences in primary PE to date this study will augment the limited body of research on the topic of pedagogies for meaningful participation. Sharing these pedagogies will enable other teachers to plan for and implement these strategies, to enhance the quality of children's physical activity experiences through meaningful engagement. A new direction for research in relation to physical education practices and policies for the use of the meaningful pedagogies within PE lessons will be identified.

1.4   Primary Research Question

This qualitative self-study addressed the following research question: What are one teacher's experiences of implementing pedagogies to facilitate children's meaningful participation in primary PE? The purpose of the study was to explore one teacher's experience of implementing an approach that fostered children's meaningful participation in PE. The study aimed to identify pedagogies that facilitate meaningful experiences for children in primary physical education guided by Kretchmar's (2006) criteria for: social interaction, improved motor competence, challenge, fun and delight.

1.5   Research Design

Burns and Grove (2003) define a research design as *"a blueprint for conducting a study with maximum control over factors that may interfere with the validity of the findings"* (p.195). This research investigated and identified pedagogical approaches to meaningful participation in primary PE through a nine week intervention where tag rugby was taught once a week for 45 minutes.The research was carried out in two Limerick urban schools. The two groups in total consisted of 60 pupils all in 4th class. Both groups were from mixed schools consisting of both boys and girls ranging in ages from nine years to ten years old. Neither group had previous experience of participating in tag rugby in school prior to the research.

The research examined strategies to support children's meaningful participation, to identify pedagogies that supported and developed valuable meaningful learning opportunities for children in primary PE. Meaningful learning was facilitated through specific pedagogical strategies including the approach to task setting and teacher questioning, as well as opportunities for reflection on activity such as written reflections and discussion circles. After the fifth week of tag rugby the tools and strategies used to support meaningful learning in the first five weeks were refined and further strategies were introduced for the remaining four weeks of the research.

1.6   My Connection to the Study

Prior to completing this research project, I had very little experience of carrying out academic research. My teaching degree was not research-oriented and I did not have experience of completing a final year project (FYP) or thesis. Therefore, this research

provided me with an opportunity for professional development through the use of the self-study research methodology

I attended a small country primary school where I grew up loving PE. The positive experiences of PE in my early years lead me to want to become an encouraging and supportive teacher. Reflecting back on my primary school years, in light of the meaningful approach, it is clear that I ascribed my primary PE learning as a meaningful experience. Some of the reasons for me to ascribe my experiences as meaningful are because we got a voice in what activities to play, we practiced a range of different skills and we got to play outside with our classmates. The positive learning environment I had in school has encouraged me to improve in my role as a facilitator of PE as I want pupils to also experience positive learning, which I had growing up.

I am an avid sports person and have a background in Gaelic football, soccer, handball and rugby. I grew up on a farm and as a result was encouraged to be active and healthy from a very early age. Sport plays a major role in my life and my sport of choice is Rugby Union. I have been playing rugby for the past 8 years and have been playing representational rugby at Provincial level for over 5 years and at International level for the past year. As a result I am a very disciplined and self-motivated person. I recognise that these experiences of sport and PE may have created certain biases, although every effort will be made on my part to take these experiences into account as a qualitative self-study researcher.

1.7 Overview of the thesis

Chapter two provides an overview of the literature which focused on the approach that prioritises meaningful participation.The gap that this research is addressing will be clearly identified. Chapter three presents the qualitative research methodology used in this study, including an explanation of the data collection and analysis tools along with a brief overview of the pedagogies used to facilitate meaningful strategies used in the research. Chapter four explores my use of the meaningful pedagogies and focuses on my personal experience of implementing this self-study research and the developments I identified in my own practice as a result of the study. Chapter five involves a discussion of the main findings in relation to the meaningful pedagogies identified and my experience of carrying out the research. The research concludes in Chapter six with a summary of the main findings, and a

discussion of the strengths and limitations of the study, recommendations for future research and the significance of the study.

2 Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter will provide a comprehensive review of the literature on the approach to PE that prioritises meaningful engagement. The first part of this chapter will explain what is meant by meaningful engagement and will also review studies that investigated methods to facilitate meaningful learning in PE. The chapter will conclude with a review of pedagogies that have been identified as supporting in children's meaningful learning.

Pedagogy is defined as the method of practice of teaching where as pedagogical approaches are recognised as strategies underpinned by philosophies used in lessons to develop one's teaching and to achieve the identified learning outcomes. Loughran (2013) writes that *"pedagogy is understood as being embedded in the relationship between teaching and learning"* (p.118). They are the overall perspectives used to plan and apply the various instructional strategies. The use of different pedagogical approaches creates a list of criteria or principles that guides one's actions as a teacher. One's teaching style is shaped by the pedagogical approaches and methods used in ones teaching.

2.2 Meaningful Engagement

Meaningful engagement is idiosyncratic; it is an individual's personal and internal interpretation of a particular context and experience, drawing on their feelings and emotions and involves a "noticing" of their interest and their affective response to the experience (Kretchmar, 2007; Metheny, 1968). The need for a deeper understanding of pupil's processes is evident as *"most everybody agrees people will return to activities they find meaningful"* (Kretchmar 2007, p.375). The attention of educators should be, according to Rovai, Wighting, Baker and Grooms (2009), on learning through physical, cognitive and affective domains. To these three learning domains students personal, *"subjective and emotional experiences of movement"* (Kretchmar 2000, p.19) should be added. This will support a "whole child" approach where children's holistic learning is provided for.

Some theorists believe that meaning holds an important place in physical education because *"meaning is the key to understanding why people move"* (Kretchmar 2000, p.20). Without meaningful learning children cannot fully experience the joys of physical activity or understand how physical education can be personally and intrinsically meaningful to each person. Metheny (1968) believed that students should be given the opportunity to explore

physical activities, discovering what they find personally meaningful and in so doing would transport them from the mundane to the memorable (Kretchmar, 2013). Metheny believed that students, if given the opportunity, will find dance or sport forms that stir their souls (Kretchmar 2000, p.20).

Another avid speaker for promoting meaningful engagement in movement was Eleanor Metheny who believed that meaning is key to understanding why people move (Metheny 1968 cited in Kretchmar 2000). Metheny (1968 cited in Kretchmar 2000) outlined how meaning can take two forms, the denotative and the connotative. Denotative meaning describes the structure we give to a certain activity, they are the *"explicit identities that we attribute to activities"* (Metheny 1968 cited in Kretchmar 2000, p.21). Connotative meanings, on the other hand, are the personal experiences or connections we make with a given activity that often form from *"idiosyncratic personal histories"* (Metheny 1968 cited in Kretchmar 2000, p.21). Connotative meaning allows students to link their past experiences to a new activity, allowing for the development of a meaning rich learning environment. Similarly Kretchmar (2000) in his writings wrote that to foster genuinely meaningful reactions to movement from pupils one should *"emphasise connotative or symbolic meanings over denotations, focus on intrinsic rather that extrinsic meaning, offer experiences that move individuals figuratively 'away', 'toward' or 'along' and promote individual commitment to particular kinds of movement"* (p.23). According to the research of Metheny (1968 cited in Kretchmar 2000) and Kretchmar (2000), educators should refocus their planning to *"invite students into one or more subcultures"* (p.24).

Kretchmar (2000) wrote that *"physical education experiences that are filled with concepts, recognitions and other meanings may not still be very meaningful at all"* (Kretchmar 2000, p.19). As a result this literature review provides some insight into what meaningful experiences for individuals consist of (Kretchmar (2000, 2002, 2006), Metheny (1968), Nilges (2004), Chen and Ennis (2004)); some argue it is losing all sense of time while carrying out an activity, while others dispute it is being transported to another world during an activity.

The next section will discuss the approaches used to facilitate meaningful experiences, while also discussing particular studies that have investigated approaches that prioritise meaningful engagement. In this section literature will be reviewed to provide guidance on the approaches and pedagogies that promote meaningful engagement in PE

2.2.1 Approaches to Meaningful Participation

Kretchmar (2000) explains the three approaches educators have used in the past in order to increase the level of meaningful engagement in lessons: the prudential, the intellectual and the affective approach (Kretchmar 2000, p.20). The prudential method consisted of the teacher describing and promoting activity as a useful tool, focusing more on its health benefits rather than the personal meaning activity can provide. In this method the educator focused more on the practical benefits activity holds instead of viewing activity as appealing to self-interest. The intellectual approach saw meaning as a by-product of understanding, where if pupils learn more about the theory of movement they will *"become more interested in their own movement experiences"* (Kretchmar 2000, p.20). Thus the intellectual method perceived that when a pupil was intelligently engaged in movement one was also meaningfully engaged. The third approach which has been used for developing meaningful participation is the affective approach. This method has a joy-orientated focus, concentrating more on the elements pupils find 'fun' in planning activities to provide meaningful opportunities. If pupils are trying their best, succeeding, learning new skills while also improving known skills and playing with friends they will view an activity as fun (Kretchmar, 2000). This will result in pupils viewing physical activity in a positive way, seeing it as a means of enjoying themselves, while also as an opportunity to learn new things. The argument for the use of the affective approach is that an experience that includes positive affect is likely to be meaningful (Kretchmar 2000, p.20).

Kretchmar (2000), although explaining the three approaches of the prudential, the intellectual and the affective in depth, views that these approaches are far from sufficient in creating a sustainable meaningful environment. *"It seems that the good reasons, the knowledge and the fun, are not powerful enough, singly or in combination, to produce lifelong movers"* (Kretchmar 2000, p.21), it appears a more focused approach to meaningful activity is needed. According to Kretchmar (2000) educators should plan lessons that are of relevance and interest to their pupils. Chen and Ennis (2004) highlighted that using personal interest as a means of motivating participants in activity appears successful in promoting a positive meaningful environment. Intrinsic motivation appears to be the engine that drives activities, which first seem to rely on extrinsic motivation (Kretchmar 2000, p.21). As consequence, intrinsic motivation results in a personal commitment to activity, culminating in a sense of fun and enjoyment (Kretchmar 2000, p.21). Individual interest holds an important place in creating an enjoyable motivating environment for pupils as *"educators*

should nurture in students a high individual interest in the subject content as a primary motivator" (Chen and Ennis 2004, p.335). Ryan and Deci's (2000a) self-determination theory also referred to behaviours carried out in the absence of external impetus (motivation) that are inherently interesting and enjoyable (intrinsic motivation). In addition Kretchmar (2000) wrote how teachers should shift from the authoritarian role of 'instructor' to the liberal role of 'activity broker' (p.24). Instead of instructing set rules, the educator provides students with a sense of ownership over their learning. This is achieved by providing students with an opportunity where they are free to explore and sculpt their physical education environment and personal experiences. A reconceptualisation of the role of students within lessons is also advised by Kretchmar (2000).

Kretchmar (2006) proposed that educators should promote and provide personally meaningful experiences for pupils within physical education settings. There is an argument that educators should move away from teacher-directed, impersonal and reason grounded activities, instead providing for *"self-directed, personally meaningful and reason-transcending play"* (Kretchmar 2006, p.7). When pupils are allowed more control of their own physical education experience it allows them to carry out activities they find meaningful in their own right, by allowing the use of skills and knowledge from past activities. As Kurzman (2012) argues; *"Humans may identify, evaluate and engage with identical perceptual 'inputs' in quite different ways, depending on the meanings we associate with these inputs"* (p.6). The argument by Kurzman (2012) transforms the view that pupils are mere agents of teacher instruction, instead viewing them as *"meaning seeking individuals who seem to flourish"* when in contact with classmates and when making *"significant stories"* out of their lives (Kretchmar 2000, p.24). Similarly the Irish Primary PE Curriculum (1999) also views children taking ownership over their learning as a major beneficial step in their development, "*If allowed to experiment, the child will invent many games in which to apply developing skills and understanding"* (p.4).

This enlightened view of pupils supported by both Kretchmar (2000, 2006) and Kurzman (2012) promotes the creation of new attitudes towards activity, shifting from health focused curriculum driven, into moments of meaningful experience. Rather than regarding educators as being solely curriculum driven, Kretchmar (2000) views them as facilitators who can *"guide students into subcultures where meanings that have the power to move lie all around"* (p.25). Kretchmar (2000) gives clear recommendations for the creation of meaningful experiences, advocating for the creation of a student-centred environment.

The use of Kretchmars (2000) guidelines for meaningful participation as a reference point can aid in the development of a meaningful physical education experience.

2.2.1.1 A Joy-Oriented Environment

A joy-oriented physical education environment may be used in creating meaningful experiences for pupils as *"joy-oriented … physical education is important because movement is joyful, pleasurable, provides intrinsic satisfaction and can be personally meaningful and central to the human experience"* (Blankenship and Ayers 2010, p.171) .In order to promote a joy-oriented physical education lesson, one must move away from shallow play which is temporary and superficial, instead embracing deep play.

The concept of play is closely linked to a joy-oriented physical education environment. Daryl Siedentop (1994) and Andrew Hawkins (2008) maintain that play is the spirit and most *"essential meaning of physical education"* (Hawkins 2008, p.353). Kretchmar (2005) writes that play can be categorized into two forms, shallow and deep play. Shallow play results in a momentary sense of delight where desired effect is experienced for a period of time but it fails to *"grab us at our core . . . engage the imagination . . . inspire . . . carry us away on wings of delight"* (Kretchmar, 2005, p.150). Unfortunately shallow play appears most often in physical education lessons, as it appears educators are *"satisfied with their students experiencing a temporary positive effect during class"* (Blankenship and Ayers 2010, p.172). On the other hand deep play is a more desired condition as it is long-lasting, and does engage, delight and inspire us (Kretchmar, 2005). Subsequently *"Deep play results in the participant taking a personal interest in an activity, with it becoming part of their identity"* (Blankenship and Ayers 2010, p.172).

Deep-play aids in providing meaningful experiences for pupils through the development of 'playgrounds'. These 'playgrounds' provide a 'second world' for pupils where they are free to explore their likes and dislikes in a safe secure environment. These playgrounds are constructed environments that have emerged over time through continual participation and success (Kretchmar, 2005). Consequently *"A playground requires commitment, time, effort and persistence to grow and continue"* (Blankenship and Ayers 2010, p.172). Here, pupils can engage in activities they find personally meaningful in an environment that has developed over time through continued participation and success (Blankenship and Ayers, 2012). Just-right tasks and challenges have a major contributing factor to the creation of these desired playgrounds as *"play is most enjoyable when we*

attempt tasks that are not too easy or too hard for us" (Kretchmar, 2000). This positive environment will allow the optimum opportunity for pupils to make personal meaning of an experience by giving them an environment to reflect on the activity.

2.2.2 The Five Criteria for Meaningful Participation in PE

The criteria for meaningful participation were developed by Kretchmar (2001) building on a previous held belief that engagement in activity can stem more from habit rather than meaning, *"... human beings are creatures of habit and good habits of active living can be generated without significant reliance on ... any other kind of notable meaning"* (p.318). Kretchmar (2006) highlighted guidelines educators should consider in order to ensure they organise their educational practice in a way that supports meaningful participation, moving on from his previous belief of activity being habitual. Kretchmar (2006a) identified five criteria that promote a meaningful PE experience: *"social interaction, challenge, increased motor competence, fun and delight"* (p.7). Chen (1998) also investigated high school student's conceptions of meaningfulness in their PE classes. Similarly Chen (1998) also developed a construct of meaningfulness based on student's perceptions. In her research she found that *"the students conceptualized meaningfulness in physical education through internalising meanings perceived in activity"* (Chen 1998, p.298).

Rather than giving set guidelines to follow for creating a meaningful environment, Kretchmar instead gave recommendations to achieve the desired conditions. In his writings, Kretchmar (2006) recommended that educators should plan lessons that allow for positive social interaction among pupils and their classmates. While also planning lessons that have a suitable level of challenge through the use of just-right tasks, these tasks give pupils a level of confidence regarding their ability when they are able to successfully complete an activity. *"Challenges or just right problems stand as the fundamental play attractor for human kind"* (Kretchmar 2006, p.352). Children will return to tasks that have a suitable level of challenge but also hold opportunities for success allowing, for meaningful accomplishments. 'Just-right' challenges and problems possess the lure and challenge of success, which can be achieved with sufficient support, time, effort, commitment, persistence and patience (Kretchmar, 2006b). These *"meaningful accomplishments are those that have criteria, rules, standards for success and criteria for excellence"* (Kretchmar 2006, p.352). Understanding of Vygotsky's theory of the 'Zone of Proximal Development' (ZPD) can inform educators in how to structure just right tasks. As *"instruction focused within each students ZPD is not too*

difficult or too easy, but just challenging enough to help him or her develop new skills by building on ones that have already been established" (Lui 2012,p.2).

Educators, according to Kretchmar (2006), should continually build on previous lessons content, increasing pupil's levels of motor competence by learning new skills in a positive safe PE environment. A positive PE environment is viewed as important to children's meaningful learning as *"physical spaces for elementary school children become personal places for exploring, discovering, expressing, inventing and creating"*(Kretchmar 2008, p.167). In his writing Kretchmar (2006) explained how children should experience fun and delight when carrying out an activity. Fun and delight are fundamental parts of an enjoyable and meaningful lesson as educators are the *"purveyors of one of the greatest playgrounds known to humankind"* (Kretchmar 2006, p.7). Children will, more often than not, return to activities they find fun or delightful, resulting in them making meaning within an activity. However an emotion that extends beyond fun is delight, which is *"typically more durable"* (Kretchmar 2006, p7). Delight helps in building and maintaining a meaningful learning environment as it is the feeling we encounter when we are *"enthralled, carried away or captivated"* in carrying out an activity (Kretchmar 2006,p.7). This sense of delight results in students being transported from the mundane to the memorable, culminating in physical education becoming an unforgettable part of their day and educational experience (Kretchmar 2006, p.7).

2.2.2.1 The Place of Meaningful Experiences in the Irish Primary PE Curriculum

The Irish Primary PE Curriculum (1999) provides a clear review of pedagogies and approaches which they belive facilitate a high quality PE environment. On review of the primary PE curriculum (1999) there are clear odes to ideas shared by Kretchmar (2006) on how to foster a meaningful PE environment. For example on page four of the curriculum the games strand provides opportunities for 'social interaction' and 'developing skills and understanding' (improved motor competence). Importantly, the strand descriptor ends by making reference to two other criteria also viewed by Kretchmar (2006) as providing for meaningful PE; 'enjoyment' (fun) and 'challenge'. The section ends by referencing the curricular aim of developing pupils 'lifelong interest'; a term which correlates with Blankenship and Ayers (2010) desire to develop 'lifelong movers' through meaningful PE.

2.2.3 Pedagogies to support Meaningful Participation

Supporting meaningful participation in PE involves the use of a wide range of pedagogical strategies to ensure ample opportunities to discover what moves an individual to *"fuse with their environment"* to an extent (Kretchmar 2000, p.22). Only one researcher has examined the meaningful experiences of children in PE. Nilges (2004) adopted a phenomenological approach and identified five dimensions of meaning for her participants; the expressive, the sensory, the experiential, competency and the inter-subjective (p.8). Nilges (2004) argues that the meanings formed in each dimension are individualised and are created personally through phenomenological construction.

Metheny (1968) also provided guidance for educators in how to structure lessons to provide the optimum level of meaningful PE experiences for pupils. She wrote how educators should structure lessons in the form of ritual that provides for both cultural and personal connotations. *"Cultural connotations remind individuals of who they are, who they belong to and where they came from"*, it provides a rich foundation for educators to plan activities that are of interest to pupils (Metheny 1968 cited in Kretchmar 2000, p.21). Metheny (1968) argues that the use of the term 'ritual' in planning lessons is justified as *"ritual reminds people by locating them, giving them connections and pointing them in the right direction"* (Metheny 1968 cited in Kretchmar 2000, p.21), therefore providing ample opportunities for personal meaningful experiences to be created. As a result educators should *"... teach in ways that promote both personal meaning, related to their students' individual lives, and shared meanings, related to the common values of their students' time and culture"* (Metheny 1968 cited in Kretchmar 2000, p.21). Metheny's (1968) approach highlighted how personal meaning should be supported by a social frame to ensure opportunities for meaningful learning for pupils. She believed this would allow teachers to tap into past experiences that can both remind and inspire pupils to carry out an activity.

2.2.4 Rationale for Choosing Pedagogies

The following pedagogies were chosen to be enacted during the research process as they provided the optimum opportunity to implement Kretchmar's (2006) five criteria for meaningful PE. The pedagogies were used as they encouraged activities to be more pupil-focused rather than teacher-directed. This supported the Irish PE guidelines which stated *"all lessons should be organised to encourage maximum participation by the child"* (PE Guidelines 1999, p.51).

Personal Goal Setting: Personal goal setting is a technique established by Locke (1968) and was a pedagogy I used that aligned with Kretchmar's (2006) criteria of fun and challenge. I felt that personal goal setting would support children's' meaningful participation because*"personal goal setting helps make the learning process more personal and therefore more meaningful..."* (Brown and Payne 2009, p.40). Personal goal setting is used as it can help to focus children's attention, can promote pupils to actively participate in relation to the demands of the activity, increase task persistence and encourage children to develop and identify strategies for achieving their personal goals (Locke 1968).

Learning with the Head, Heart and Hands: The HHH approach is a pedagogy developed by physical education blogger Andy Vasily (2015). The approach divides learning into three areas which aids in introducing the approach in the classroom as children are not overwhelmed by large amounts of information at once. The 'head' focuses on rules, tactics and safety (cognitive dimension), the 'heart' focuses on thoughts and feelings (affective dimension), and the 'hands' focuses on the skills necessary for tag rugby (physical dimension). This represents a "whole child" approach, where children's physical, affective and cognitive learning are all considered in the learning experience.

Reflections: Reflections as a pedagogy for meaningful learning was supported in the writing of Bain (1995) who wrote that movement is only made meaningful through the method of reflection. Reflections encourage pupils to pause and reflect on their PE lesson; encouraging participants to internalise there experience and draw personal meaning from the activity. The use of the reflection pedagogy requires pupils to think deeply on their personal experience of activity. It is important for the participants to assess and reflect on a given activity as it is *"in moments of reflection spectators and participants alike experience the power sport\activity has to move them"* (Kretchmar 2000, p.22). Similarly Arnold (1979) also found that meaningful learning is *"movement constituted by the performer"* (p.20). It is important to motivate student's interest as *"Meaning is created between the event and the individual's reaction to it"* (Ignelzi 2000, p.7). This meaningful environment can be achieved through the use of reflections, class discussion and think-pair share.

The PE environment indentified by Kretchmar (2000) would involve participants being active members in their learning with children given a large level of responsibility for the structure and progression of lessons (NCCA, 2008). A PE lesson designed to facilitate

meaningful participation should include opportunities to reflect on an activity and share their opinions within a group or individually (Eison, 2010). As it is in these moments of personal reflection that *"participants experience the power sport has to move them"* (Kretchmar 2000, p.22). Children's meaningful participation would result in pupils making connections between lesson content and how this can be applied to other activities and experiences (Kretchmar, 2000).

Chedzoy and Burden (2009) investigated the thoughts and feelings of students on the aspects of doing well in physical education. Maivorsdottir et al (2014) explored physical education student teachers process of participating in lessons (Maivorsdottir et al. 2014, p.1). The study explored how *"meaning-making... is expressed in students stories by analysing what is being valued in the students meaning-making"* of activities (Maivorsdottir et al. 2014, p.14). Similarly in my research I analysed children's tag rugby acrostic poems to assess for instances of meaningful learning.

Reflections provide a first-hand written or verbal account of pupil's experiences and feelings. This insight will prove useful in providing meaningful physical education for pupils, moving away from physical education that has often been constructed in a practical or utilitarian manner instead leaving this new experience wide open to conceptualizations from each individual person (Brown and Payne 2009). Participants accounts of learning can be used to aid educators in planning activities that provide for numerous meaningful opportunities for pupils as *"children's thinking is embedded in a context which has some meaning to them..."* (Moyle's 2001, p.14).Therefore reflections provide suitable opportunity for class discussion to "*enhance student understanding, add context to academic content, broaden student perspectives, highlight opposing viewpoints, reinforce knowledge, build confidence, and support community in learning"* (Blount and Napolitano, 2014).

To assess individual learning educators must listen carefully to what *"students say about their experiences, including how they make sense of learning, their relationships with others, and themselves"* (Ignelzi 2000, p.11). This 'understanding' can be developed through communication with pupils, as often children are extremely honest about their likes and dislikes and what activities they find enjoyable. Children who tend to be very honest about what they are thinking and feeling as well as what they do and don't understand, provide clear insights into truisms about how human beings function (Ignelzi 2000). This reflection on experience may help in informing future meaningful PE strategies for educators. These 'insights' along with pupils' deeper understanding of the 'self' can aid educators in providing

meaningful educative lessons and experiences. This safe environment, where children feel free to share their opinions, is vital for personally meaningful learning.

The play-teach play pedagogy: This method is often used in teaching games using the TGfU model. Graham (2008) suggests: *"Connection between practice and play are made clearer by initially playing the game, which then helps both the children and the teacher understand and decide on the skills or combination of skills to practice* (p.94)." The play-teach-play pedagogy was chosen as it also promotes understanding through collaboration between players. Working in small groups the children participate and problem solve together to identify good tactical solutions. The advantage of using play-teach-play *"...is that children can clearly see what and why they need to practice"* (Graham 2008, p.94). The approach promotes children to take ownership of their learning and allows for activities to become self-directed by the children. The play-teach-play pedagogy aids in a pupil's individual development as they practice skills in the actual context they were to be used (Graham, 2008), developing the children's tactical understanding of skills.

Evaluation Rubric: *"A rubric is defined as a tool for assessing instruction and performance according to predetermined expectations and criteria"* (Taggart et al. 1999, p.ix). Evaluation rubrics can have a dual function as both an assessment and instructional tool because *"rubrics can function as meaningful objective tools"* (Taggart et al. 1999, p.xi). Rubrics provide ample opportunities for pupils to reflect on their learning, either individually or grouped, and provide students with the opportunity to develop a deeper understanding. *"As students become accustomed to using rubrics to evaluate themselves, they learn criteria for achievement levels and how to set goals and strive to reach them"* (Taggart et al. 1999, p.xv). The goals created while using rubrics will allow students to create a meaningful learning experience that is of personal value to them.

The spirit point scoresheet is an example on an evaluation rubric used during this research project. The spirit point score sheet is an approach where children self-assess their performance based on clear success criteria, in this instance geared toward the affective domain. The spirit points system was chosen because of the importance of appropriate "spirit" and fair play in physical activity participation: *"Players must know the rules, be fair-minded and truthful, explain their viewpoint clearly and briefly, allow opponents a*

*reasonable chance to speak and resolve disputes as quickly as possible, using respectful language" (*WFDF, 2016*).*

Teaching by Invitation: Teaching by invitation is a pedagogy which echoes the guided-discovery approach endorsed by the Irish Primary PE Curriculum (1999). Teaching by invitation involves giving participants two or more task options, all of which practice a similar skill, and participants choose the activity which best suites their ability. Similar to guided-discovery, teaching by invitation can be used where the teacher wishes to place an emphasis on leading the children to explore and experiment with certain movement challenges or skills (Physical Education Teacher Guidelines 1999, p.43)

Making Learning Personally Relevant: The method of making learning personally relevant is used to adopt a holistic approach to teaching by engaging participants at the personal, emotional, physical and mental level. The approach is also used to relate similartieis between PE activites and other sports and games to pupils. Therefore I was aiming to support pupil's understanding of their experiences so that they *"would not be limited to the school day or in-class instruction"* (Kretchmar 2006, p.352). The pedagogy is used in teaching to support children in *"making connections across areas of activity, and to understand similarities and differences between activities and learning as well as enhancing pupils understanding"* (Capel et al, 2013, p.30).

Think-Pair-Share: *"The Think-Pair-Share strategy is designed to differentiate instruction by providing students time and structure for thinking on a given topic, enabling them to formulate individual ideas and share these ideas with a peer"* (Simon 2014). This method similar to class discussion could prove useful in developing student's meaningful learning as it gives adequate time to reflect on a given activity and to internalise its personal meaning for them, supporting Eisons (2010) that children should be given time to reflect both in groups and individually. Think-Pair-Share supports the use of the making-learning personally relevant pedagogy as it enables learners to relate their personal views on activities to their peers and teachers. Therefore *"Sharing is crucial in order to build and advance knowledge in ways that might be useful and valuable for others"* (Blumberg 2009, p.8). Think-pair share provides for this 'sharing' and is an extremely useful method which can be used in an already active P.E setting at any stage in the learning process. *"Think-Pair-*

Share helps students develop conceptual understanding of a topic, develop the ability to filter information and draw conclusions, and develop the ability to consider other points of view" (Simon 2014). It is a method which allows for social interaction among classmates, fulfilling one of Kretchmar'scriterion for meaningful learning.

2.2.5 Summary

The Irish PE guidelines state that, throughout lessons children *"should be given opportunities to discuss"* (p.85) both tactics and game organisation. Therefore play-teach-play and making learning personally relevant supported group discussion as recommended by the Irish guidelines. The spirit point scoresheet and written reflections acted as a measure of both pupil's performance but also their thought processes in carrying out activities. The written data which resulted from the use of personal goal setting, reflections, learning with the head, the heart and hands and spirit points acted as a *"record of a child's progress"* (PE Guidelines 1999, p.100).

2.3 Conclusion

The review of the literature shows the different views of researchers who have all investigated approaches for prioritising student's meaningful engagement in activities. Review of the relevant literature indicates that educators by facilitating meaningful engagement may provide children with opportunities to identify aspects of participation that are personally meaningful. The literature review clearly indicates the value of setting learning tasks based on student's personal interests and the benefits of adopting a joy-orientated PE environment. However there is little information on what pedagogies educators should use to foster pupils meaningful engagement in primary PE

A review of the literature shows that more research is needed to identify pedagogies and strategies that educators can use to effectively create a meaningful PE learning experience for their students. This research will address this gap and add to the limited body literature by identifying pedagogies to support children's meaningful learning in primary PE. The following chapter will discuss the research methodology used in this qualitative self-study. The data collection tools and data analysis methods used will be outlined. A brief explanation of the meaningful pedagogies used in lessons will also be given.

3 Chapter 3: Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

Burns and Grove (2003) describe a qualitative approach to research *as "a systematic subjective approach used to describe life experiences and situations to give them meaning"* (p.19). The qualitative approach is used by researchers to explore the experiences, perspectives, feelings and behaviours of people and to gain insight into their understanding of a topic. The qualitative approach was adopted into my research to create a person-centred holistic viewpoint in order to understand how the participants identified experiences as meaningful, through the use of particular meaningful pedagogies.

A collaborative self-study (LaBoskey, 2004) approach provided the methodological frame for this research. Self-study requires teachers to describe and analyse their practice, make judgments on teaching and learning encounters, interpret their developing pedagogies and identify enabling and limiting aspects of pedagogical practices (Ovens and Fletcher, 2014). LaBoskey's (2004) criteria for quality in self-study were adopted: (a) self-initiated and -focused, (b) improvement aimed, (c) interactive, (d) multiple forms of qualitative data, and (e) validity based in trustworthiness. Self-study was chosen as the research methodology as it provides opportunities for a researcher to look reflectively at *"their philosophical orientation relative to knowledge making and curriculum values"* while also considering their *"instructional techniques that help students access meaning"* (Nilges 2004, p.298). The self-study approach was chosen as the research methodology to enable me to carry out a qualitative study of the pedagogies I believed best provided for children's meaningful participation opportunities in my practice. A 'critical friend' approach (further detail in section 3.2.2) was used to challenge my assumptions about teaching PE through the use of an approach that prioritised children's meaningful learning. The rationale for using a qualitative self-study approach to this research was to explore and describe my experiences of supporting children's meaningful participation and identify what pedagogies supported that process.

3.1.1 Approach to Research Design

The teaching games for understanding model (TGfU) was chosen along with the invasion game of tag rugby as the mediums used for investigating the chosen meaningful pedagogies. The TGfU model was decided upon as it is a holistic model that focuses on

individual and personal development rather than solely skill development (Hopper et al., 2002). The TGfU model allowed games sense such as problem solving, to be taught in tandem with the various skills required in tag rugby by adding skills at a pace that was appropriate to the children's skill level. The TGfU model allowed greater opportunities for deep thinking and reflection on activities (Hopper et al., 2002) with questions being focused more on 'Why are we doing the skill and how can we do it better?' rather than 'How do we do the skill?'. Through the manipulation of game factors such as time, space and tasks along with the use of key questions a strong understanding of the game and the person as a player can be developed.

TGfU was first introduced by Bunker and Thorpe (1982) and originally consisted of a six step model. As a result of the TGfU model and the revised approach to games teaching it promoted, *"the perspective of the teaching-learning process has evolved from a teacher centred approach to a more student-centred approach where students are encouraged to develop problem solving skills, critical thinking and autonomy of thought"* (Tan et al. 2012, p.332). The key feature of the TGfU model lies in the design of well-structured games that require students to make decisions, improving their understanding of games (Griffin and Butler, 2005). The original model consisted of six steps which were;

1. **The game**, is introduced to the class and is changed and altered to meet the developmental level of the class.
2. **Game appreciation**, the class should be introduced to the rules and concepts of the game (e.g. boundaries, scoring, teams etc.)
3. **Tactical awareness**, the class must think about game strategy in order to help them work through and understand the principles of the game.
4. **Making appropriate decisions**, pupils must consider and focus on decision making processes that occur in games and learn to adapt to these situations.
5. **Skill execution**, this focuses on how the class carry out a certain skills and movements. The skill is always performed and related to game context.
6. **Performance**, the class carry out the activity putting what they learned about the different elements of the game into practice.

(Griffin and Butler 2005, p.2)

These steps were then coupled with four pedagogical strategies that Bunker and Thorpe (1982) later developed; sampling, representation, exaggeration and tactical complexity. Sampling gives pupils the opportunity to explore and experience the similarities and differences among games, understanding how skills can be transferable. Representation involves playing miniature versions of the game where pupils can practice game skills in smaller groups. Exageration involves changing the structure or secondary rules of the game to emphasise certain skills or decision making (e.g. narrow space to help keep depth). Tactical complexity involves matching the game activity to the skill level of the class, ensuring all activities are developmentally appropriate (Griffin and Butler 2005). Griffin, Mitchell and Oslin (1997) previously simplified the TGfU model to a three stage model focusing on what they believe to be the three essential elements of the approach. These elements are game form (introducing children to different forms of a game), tactical awareness (understanding of game tactics) and execution of skills.

The TGfU model has redirected games learning from a highly structured technique based focus, with an emphasis on knowledge and technical development, to a more student based approach that teaches both tactics and skills in small game learning contexts (Tan et al. 2004). Griffin et al. (1997) state in their book which is devoted to the use of an integrated tactical/skill approach for teaching games, that *"a tactical approach…lets your students experience the excitement of actual play before they begin practicing specific skills…When they understand why each skill is important, students can apply the skills effectively during game play"* (p. 1).

3.1.2 Tag Rugby

Tag rugby was chosen as the activity to be used in the research process as it is a game that requires a large level of higher order thinking and reasoning. This promoted meaningful learning as the pupils were required to reflect deeply on their activity and provide feedback on carrying out particular tasks. Tag rugby was also seen as an enjoyable game pupils did not have a large amount of experience participating in, providing a sense of excitement in taking part in a fun new activity. Tag rugby was selected as it is developmentally appropriate as it requires being divided into set learning stages and phases in order to teach the skills and concepts effectively. This provided the optimum opportunity for planning the use of specific meaningful pedagogies at the various stages of the learning process in order to assess their function in teaching for meaning.

Tag rugby involves the use of a large number of skills such as catching and passing, making space and identifying space, working as a team and communication. All of these skills are transferable to many other activities outside of tag rugby. The transferrable nature of skills allows pupils to gain confidence in their ability through the mastering of skills and bringing that confidence into other sporting areas.

Tag rugby was also seen as an activity that was culturally appropriate as the research was carried out in two Limerick schools and Limerick is seen as the home of Munster rugby. This builds from Metheny's (1968) argument for the use of *"cultural connotations"* when planning activities. As rugby plays such a major part in the culture of Limerick it was seen as an activity that would be of interest to the pupils, holding their attention throughout the lessons. Due to this tag rugby was viewed as an activity that was extremely suitable and appropriate to be used as a medium to support children's meaningful participation.

Both the Teaching Games for Understanding model (Appendix R) which are; the game, game appreciation, tactical awareness, making appropriate decisions, skill execution, performance and the invasion game of tag rugby were used in teaching the following tag rugby skills and tactics:

1. Catching and passing the ball.
2. Running with the ball in two hands.
3. How to tag a person.
4. Running into space and making space.
5. Defending and working as a team.
6. Going forward with the ball.
7. Scoring a try.

These skills were taught through different games and activities that practiced each skill both independently and in unison, (E.g. Grab a tag, Bulldog, Captains table, Endball, Mini-games of tag rugby, and Partner score). The class were divided equally into different groups each week with the games organised into equal sized grids, allowing every opportunity for interpersonal interaction between classmates but also successful practice of skills and concepts.

3.1.3 Teaching Stages

Weeks 1-3	Passing (backwards) and catching, how to tag a person, side stepping, spacial awareness, attacking and defending activities level 1
Weeks 4-6	Running into space and making space, attacking and defending activities level 2, defending as a team
Weeks 7-8	Identifying space, attacking and defending activities level 3, making space level 2 (support runner, loops, drawing the defender)
Week 9	Games day

Table 3.1 Teaching Stages

3.1.4 Planning Guide

Kretchmar's (2006) five criteria for meaningful participation in PE were used as a planning guide to provide for optimal opportunities for children's meaningful experiences throughout the research process. The criteria which guided the planning process were as follows:

1. **Social Interaction**: Involved the use of activities that had positive group interaction. This was achieved through the use of activities that required large levels of communication between groups and participants in order to carry out activities. Activities were designed that allowed for some degree of peer teaching with pupils giving advice to one another on how to improve or master a certain skill.

2. **Challenge**: Involved adapting activities to make them easier or harder, often using ideas shared by the children to achieve this level of challenge. The appropriate level of challenge was promoted through teaching by invitation, feedback and 'just-right' challenges.

3. **Increased motor competence**: Children learned the fundamental skills and knowledge of tag rugby and invasion games. This was accomplished through the use of activities that required personal goal setting from pupils while also providing children with opportunities to practice skills to gain a sense of confidence in their ability.

4. **Fun**: Throughout the lessons I asked the children what activities they enjoyed and activities were planned in accordance to pupil's interests. Fun was used as a vehicle

for achieving meaningful participation rather than as an outcome. Children were asked what activities they enjoyed and were supported in reflecting on what made an activity enjoyable (reflections, think-pair share, questioning and photo elicitation and picture drawing). Self-determination theory, which explores the effects of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, was used in the design of activities, this allowed pupils to discuss what motivated them to carry out the activity and why they found the particular activity enjoyable.

5. **Delight**: Given the length of the intervention it was not possible to sufficiently plan for the criterion of delight as outlined by Kretchmar (2006). Efforts were made however, to make learning personally relevant to learners and build on their interests. These methods were used to allow for a sense of deep play which is more durable than just fun. Delight involves children losing all sense of time when participating in an activity and will make PE an *"unforgettable part of their educational experience"* (Kretchmar 2006, p.7).

Kretchmars (2006) criteria were used in the planning of lessons to provide for childrens meaningful engagement similarly the self-study research methodology was also used to inform the design of the research and data collection.

3.2 Self-Study

Self-study is a methodology or a *"stance that a researcher takes towards understanding or explaining the physical or social world"* (Samaras 2011, p.67). It is a useful methodology often used by educators for professional betterment as *"self-study involves an intrapersonal quest to understand one's practice"* (Samaras and Freese 2006 p.51). Whitehead (1993 cited by Louie et al. 2003, p. 150) views self-study research as a mode of scholarly inquiry in which teachers examine their beliefs and actions within the context of their work as educators and explore pedagogical questions. This involves a clear and concise plan of the actions to be carried out at various stages, in order to collect the relevant data to inform the research process.

Self-study provided a structured framework that allowed me to improve both my teaching and answer the research question about pedagogy (Louie et al. 2003). Self-study has a distinct and intentional focus on the self while also focusing on improving personal pedagogies. In his findings, Barnes (1998) explained how self-study researchers must have a

temperament that is approachable to new ideas from others, and how collaboration plays a decisive function in self-study. As researchers, one can frame and reframe a problem from different perspectives through discussion and collaboration with other educators and students. Reframing is vital in self-study as it provides an opportunity for the researcher to consider issues differently, reflect on themselves as educators, change how one looks at what's occurring in classrooms and school environments, and ultimately adjust one's practices for the better (Hamilton and Pinnegar, 1998). Self-study acted as a useful tool for both teacher improvement and knowledge generation about my own practice and outlook (Louie et al 2003).

3.2.1 The Self-Study Lens

Self-study differs from reflexive practice in that it is *"an extension of reflection on practice, with aspirations that go beyond professional development"* (Loughran and Northfield 1998, p.15). Rather than solely focussing on improving one's own practice, self-study extends into the wider communication and generation of new knowledge and understanding (Loughran and Northfield, 1998). Hence *"self-study's intellectual roots are intimately tied to the development of the qualitative research paradigm"* (Loughran and Northfield, p.22). Context, process and relationships are key elements to the self-study of teaching and educative practice (Bullough and Pinnegar 2001).

3.2.2 Characteristics of Self-Study

3.2.2.1 The Five Foci

Samaras' Five Foci give a clear description of what is required in self-study. The Five Foci framework provides a manageable format and set of guidelines for one to understand and apply self-study in a high-quality self-study teacher research project (Samaras 2011). The Five Foci are;

(a) Personal Situated Inquiry:

Much like LaBoskey's (2004) first principle of self-study being self-initiated or focused, Samaras (2011) recognises that the research involves an educator carrying out a self-study of their practice and draws from their own personal experience. It provides educators with the opportunity to *"explore who they are as a teacher"* (Samaras 2011, p.72)

but also acts as a self-assessment tool allowing for professional betterment throughout the research period and beyond.

(b) Critical Collaborative Inquiry (A Critical Friend):

The term self-study indicates that the research method requires predominantly individual work, however, *"self-study is validated through collaboration including testing, sharing and challenging exemplars of teaching practices"* (LaBoskey 2004, p.252). These are often carried out with a critical friend, who has a major role in the development of the research topic as they cause the researcher to pause and reflect on their work at various points throughout the research: *"Critical friends encourage and solicit respectful questioning and divergent views to obtain alternative perspectives and work to help validate the quality and legitimacy of each other's work"* (Samaras 2011, p.10). A critical friend is believed to be a beneficial resource as they provide a researcher with an outside perspective and often highlight an area in one's work that the researcher may have overlooked. In this way, critical friends serve as validators who provide feedback in the process of shaping one's research (Samaras 2011).

(c) Improved Learning:

The process of self-study provides an improved continuum of learning for both teacher and student, as both experience new methodologies and exciting learning opportunities. As LaBoskey (2004) writes, all self-study should be in some way improvement-aimed. Ideally, the focus of the improvement should be on understanding one's *self-in-practice.* This is one way to distinguish self-study from other common methodologies. For example (and stated briefly), action research is directed toward better understanding practice, while auto ethnography is directed toward better understanding the self. Self-study at its core combines the two but does not prioritise one domain (self or practice). Teachers who engage in self-study research enhance professional development and greatly influence student learning, *"inform programs, influence policy decisions and reform education"* (Samaras 2011, p.72).

(d) Transparent and Systematic Research Process:

It is imperative that researchers clearly and systematically document their research process in order to create a clear argument. As Hamilton and Pinnegar (1998, p.243) note,

"The value of self-study depends on the researcher or teacher providing convincing evidence that they know what they claim to". This can only be achieved if the researcher collects information, which is of relevance to the study, in a structured and informative manner. Systematic research helps reduce the possibility of bias as it uses transparent and clear procedures when carrying out the task: *"A systematic review uses transparent procedures to find, evaluate and synthesize the results of relevant research"* (Campbell 2014). This prevents confusion regarding the structure of the study but also heightens the validity of the material gathered in informing the research. In self-study, teacher-initiated research it is important that one is collecting data that provides information about their efforts to improve one's practice and students' learning (Samaras 2011, p.161). It requires a large level of organisation with the researcher maintaining a nature of openness to questions, views and critiques often contributed by a critical friend regarding their study.

Self-study involves the use of multiple methods that *"have been developed largely by and for self-study teacher educators"* (Samaras 2011, p.88). The use of multiple methods enables us to acknowledge the hidden factors that can impact the self-study research process, such as context, process and history (Hamilton and Pinnegar, 2009). Examples of multiple-methods used in self-study research can include interviews, observations, critical friend reflections, lesson notes and journals. We use these methods *"to help us better understand what we hope to examine and to reveal for the readers where we looked, how we looked, and along with the evidence from which we will develop our analysis"* (Hamilton and Pinnegar 2009, p.106).

(e) Knowledge Generation and Presentation:

The research process generates knowledge regarding the researched topic, acting as a useful resource in both personal and school development. By questioning assumptions regarding their own personal practice, self-study researchers generate and share new knowledge to inform their future teaching. Although the study involves an investigation of the 'self' and is of personal concern, it requires making one's research known and available to the larger public. This 'presentation' of knowledge *"allows teachers to work towards real change with and through others"* (Samaras 2011, p.82). LaBoskey (2004) in his writings views validity in self-study as being dependent on trustworthiness, leading the reader to decide whether or not the findings from the research ring true to their own personal experience.

3.3 Pedagogies for Meaningful Participation

The following section details the pedagogical approaches used in fostering childrens meaningful participation during the tag rugby unit. How the pedagogical approaches were used in lessons to provide for childrens meaningful learning will also be discussed.

3.3.1 Student Centred Approach

The student-centred approach was adopted in each lesson throughout the research process to create a positive learning environment for pupils. This approach was decided upon as it shifted instruction away from the teacher to the pupil, providing them with a sense of ownership over their learning. Student-centred learning is an approach in education, which focuses on the needs of the students, rather than those of others involved in the educational process, such as teachers (Blumberg, 2009). This was achieved through allowing children to have a voice in how they learned. In this approach I acted as facilitator for learning by guiding pupils into making new interpretations of the learning material. A student-centred approach has many implications for the design of curriculum, course content, and interactivity of courses (O'Neil and McMahon, 2005). This approach also allowed lessons to be structured in a way which provided for both the cultural and personal interests of pupils. The student-centred approach provided a rich foundation to plan activities that were of interest to pupils.

3.3.2 Personal Goal Setting

This pedagogy was used in the majority of lessons as a method of encouraging pupils to engage with the designed activities at a personal level. In this teacher-research, personal goal setting involved the children setting their own personal goals for the tag rugby unit. Importantly, I encouraged the children to think of goal setting holistically, considering ways they might set goals related to their physical, social, and cognitive development respectively. Personal goal setting was also used in lessons as a method of promoting pupils to engage with the tag rugby activities at a personal level. Personal goal setting resulted in pupils setting standards for tasks that best suited their ability level resulting in pupils feeling a sense of accomplishment when they completed a task. Goal setting is a technique that was established by Locke (1968) and encouraged pupils meaningful participation with tasks. It supported pupils in devising a plan of action that best suited the activity, demonstrating

their understanding of skills. Personal goal setting was also included in reflection sheets, which allowed pupils to set personal goals based on what they wanted to achieve throughout the tag rugby unit.

During our two minute huddle before each lesson began I discussed the content of the day's lesson with the children and gave them the opportunity to set personal goals and targets based on this. I used the concept of personal motivation where *"one is doing something for its own sake and not for external rewards"* (Wang et al, 2007), to encourage the children to engage fully with activities. Children were encouraged to set their personal goals before all subsequent lessons and were supported in working towards these goals during activities. Pupils were supported in achieving their personal goals by encouraging them to pause and reflect during lessons to think logically and tactically about what step they should take next to achieve their personal goals. Personal motivation was used to encourage children to challenge themselves without putting unwanted pressure on other participant's, ensuring lessons were fun for all participants

3.3.3 Reflections

Reflection was a pedagogy used in eight tag rugby lessons during the tag unit. Pupils reflected on what they learned and how they felt carrying out the activities both after and during lessons. These reflections were then used as a means of helping children to internalize what they experienced, in what other way could the skill be used and how they felt carrying out the activity. Reflections played a major role in understanding how children ascribed activities as meaningful as they were first-hand accounts of children's personal experience of the lesson. These assisted in discerning what pupils enjoyed and also what they found meaningful in the lesson. Reflections took the form of both written reflections and verbal accounts through think-pair-share. The use of think-pair-share during lessons allowed pupils to experience activities through a different lens by using both their personal and partners views on the task. Reflections when compared to questionnaires can provide a rich source of unbiased information *"as questionnaire items themselves are specified by the researchers and do not necessarily reflect the actual or predominant thoughts of the recipients, especially those of a younger age"* (Chedzoy and Burden 2009, p.185). Thus the use of reflections proved much more useful in exploring the sense and meaning the children made of their PE lessons.

3.3.4   Learning with the Head, Heart and Hands (HHH)

The approach promoted by Andy Vasily (2015) of learning with the HHH was adopted into lessons. This idea broke down learning into three different areas, how we learn with our head, how we learn with the heart and how we learn with our hands. The 'heart' focused on the affective: thoughts and feelings, the 'head' focused on the cognitive; rule, strategy and safety, and the 'hands' focused on the physical; skills necessary for tag rugby. Each approach was introduced independently. In week five I wrote to my critical friend: *"I'm introducing the concept of learning with the head, heart and hands week by week to the class"* (CF Reflection, Week 5), with a class discussion and poster presentation explaining the approach before each lesson. The different approaches were introduced separately to allow the children to fully experience and understand the different examples of learning under each heading. Following the introductory discussion and the main physical activity portion of the lesson, pupils then wrote reflections at the end of lessons based on each approach. Pupils were encouraged, through teacher direction, to reflect during activities both individually and in groups to discuss how they were learning with the head, heart and hands.

3.3.5   Play-Teach-Play Pedagogy

The play-teach-play pedagogy was used in lessons as it supported the use of the TGfU model. The pedagogy involved playing a tag rugby activity at the beginning of a lesson and the groups actively identified skills or concepts that needed to be practiced (e.g. Diagonal passing, holding depth and passing backwards). After the children got time to practice the identified skills the game was continued. Children played the game, practiced some more and played again.

3.3.6   Spirit Points

Spirit points were used in lessons 7, 8 and 9 to encourage sportsmanship, praise and to promote teamwork. The approach was adopted from ultimate Frisbee and was adapted to suit the needs of the class. There was a standard score sheet/rubric based on the areas that needed to be focused on given to each group. Teams had to firstly self-assess by rating their performance at the end of activities based on the success criteria which were knowledge and rule use, praise, controlling anger and inclusion, on a scale on 1-4. Teams then began to peer assess as lessons developed.

3.3.7　Teaching by Invitation

The method was chosen as it provided for a range of task choices, therefore providing for the individual differences and abilities of the class. Teaching by invitation was chosen to be used in lessons as it is an effective teaching technique for children of all ages for adjusting tasks or activities to allow for individual differences (Blankenship, 1995). The approach was achieved by providing pupils with a range of different options for practicing a skill and allowing pupils to choose which activity they found most comfortable. During lessons I provided two or more task options to provide participants with both choice and autonomy, and the children then participated in the activity they felt most comfortable and confident with. As the children gained in skill they naturally wanted to challenge themselves with more difficult tasks, which allowed for a natural and gradual sense of lesson development and progression (just-right challenge).

3.3.8　Making Learning Personally Relevant

Although extrinsic motivation can motivate students on the short term, it has a short lasting effect as it provides students with a false motivator. For example focusing solely on performance goals will result in pupils taking part in an activity but losing interest quickly as they have no personal connection to the activity. Making learning personally relevant was selected as a chosen method in this research as it involved pupils taking part in an activity as it was of interest to them and for enjoyment. The pedagogy was implemented in all lessons through the use of various approaches such as personal goal setting, teaching by invitation and by allowing pupils to help in the planning and progress of the lesson activities.

3.4　Researcher Data CollectionTools

Self-study research encompasses many research approaches and methods, allowing members to build upon their existing research expertise (LaBoskey, 2004). Many research methods can be used in gathering research data such as personal reflections, memory work, and discussions. A range of qualitative data collection tools were used in this self-study research.

3.4.1   Research Diary

A research diary was used as a data collection resource that documented my thoughts and feelings throughout the research process. This source was beneficial as it gave first-hand accounts of my views on particular topics throughout the process while also acting as an evaluation method of my teaching. As it was a self-study, the research diary, where personal thoughts were stored had a fundamental role in evaluating the teaching process and how to improve as an educator. The use of personal reflections are also promoted to help teachers unpack their own experiences, beliefs, knowledge and philosophies and to help them understand how reflections shape their identities and actions as teachers (Ovens and Tinning, 2009). That is one of the reasons personal teacher reflections were used as a method in the research process, as it allowed me to track my thoughts and experiences of the data gathering process. Personal reflection did not only allow me to record my experiences, but also acted as a data collection tool to inform the data analysis process.

3.4.2   Critical Friend Reflections

Critical friend responses were used in the shaping of the research process as they caused me to pause, reflect and justify what I was doing in the research. Planning and reflection documents were completed for each lesson. These documents were shared with a critical friend who challenged and/or questioned my assumptions. I responded to the comments shared by the critical friend. The reflections were carried out in collaboration with Dr Tim Fletcher where a rubric (Appendix C) was followed in sharing information and discussing topics of interest. This ensured that a constant level of data was generated to inform the research process, while also ensuring a sense of rigour and trustworthiness in the responses through the use of a custom rubric for the duration of the study.

3.4.3   Independent Peer Observer Document

The peer observation took place in week seven and involved a fellow PE researcher observing one of my tag rugby lessons. He observed the tag rugby lesson using a pre-designed observation rubric (Appendix C) to observe my teaching and to assess for instances of meaningful learning. The peer observation exercise was extremely useful as it highlighted instances of meaningful learning but also identified areas for further investigation.

3.5 Children Data Collection Tools

Data generated by and with the children was an important data source that supported the teacher self-study. Children's meaningful participation was examined using a combination of visual (Einarsdottir et al., 2009) and textual methods (Clark et al., 2011). This included both visuals (drawings) and texts (diary entries, stories and poems) related to their PE experiences. The children's' experiences were also explored through individual and focus group interviews (Braun and Clarke, 2013). These data collection tools were used throughout the research process in order to gain a clear understanding of the children's meaningful learning.

3.5.1 Class Discussion/Think-Pair-Share

Class discussion and think-pair-share were used in each lesson during the data collection as a method of getting feedback from pupil's but also to encourage them to reflect on the activities. The information received from the children was logged and reflected on in my research journal. The use of class discussion and think-pair-share resulted in pupils giving ideas on how to change activities, making them feel responsible for their learning and as a result took personal meaning from it. Group or class discussions also provided an opportunity for the participants to further extend the points made in there reflections and PE pictures. The class discussions held between me as researcher and pupils became an informal tool for identifying areas that worked well or needed to be improved on. Class discussion proved a useful method in informing the success of a lesson and areas the class enjoyed.

3.5.2 Post-Lesson Written Reflections

The use of reflection at the end of lessons was a useful method of gaining a first-hand personal account of pupils' thoughts and ideas regarding a particular topic. In the written reflection templates (Appendix B) pupils wrote about their thoughts on how the lesson went, their thoughts on particular games, what they enjoyed and why. They were also given the opportunity to give their personal opinion and write about how they would change an activity or practice a skill in a different way.

3.5.3   Interviews and Focus Groups

Interview as an information gathering method in physical education and youth sport research can take many forms, from informal, mobile conversations to highly structured, formal interviews (Armour and Macdonald 2012, p.218). Focus group interviews were carried out at three different stages in the tag rugby unit, in weeks three, six and nine, with both groups. Interviews allowed me to gather descriptive data on participants' points of view about the research in question and in their own words. *"Interviews reflect the purpose and assumptions of the research design and are informed by the research questions that motivate and focus your research"* (Armour and Macdonald 2012, p.219). They provided an opportunity to ask specific and/or general questions depending on the lesson topic and aim (Samaras, 2011). There are a large variety of information gathering interview formats, from formal or informal, structured or semi-structured and grouped or focus group interviews, allowing me to provide for the varied pupil preferences in order to collect the optimum data to inform the research process. While interviewing I was conscious of the seven points raised by Rubin and Rubin (2005) which were; building rapport with participants, reassuring anxious or nervous interviewees, showing understanding, gathering facts and basic descriptions, asking difficult questions, asking emotional or controversial questions and closing while maintaining meaning.

Focus group interviews were carried out after lessons in weeks three, six and nine. Four children who were chosen at random were interviewed collectively during each focus group. No pupil took part in more than one focus group interview, so that I was able to get a broad sense of the children's opinions on the tag rugby activities. In their groups of four, the children were asked a series of questions (Appendix Q) about the activities they took part in that week. The insight provided by children's responses was used to inform and plan for further meaningful tag rugby activities. The focus group questioning took no longer than 20 minutes.

Focus group interviews consisted of four pupils who answered questions collectively at the end of the chosen lesson regarding their thoughts and feelings about the activities they took part in. Focus groups are often conducted for the *"purpose of elaborating participant's perspectives on a given topic"* (Armour and Macdonald 2012, p.219). The chosen interview questions aided in getting useful information for the research topic as the interview questions posed, generated the data required to inform the research question. The interview process should not be a daunting experience for pupils, and should take the form

of a mutual conversation. If pupils are at ease with the interview process, they will be more open to sharing about their personal experience of PE and the personal meaning behind their activities.

3.5.4   Picture Drawing

Pupils were given the opportunity at the end of certain lessons to draw a picture that best represented what they did in the lesson and how they felt doing the activity. This acted as a way of assessing whether the children took personal meaning from the activity. The pictures also worked as a catalyst in encouraging pupils to talk about an activity. Picture drawing involved pupils recording their responses to a particular activity through picture and colour. It acted as a way of allowing pupils to show their understanding of a particular topic while also highlighting the points they found meaningful. *"The visual imagery that children acquire through drawing is vital to their later understanding of subjects"* (Crace, 2003). The use of picture drawing acted as a differentiation tool allowing every pupil to share their thoughts on an activity, not only through writing or interview. This method of picture drawing is particularly useful for primary aged children as *"what children engage with, think, know, feel or can do are all of importance in the assessment process. Reflection on this information helps the practitioner to establish how best to advance children's learning and development"* (NCCA 2008, p.8).

During the tag rugby unit I used a picture a child drew in class about tag rugby as a starting point for discussion in an individual interview. This method was chosen *"because it meets the child's originality and individuality, and provides space for a creative transposition of the topic"* (Tschanz et al. 1992, p.265, Translated). The picture was used as a springboard for conversation to help gain an understanding of how the child was making sense of their tag rugby experience.   The following is an example of a picture that was used as a springboard at the beginning of an individual interview in week 8.
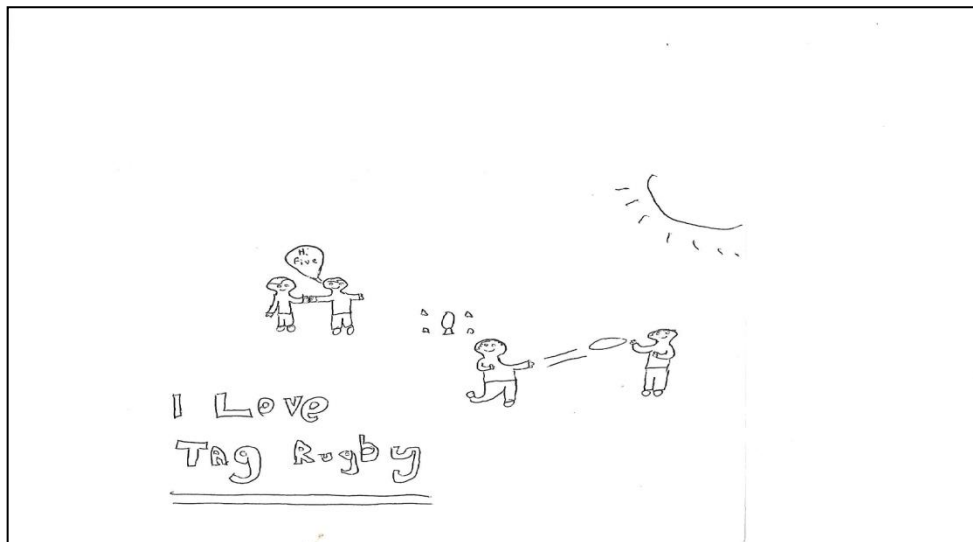
Figure 3.1- Child's Drawing

3.5.5 Questioning

Throughout the data collection the pupils were questioned during all lessons both individually and in groups using open ended questioning. The questions were directed in a way that questioned for meaning and understanding; "How did the experience of the activities go for you? What are your feelings about the experience? Would you like to play the game again? How could you make the game harder or easier? Where else could you use this skill? How could you use this skill in a different game?" Questioning was used throughout the lessons as it was a key strategy to help children make sense of their experience. The responses generated allowed the researcher to reflect on the meaningful pedagogies being used and to evaluate their efficiency.

3.5.6 Observations

During the tag lessons I observed children's engagement in activities, again these observations aided in informing my research journal, where the outcome of lessons were reviewed and analysed. I listened closely to children's verbal reactions such as 'this is great' or 'I'm having fun' etc. along with facial expressions and body language. This assisted in evaluating the lesson structure and to ensure meaningful experiences were provided for pupils within a lesson. These observations were noted following the lessons in my diary, fieldnotes and reflections.

3.6 Data Analysis

Overall, a thematic approach to data analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2013) was employed. During the data collection process a preliminary analysis of the data from each individual lesson formed part of my reflection on each lesson. Findings from the preliminary analysis informed and supported the planning of activities. Following completion of the tag rugby intervention a full analysis was completed. The six phases of thematic planning (Fig.1.2), established by Braun and Clarke (2013) were used as a guide to aid in the data analysis process. I followed each stage step by step during the data analysis phase in order to ensure rigour and trustworthiness in the data analysis.

1. Familiarizing yourself with your data	Transcribing data (if necessary), reading and re-reading the data, noting down initial ideas.	
2. Generating initial codes	Coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code.	See Appendix E
3. Searching for themes	Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme.	See Appendix F
4. Reviewing themes	Checking if the themes work in relation to the coded extracts (Level 1) and the entire data set (Level 2), generating a thematic 'map' of the analysis.	See Appendix G
5. Defining and naming themes	Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story the analysis tells, generating clear definitions and names for each theme.	See Appendix H
6. Producing the report	The final opportunity for analysis. Selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts, relating back of the analysis to the research question and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis.	Thesis

Table 3.2 The Six Phases of Thematic Planning

Step 1: Pupils' focus group interviews were transcribed using Braun and Clarke's (2013) transcription notation system, which was adapted from Jefferson (2004). Data were anonymised by changing information that could have identified a participant (Braun and Clarke, 2013). Data were analysed in two stages. Stage one involved a review of the self-generated data by the researcher (critical friend reflections, research journal entries and lesson plans). Stage two involved the analysis of pupil generated data (pupil written reflections, transcribed pupil focus group interviews and pupil drawings). I reviewed all data -- both pupil and self-generated -- and noted initial ideas.

Step 2: A complete coding system was used in the coding of both pupil and researcher generated data. All areas of relevance and interest to the research question were identified and labelled. *"...rather than selecting out a particular corpus of instances which you then analyse, you code all the data that's relevant to your research question, and it's only later in the analytic process that you become more selective"* (Braun and Clarke 2013, p.206). Codes were used each time I identified an item of data as being potentially relevant to the research question. The motto of 'inclusivity' was adopted in the coding process in order to capture both the instances of patterning and diversity within the data (Braun and Clarke 2013).

Step 3: The initial codes were reviewed and collated in order to identify possible themes from the data. A theme *"captures something important about the data in relation to the research question, and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set"* (Braun and Clarke, 2013, p.224). Each theme identified had a central organising concept which contained different ideas (sub-themes) relating to the main theme (Braun and Clarke, 2013). Identifying the themes was an active process in which I examined all the codes and coded data and identified potential patterns. *"To identify patterns in the data, you need to review the codes and the collated data relating to each code, with the aim of identifying similarity that overlap between codes"* (Braun and Clarke, 2013, p.225). I identified themes that captured the most salient moments in the data. Visual mapping was used to help identify possible relationships between the codes, themes and sub-themes.

Step 4: The candidate themes were reviewed in order to confirm they related to the coded and collated data, this acted as a form of 'quality control' (Braun and Clarke 2013). Both the self and pupil generated data were reviewed separately, to ensure the chosen themes were appropriate and fitting to represent the data sets effectively. Once the themes were reviewed in relation to the coded data the entire (un-coded) dataset was reviewed. This was done to ensure the themes captured *"the meaning of the dataset in relation to [the] research question"* (Braun and Clarke 2013, p.234).

Step 5: Following review of the coded data and datasets I worked to clearly define the themes to state the specific features of each. This involved writing a short paragraph explaining what each theme is about. Writing a short synopsis enabled me to analyse the clarity of each theme and review that they were suitable.

Step 6: The final stage of the data analysis involved selecting the extracts that best illustrated the different facets of each theme and then a narrative explaining each theme was written. Extracts from the coded data were used to support the developed themes. The following chapter will identify and explain the themes present in the research, using data from the study as evidence.

3.7   Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval for this study was obtained from MIREC (Appendix D). All procedures aligned with the guidelines and recommendations of MIREC. All researchers involved with the project were required to sign acceptance of the MIC Child Protection guidelines and align procedures with each schools Child Protection guidelines. Firstly, permission to conduct research from the class groupings and teachers in question was initially sought and gained from the school principals (Appendices L and N). It was emphasised to both the principals and class teachers that the confidentiality and anonymity of the school and pupils involved was guaranteed.

Children, parents and teachers were required to give written informed consent (Appendices I to O). A general letter and information sheet was sent to all parents/guardians and children in the class informing them of the research taking place (Appendices I and K). Also, informed consent was required from the class teachers of each group. A letter and

information sheet was sent to both class teachers and they were made aware of the purpose of the study, what the study involved and how they could voluntarily pull out if necessary from the research at any stage (Appendices L and M). Obtaining informed consent was appropriate for this research as it ensured that children, parents and the class teachers were aware of the purpose and duration of the study.

3.8 Conclusion

This chapter described the qualitative approach to the research. As the research was a self-study of educative practice the researcher served as the main data collection source. Data was collected by means of pupil interviewing, childrens drawings, written reflections, research journals, critical friend responses, observation and questioning. The researcher made sense of data by adopting a thematic approach to data analysis. The trustworthiness of the data was provided for through the use of multiple data collection methods. The following chapter will outline the main findings from this research.

4   Chapter 4: Findings

The following chapter details the main findings of my research in terms of my learning to facilitate meaningful engagement in primary school PE and the pedagogical approaches I used to facilitate meaningful PE experiences for the children. The first part of this chapter focuses on my learning to facilitate meaningful engagement in primary school PE. There are two main parts in this section: learning to teach PE and Learning to teach meaningful PE. Data included my weekly reflections, critical friend (CF) responses, peer observation responses, pupil generated data and planning documents. Throughout the section I chart the development in my teaching in these two areas, the challenges I faced and insights I gained about my own practice.

The second part of this findings chapter explains and demonstrates how the different pedagogies supported and impacted pupils' meaningful participation in activity. Data from my critical friend reflections, lesson planning documents, pupil-generated data and my independent observer document is used to illustrate the effectiveness of the different pedagogies.

4.1   Learning To Foster Meaningful PE Experiences

4.1.1   Introduction

In this section I explain how, from a starting point, I was overwhelmed and questioning my ability to provide meaningful PE experiences. I explain how by gaining confidence in my practice, my teaching evolved to where I was confident and comfortable using the criteria for both meaningful PE experiences and the games centred approach in my teaching. The themes chart my progress from an apprehensive teacher, to a facilitator of learning relishing my role in providing meaningful PE experiences for the children.

4.1.2   Learning to Teach PE

This section focuses on my personal experience of teaching the tag rugby unit and my experience of learning to facilitate meaningful experiences as a newly qualified teacher (NQT). I detail the challenges I faced but also chart the major developments in my teaching during the course of teaching the tag rugby unit. I have divided this section into four-learning areas, with each section demonstrating how the experience of teaching the unit aided in my development as a beginning teacher of physical education.

4.1.3   Gaining Experience

In the first three weeks of teaching the tag rugby unit I was questioning my ability as a teacher of PE and whether my lack of classroom experience as a NQT would negatively impact the quality of my teaching. A particular aspect of my practice I was unsure about was the pedagogies I was using and the extent to which the class was enjoying the tag rugby unit. During the first weeks of the unit I read about the importance of making connections between a PE lesson and other activities and I focused on this idea for the first two weeks of lessons (Winiecki, 2013). Looking back at the first two weeks of tag rugby through a meaningful lens, the data showed I was too concerned with the children understanding what they were doing and why they were doing it, without giving due consideration to how they felt playing an activity. My over concern for children's understanding was commented on by Tim my CF in his response to my reflections in week 2;

> *This takes me back to last week's big question: what is the relationship between meaning and understanding? It seems they are developing their understanding of endball and tag rugby but how might this influence the meaning they take from participation in these activities?*
>
> (CF Reflection, Week 2)

Tim's questioning caused me to pause and reflect on my teaching. His comment resulted in me re-evaluating my preoccupation with children making-connections between activities, instead I became more aware of participants' affective learning needs. Another prime focus was getting the children to understand the transfer of knowledge from skills learned in PE to other areas of sport and play. This suggests I was focusing (arguably too much) on improving pupils' motor competence, one of Kretchmar's (2006) criteria for meaningful experiences.

As I was a NQT who did not know the children well, I was concerned with maintaining order and control of the lessons;

> *...having the pupils repeat the rules to me before they begin. This will help the pupils stay on task. Also I am going to get the groups to walk around the perimeter of their playing area so they understand the boundaries and not disruptanother teams*
>
> (CF reflection, Week 2).

In hindsight, I realise my focus was valid at that point at the beginning of the tag rugby unit; however, as I got to know the children better it was no longer as much of a concern. This

was shown by my research journal entry after the third week of tag rugby "*They (the children) were really good at directing games and developing on their skills gradually"*. This journal entry marks my realisation that I no longer felt I needed to be in control of all aspects of lessons. On reflection, my own experience of sport and training informed this outlook at first; where by, although I train for enjoyment, as an elite athlete, I also train to win. For this reason I was concerned with the minor details of having pupils staying within the cones, or following the rules and listening to directions, as this has become what I now look to perfect in my own game play.

Adjusting my approach to teaching PE to focus on the quality of children's experiences and no longer focusing on rigidly following rules required me to separate my own sporting experience from teaching the unit. This left me feeling vulnerable because I was letting go of what I was used to as a learner. *'I felt vulnerable at times during the lesson trying to emphasise the importance of meaning over the skill, [even though] it is in my nature as a player to master the skill first'* (CF Reflection, Week 1).Throughout the unit, this change occurred through the use of the TGfU model and by prioritising children's affective learning. My outlook was shifting from a sole emphasis on skill execution to considering wider aspects of lesson experiences such as having fun and playing with friends, through the use of the five criteria. As the unit and my self-study progressed, Kretchmar's (2006) criteria for meaningful participation encouraged me to view PE lessons through a different lens. It caused me to reflect on and question what elements needed to be present in a lesson for me to view it as successful. Prior to my use of Kretchmar's criteria, I saw a successful lesson in terms of children understanding skills and concepts. Now I viewed a lesson as successful when children were laughing playing with their friends, learning new skills (though the skills did not need to be perfected), and when the children were appropriately challenged.

The first theme outlined above, 'Gaining Experience', describes how I developed as a facilitator of meaningful physical education. The theme details how during the course of the unit my confidence grew to the extent that I was comfortable in adapting lessons to suit the needs of the children, and I no longer viewed rigidly following the lesson plan as the holy grail of lesson organisation. The theme describes my development towards a primary focus on pupils' meaningful experience and how I separated my own experience of elite sport to ensure an enjoyable learning environment for the children.

4.1.4   The Importance of Being Informed

This theme describes how over the course of teaching the tag rugby unit, I improved my planning skills and adopted a wider range of pedagogies which improved my teaching and both the pupils' learning experiences and my own. The theme outlines how I adopted new approaches in my teaching. The theme explains how the fear of children 'liking me' influenced my planning decisions at the beginning but shifted to my becoming more attuned to the needs of the children as the weeks progressed.

I was still getting to know the children in the first three weeks. As a result, I questioned my ability to plan for and provide meaningful experiences for the pupils. As I had no previous experience with the groups I was still learning all their names, what they liked and disliked about PE, what they looked forward to most about activities and the different skill sets within the groups. As I was new to the groups and wanted the children to enjoy their tag rugby experience, at times I found myself being concerned about the pupils 'liking me'. This influenced my planning and approach at the beginning of the unit. The concern for being 'liked' resulted in me focusing primarily on the fun element of meaningful participation in the beginning weeks, giving little focus to the other criteria. For example, in Week 4 I wrote: "*That [playing a game] was really special as it shows my lessons are suitable for the children and they are enjoying them which is the main aim"* (CF Reflection, Week 4). The quote above highlights how I was concerned with the children enjoying the lesson – an important part of a positive learning experience but also demonstrates how I was over prioritising the fun element of learning in my teaching. As the weeks progressed, following conversation with my CF I consciously began to include other areas of the criteria for meaningful learning into my lessons. As a result of this awareness, my planning for meaningful experiences was more holistic. For example, the following example demonstrates how the meaningful criteria of improved motor competence, social interaction, challenge, and fun were evident in my lesson planning.

Cuspóirí/ Objectives	The child should be enabled to:
	Knowledge:
	• Understand the rules of tag rugby and be able to self-referee a game.
	Skills:
	• Practice the skills of passing, running straight lines, moving into space, attacking space and creating space (looping).
	Attitudes:

	• Develop a positive fun team attitude to reduce the level of competiveness and self-assess their teamwork as a team using the spirit point score system.

Table 4.1- (Adapted from a Planning Document, Week 8)

The element of improved motor competence was planned for through the practicing of different skills, while social interaction was evident by using the spirit point score sheet to promote group discussion. Pupils were challenged through the task of self-refereeing their games and a fun atmosphere was promoted by developing a positive team attitude through playing the tag games and self-assessing individual team performance.

Along with my growing confidence in teaching generally, analysis of my personal reflections clearly showed that during weeks 4-6 I became more confident in using a range of pedagogies in teaching the tag rugby unit. This growth in confidence surrounding pedagogies occurred as I had more experience with the groups and got to know the children better.Initially at the beginning of the research process I was using pedagogies I had previous experience with, such as teaching skills in isolation and using relays as activities to practice new skills, which is clear in my week one planning document.

Development **Step 1** Ball familiarization	• Divide the children into equal groups in order to carry out a relay. • The relays will incorporate a range of ball manipulation tasks for the children to gain a sense of confidence in handling a rugby ball.

Table 4.2-(Adapted from a Planning Document, Week 1)

Weeks 4-6 of the tag rugby unit demonstrated my new confidence in my teaching. For example, I was willing to experiment with implementing pedagogies I had no previous experience of such as learning with the head, heart and hands (HHH) (Vasily, 2015) and spirit points. Using learning with the HHH approach was different to any prior pedagogy I had used in that it divided learning into three areas or learning domains. The pedagogy encouraged pupils to reflect on their progress in terms of personal, emotional and skill development. Learning with the HHH method changed my mindset from viewing pupils' development

solely in terms of skill execution (the hands), to viewing pupils' individual, personal (head) and inter-personal (heart) development as a positive outcome.

As a result of using pedagogies that were more pupil focused, competition was deemphasised and intrinsic motivation was encouraged. For example, during Week 4 I wrote: *"I made it very clear that you don't always have to score the most tries or get the most tags to be the best and have fun at tag rugby"* (CF Reflection, Week 4). This idea of not having to score the most tries was made clear to the pupils through our class discussion at the beginning of the lesson where we discussed the importance of participation and de-emphasised competition. I actively promoted the importance of meaningful participation over competition through constant discussion and questioning with the children, as well as providing positive feedback to children, where I highlighted areas such as peer praise, inclusion and skill improvement.

I also used personal goal setting to allow the children to consider what was important to them personally in the lesson. I then implemented pedagogies that promoted pupil autonomy such as teaching by invitation. In sum, I began to adopt an approach which no longer placed me (as the teacher) at the centre of lesson planning; instead, I was beginning to adapt my lesson planning based on pupil feedback which is clear in the following quote from our focus group interview in week three.

> *Teacher- So even in the rugby netball, you know the game we played at the end how could we change it to make it [the game] better?*
> *Pupil- Am maybe if you, maybe if you were able to have a bit more space and less people.*

(Focus Group, School B, Week 3)

The above quote highlights the children's understanding of the activity through my teacher questioning but also shows how I sought pupil feedback to help improve and change lessons. I then implemented the pupil feedback in the following week's lesson, demonstrating the development of my student-centred approach, by designing activities to vary in space and the number of players.

51% Funnel Groups of 4	• Attacking game where the attacker moves from smaller space into larger space (i.e. in a funnel shape) against a

	defender. Aim is for the players to practice go forward ball, fix the defender (face) and run at space.
Step 3 **Activity 2:** **Mini Games**	• Play mini games of 5V2 and 4v3. These games are designed in order to allow the children gain more experience of identifying space and attacking it without the pressure of a large number of defenders.

Table 4.3-(Adapted from a Planning Document, Week 4)

The theme 'The Importance of Being Informed' details the importance of providing a positive learning environment for participants through the use of organised planning and teaching. The theme explains how my lesson planning and use of pedagogy improved as I got to know the children better. It describes how lessons became more pupil focused with time and my improved ability to liaise with the pupils benefitted the planning and teaching process. The theme highlights how important reflecting on my practice was to providing an enriching learning and teaching experience for both the children and me.

4.1.5 Moving from Teacher-Directed to Student-Directed Play

The following theme 'Moving from Teacher-Directed to Student-Directed Play' describes how I gave some control of lessons to the children. I describe how children were actively involved in the planning and direction of lessons, giving ideas and feedback on how to improve an activity. This theme describes how as my confidence and experience grew I became more comfortable in the role as facilitator of meaningful learning experiences.

During Weeks 4-6 of the intervention a major development in my approach as a physical educator was my flexibility in planning and enacting a meaningful approach. An example of being flexible in my planning was evident in my transition from directing lessons to instead allowing pupils to take more control in guiding and directing their own learning. The following extract from my week eight planning document demonstrates this change:

I have planned a game of captains table which is a fun passing game where the children pass further each time. I have planned this activity in a way that allows for teaching by invitation in that if they feel comfortable enough or want to challenge themselves more the group can take a step back each to pass even further. I have also planned this activity to build onto another if the class wish. I have planned to give the class an option of if they feel they want to practice passing using a different activity they can change to 'partner score

My new, more flexible approach of allowing pupils to take some control in directing lessons was recognised during my lesson observation in week seven where my peer observer commented on my differentiation of allowing the children to pass in a circle or a line (See Section 4.3.6 on Teaching by Invitation). During this time I was successfully teaching PE with a prime focus on meaningful engagement by the pupils. For example, I promoted a learning environment which supported 'pupil talk' where pupils were encouraged to reflect and discuss their learning with their classmates, which allowed pupils to take meaning from their learning experience. I adopted the role of facilitator, in that I facilitated pupils' learning rather than directing it, and planned lessons in a way that allowed pupils to take ownership of their learning.

Pupil autonomy is vital for the development of participant's personal playgrounds (Kretchmar, 2006), an atmosphere which I consciously planned to provide for in lessons. In week 7 I wrote: *"I'm using Kretchmar's idea for making personal playgrounds in that I'm using his idea of play being self-directed, personally meaningful and reason transcending play"* (CF Reflection, Week 7). Kretchmar's idea of creating personal playgrounds suggests pupils should take control of their learning in order to take personal meaning from an experience. My decision to provide activities that involved increased self-direction from pupils was evident in my planning document from week 7:

Step 3	• Rugby netball will then develop onto mini games of tag rugby where children will be encouraged to self-referee and play the game. They will also be given time to self-assess their team performance by using the spirit point rubric.

Table 4.4-(Adapted from a Planning Document, Week 7)

The excerpt above demonstrates my promotion of pupil autonomy to encourage personal meaningful learning by the pupils. I had adopted Kretchmar's (2000) concept of the teacher as 'activity broker', where I created a meaningful environment which invited pupils to take part in activities out of personal choice rather than feeling obliged to participate. My conscious effort to promote pupil autonomy in guiding lessons was clear in a reflection*"Today I'm really focusing on the class directing the lesson and guiding their*

learning" (CF Reflection, Week 7).This demonstrated my concern for providing autonomy for participants but also demonstrated my acceptance of the role as facilitator within lessons.

During the course of the unit, my perception had shifted drastically from being most concerned with controlling pupil behaviour to instead purposefully providing lessons that required participant's self-guidance and active involvement in the direction of activities. This "letting go" of controlling the class reflected a growth in my confidence as a teacher of PE. I allowed children to guide lessons as I was now becoming more confident in both my teaching of tag rugby and using meaningful pedagogies. My growth in confidence occurred as each week I was gaining more experience with the groups and using different pedagogies. Importantly, I saw first-hand how my teaching was improving and was able to consolidate this belief with support from my critical friend, peer observer, teachers at the school, and the pupils.

The theme 'Moving From Teacher-Directed to Student-Directed Play' describes how my role within lessons changed drastically over time. It explains how I adopted the role of facilitator, allowing the children to decide and guide the progression of lessons. The theme mapped my transition from a director of lesson activities to my new role as activity broker.

4.1.6   Building Confidence through the TGfU Model

The theme 'Building Confidence through the TGfU Model' describes how I used the model to provide meaningful experiences for the children. I adopted a teaching games for understanding (TGfU) approach in teaching the tag rugby unit. The theme describes how I used the TGfU approach to aid children's skill development and tactical understanding. As I followed the TGfU model I taught the tactical concepts and skills of tag rugby jointly through games, and no longer saw the need to teach skills in isolation from the situations in which the skills are used. The section also describes how my confidence in the role as a teacher of PE increased through the use of the model.

The TGfU model was different to my own experience of learning games. My own experience of learning rugby could be described as traditional, involving us learning a skill and we did not play a game until the skill was perfected. Further, there was little emphasis placed on tactical understanding. In addition to no experience of TGfU as a learner, I had no previous experience of implementing TGfU approaches in my teaching. While learning about pedagogies related to meaningful participation and how to teach tag rugby, I was also learning how to teach through the TGfU model.

The play-teach-play approach I adopted using the TGfU model aided in my development as a teacher of PE but also as a facilitator of meaningful PE experiences. My mind set changed from one that was solely focused on skill development and execution to one that was also concerned with pupils' personal, tactical and individual development. The play-teach-play approach aided in each pupil's individual development as they practiced skills in the actual context they were to be used, developing the children's tactical understanding of the tag rugby skills. My peer observer supported my beliefs that I was able to use TGfU principles to enhance students' tactical understanding: *"Discussing dodging, finding space, pauses game after a while, good progression in second game using skills from first game"* (Observation Document, Week 7).

The following example from my planning document in week five demonstrates how I implemented the play-teach-play approach into my lesson planning.

Step 1	• Mini-games of tag rugby where the class try use what they learned in the previous lessons and put these into a game.
Step 2	• Diagonal passing, the class will practice in groups of four. This will encourage the class to use depth in attack in the games.
Step 3	• Return to mini games to allow the children implement what they learned in the passing segment.

Table 4.5- (Adapted from a Planning Document, Week 5)

Implementing the TGfU model coupled with the play-teach-play pedagogy enabled me to focus on children's skill development *through* prioritising their tactical understanding of tag rugby. An example from my CF reflection in week one demonstrates how I used the model to make the children more tactically aware about the importance and function tagging has in tag rugby;

> *They knew what skills endball was practicing and why I was introducing them in that way [through the game] rather than playing tag rugby straight away. They also understood the importance of tagging in tag rugby (for defending) and why grab a tag was played as the warm up game*
>
> (CF Reflection, Week 1).

This statement in my reflection demonstrated how I was including tactical understanding as a key part of lesson outcomes through the use of the TGfU model.

This section described how learning about and implementing the TGfU model caused a major growth in my teaching. The theme explains how my first experience of sport was far removed from the 'new' TGfU model I was to implement in lessons. This section describes how I found the model extremely useful for teaching both tactical understanding and skill development in unison. The play-teach-play approach outlined in this section details how I became concerned for pupils individual tactical and skill development, a far cry from the 'one size fits all' learning I experienced as a young player.

4.2 Learning to Teach Meaningful PE

In this section I detail how learning to implement pedagogies that promote meaningful engagement changed my teaching. In this section I will detail how Kretchmar's criteria for meaningful participation (Kretchmar, 2006a) became my guide for identifying meaningful learning experiences within the tag rugby unit. This section describes how my teaching shifted to focusing on children's feelings about an activity.This section will also describe how using approaches that promoted meaningful participation resulted in my development as a facilitator of meaningful physical education.

4.2.1 Observing Meaningful Participation using Kretchmar's 5 Criteria

Experience of planning for and implementing Kretchmar's criteria for meaningful participation guided my development as a facilitator of meaningful PE. I decided to foster a tag rugby culture where having fun, playing with your friends (social interaction), learning new skills (motor competence) and trying games that weren't too easy or too hard (challenge) were the driving forces behind children's participation.

An example of how Kretchmar's (2006) criteria informed my teaching was evident by my use of the spirit point score sheet in activities. The spirit points score sheet provided for the criteria of social interaction as the groups were encouraged to discuss their team's performance in the games based on certain success criteria (Skill and knowledge use, praise, inclusion and controlling anger). After discussion of the headings, each group marked their performance out of four, giving an explanation for their score. I noted how much the children had evolved in terms of positive social interactions:

I saw how much the children have developed from the first week of tag. They were encouraging and praising each other throughout the lesson and I didn't have to prompt them to do this during the

games. It was also extremely nice to hear the teams really discussing their performance and giving examples of where they did the criteria [the success criteria identified on the spirit point's sheet] *for points. I found this really useful for judging the success of [the] lessons.*

My implementation of Kretchmar's (2006) criteria for meaningful PE participation supported the children in making meaning from their PE lessons. The children were then transferring these meanings to their lives outside the PE classroom. The following example demonstrates how the tag rugby lessons supported a pupil in experiencing transcendental play, being transported to another world through play. In the following example the pupil explains how she imagined the ball going over her head was a shooting star. Demonstrating how the child was carried beyond the physical activity barriers of the lesson and her imagination took her beyond the actual game; she created her own personal meaning. *"Pupil B- 'I liked when we were inside when we were playing the captain game because when we were lying down I was imaging the ball going over my head was a shooting star'."*(Focus Group Interview School A, Week 3)

Experiences which included the elements of challenge, social interaction, skill development and fun were effective in creating meaningful experiences for the children as evidenced by children's post lesson reflections and lesson observations.

"What Tag Rugby means to me?

*T*ag Rugby is the best
A lot of [fun] we have
*G*reat fun while getting fit

*R*unning around and around
*U*nderstanding the rules
*G*etting time with my friends
*B*ringing new sports to our school
*Y*ou are the best Ciara"

(Pupil Reflection, Week 7)

The above acrostic poem demonstrates what the pupil found meaningful about the tag rugby unit. This child found tag rugby to be a fun new sport where he got to play with his friends (social interaction). It also explains how he enjoyed being active in the lessons (increased motor competence) while also learning and understanding new rules (challenge). The above child's poem demonstrates the presence of three of Kretchmar's (2006) criteria for meaningful participation.

Kretchmar's criteria for meaningful participation framed my research approach. At the beginning of the research process I found myself anxious about ensuring some of the criteria were present in lessons, in particular fun, challenge and improved motor competence. Evidence from my research journal show I was over thinking how I could include the different elements in lessons through different fun activities. For example:

I wanted to focus on the fun aspect of [meaningful engagement]. We played a game of apples and oranges... This will provide meaning making opportunities as it is a very enjoyable activity which I believe the class will find memorable

(CF Reflection, Week 3).

However, as the weeks progressed and my confidence across teaching experiences grew, I became very comfortable in using the criteria in lesson planning. I came to a stage where I no longer analysed a lesson plan for hours worrying and ensuring the meaningful criteria were clear in an activity. Rather, the criteria became a type of guide ingrained in my memory and an instinctive automatic gauge for judging the success of a lesson.

For example, during a lesson in Week 6 the children were playing a warm up game of octopus tag. In my head I was going through the criteria, gauging pupils' engagement accordingly. I had observed their participation and said to myself: in this game they were having fun, playing with their classmates (social interaction) and practicing tagging (Improved motor competence). Yet, from my observation I viewed that the game was not challenging enough and adapted the activity accordingly by adjusting the size of the playing area and allowing catchers to take more steps. I asked the children their opinion of the revised game and from their responses judged that the game was still too easy. I changed the activity to a new game of bulldog. I wrote: *"I was practically using the 5 criteria as a checklist"* (Research Diary, Week 6). This is an example of how I used Kretchmar's criteria as a gauge to evaluate and make adaptions during activities. During this new warm up game I

observed that the children were having more fun than in the previous game (I could hear laughing, shouts of excitement and feedback) and were playing with classmates (social interaction):"*they practiced tagging, dodging, avoiding the defender, making space and moving into space*" (increased motor competence) and importantly they found the new game a lot more challenging, "*as I kept changing the size of the playing area which they found hard when it was tight!*" (Research Diary, Week 6).

This was a special moment in my teaching because it illustrated to me how I was successfully using the meaningful criteria in my practice. This moment in Week six demonstrated how I had developed as a facilitator of meaningful physical education. I had moved from sticking to what I knew ("*... being honest Tim I used the pop passing as it is a drill we use in training*" (CF Reflection, Week 3)), to now consciously planning how each activity could develop meaningful physical education opportunities for the children. I was consciously looking for opportunities to provide meaningful PE experiences in lessons.

An important element of self-study is reflecting in and on one's own practice. After Week 6, I was able to review my lessons and reflections during the schools' mid-term break. I used this time of reflection to identify instances of meaningful participation by the pupils. As a result of getting to know the children better I found myself, timidly at first, adapting the lessons to suit the class's needs. During week eight adjusting the lesson to suit the children's needs was evident as I found myself adding meaningful opportunities into activities wherever I saw an opportunity, "*...they found it [the game] very enjoyable and challenging as I gave them different tasks and skills to practice each time*"(CF Reflection, week 8). This quote from my CF reflection demonstrates how Kretchmar's (2006) criteria of challenge and improved motor competence were evident in the lesson.

In this section I describe how the criteria became my guide and were explicitly used in lesson planning. It charts how I moved from including activities that I was familiar with into lessons to instead consciously planning how each activity had a relevant meaningful and purposeful opportunity. The theme demonstrates how implementing Kretchmars criteria for meaningful physical activity was pivotal in my development as a facilitator of meaningful physical education.

4.2.2 Prioritising the Affective Dimension

The theme 'Prioritising the Affective Dimension' will be described here: how I changed from a teacher who was concerned with pupils' skill knowledge and skill practice, to

an educator that fostered pupils' reflection on activities. The section will outline how my practice changed from being over reliant on theory retention, where I was heavily concerned with pupils' understanding of how and why we use a skill, to focusing more on how pupils felt while carrying out an activity. The section will explain how I became more concerned for pupils' personal affective responses to activities.

At the beginning of the unit I was very concerned about the children understanding what we were doing in the lessons, as well as understanding the skills they were practicing and why. This is evident in my comment in my critical friend reflection in week 1:

> *Pupils were encouraged to reflect and think about where else the skill of passing could be used outside off the lesson. Could it be used in class games at lunchtime, during training, at home or playing with friends?*
>
> (CF Reflection, Week 1).

I prioritised the children's affective learning in my teaching as the weeks progressed as I saw an over-reliance on cognitive understanding at the beginning of the research process. In week three through discussion with my critical friend I identified a neglect of the affective dimension due to a prioritization of children's cognitive knowledge retention. I wasn't giving due consideration to the affective and emotive element of the children's learning experiences in the PE lessons. Both affective and emotional learning are important in creating a meaningful learning environment for pupils as it allows children to reflect on how they felt during an activity and create personal meaning. I began to promote pupil's meaningful participation by encouraging pupils to reflect on how they felt while participating in tag rugby activities. There was a clear shift from this point. I no longer focused solely on the physical or cognitive elements of teaching physical education, I also emphasised and valued pupils' emotions and feelings,

> *I am focussing more on the affective as opposed to the cognitive in my approach to [meaningful engagement] in this lesson. I want to focus more on feeling and what they find fun rather than seeing how they can transfer the skill knowledge from tag rugby to other sports*
>
> (CF Reflection, Week 3).

From this point onwards I paid attention to the children's feelings and how they felt during an activity consistently in lessons "*since the last lesson I listened [over]the pupil interviews*

and took what they said into consideration when planning the lesson" (CF Reflection, Week 4).

Throughout the remaining lessons I continued to emphasise pupil's awareness of their feelings and experience of participating in the various activities, using strategies such as a discussion circle. I also promoted the affective aspect of participation by introducing the concept of learning with the heart (Vasily, 2015) in Week 5. Through the use of learning with the heart pupils became aware of how their reactions in games can affect how others feel during lessons. Encouraging the children to be sensitive to the needs of their classmates was promoted through the use of post lesson reflections by the participants where pupils described how they used their hearts in their learning. *"This reflection is aimed at highlighting the positive effect peer praise can have on a lesson and how much better it can make a person feel"* (CF Reflection, Week 5). Focusing on pupil's experiences of an activity through the use of post lesson reflections and focus group interviews demonstrated my concern for children's feelings on an activity. Based on pupil feedback I deemphasised, but did not eliminate, competitive sport and promoted affective learning, thus demonstrating my focus to provide meaningful PE experiences for all participants.

> *Pupil C - [Be] Cause normally all my family watch all the matches and the only one thing I don't like about it is that its [Tag Rugby] a bit competitive.*
> *Researcher- Ok a bit competitive. Do you think if we took the competitive element out of it would it be a bit better?*
> *All Pupils- Ya (all together)*
> *Researcher-Ok so maybe we could have a small bit of competition, maybe if we halved it??*
> *Pupil B- Ya the most fun, half competition and half fun.*
>
> (Focus Group Interview School B, Week 3).

The final weeks of the intervention was when I realised how much I had developed not just as a teacher of physical education but also as a facilitator of meaningful PE. Looking back I initially judged the success of each lesson on 'how much' the children learned and whether they understood the rules or not. I recognise now that I was overly focused on the cognitive and physical skill learning and questions focused on children's recall or recognition of specific facts and concepts of games. Through the use of specific tasks that promoted pupils becoming in tuned with their thoughts, feelings and emotions I developed as a teacher, which is clear in my closing comments to my CF.

I've found that over the weeks I've become a lot more comfortable with teaching tag rugby to the class but also integrating [meaningful engagement] opportunities automatically into my lessons. My approach has completely changed from solely focusing on covering a topic to now making sure that activities we are doing are of interest to the children but also making sure they have opportunities for class discussion and meaningful PE experiences. This is how my approach has changed on a whole, I now automatically when planning a lesson plan the [meaningful engagement] opportunities before the content of the lesson is set in stone

(CF Reflection, Week 9).

I now know first-hand from experience, the strength and value that can be brought to a lesson by intertwining both the cognitive and affective dimension into learning respectively.

'Prioritising the Affective Dimension' highlighted the importance of reflecting on one's practice but also collaborating with a critical friend. It was through discussion with my critical friend that I identified a neglect of the affective dimension, which was a turning point in my development as a facilitator of meaningful PE. The theme described how I no longer focused solely on cognitive understanding instead I combined both cognitive and affective learning into my practice.

4.3   Conclusion

The overall themes 'Learning to Teach PE' and 'Learning to teach meaningful PE' chart my development as a facilitator of meaningful PE experiences and details how Kretchmars (2006) criteria guided my teaching. The section shows how my teaching of PE developed over the course of the tag rugby unit and how I focused more on the affective element of learning rather than solely cognitive and physicallearning.This chapter outlines how implementing Kretchmar's (2006) criteria within a TGfU approach supported my development as a teacher of PE as well as a facilitator of meaningful PE experiences. The themeschart the developments and challenges I encountered during my practice. The chapter describes how I progressed from being apprehensive about my teaching to being confident in my ability as a facilitator of meaningful physical education experiences.

4.4 Pedagogical Approaches that Fostered Meaningful Participation

In the following section the pedagogies of personal goal setting, learning with the head, the heart and hands, lesson reflections, the play-teach-play approach, teaching by invitation and making learning personally relevant will be discussed.

4.4.1 Personal Goal Setting

In the following section I detail how I used personal goal setting to foster meaningful PE experiences for the participants. I explain how I identified children becoming overly competitive in activities and adopted the approach of personal goal setting into my teaching to counteract this. In the section I describe how the approach was used to promote children's self-confidence by encouraging participants to recognise their own talented ability in reaching their goals.

Personal goal setting supported the use of the affective dimension in lessons as personal goals *"deal almost exclusively with internal feelings and conditions"* (Personal.psu.edu, 2014). The use of personal goals resulted in pupils setting standards for tasks that best suited their ability level, resulting in pupils feeling a sense of accomplishment when they took part in a task.

During the second week of the tag rugby unit I asked the children to reflect on what they wanted to achieve in the unit. Pupils were asked to set their personal goals the second rather than the first week of lessons as I wanted the children to firstly experience playing tag rugby, and identify their individual skill sets before they made goals for the unit. Pupils then shared their goals during the post lesson written reflection. For example, *"I want to improve on my passing skills because I think its a little poor"* (Pupil Reflection, Week 2). The above example demonstrates how one child wanted to use the tag rugby unit as an opportunity to improve her passing skills which supported their physical development. The overall nature of the goals identified by the children were to improve their passing, tagging and dodging skills. Children also wanted to learn the rules of tag rugby and how to play a tag rugby match, which supported their cognitive development. Participant's also viewed tag rugby lessons as an opportunity to play with their friends, providing for their social development. The following example demonstrates how a pupil identified the importance of the offside rule in games and wanted to learn the principle in order to support the group in improving at tag rugby. *"The offside rule because it will help us play"* (Pupil reflection, Week 2).

Student-generated data supported my reasons for choosing personal goal setting. For example, during a focus group in week three a pupil commented on how she found some people being too competitive during tag rugby games. *"...the only one thing I don't like about it is that it's [Tag Rugby] a bit competitive"* (Focus group, Week 3). Personal goal setting offered a suitable solution to this problem without eliminating competition fully. The idea of competition being de-emphasised was supported in the Irish Primary PE Curriculum (1999) which stated that *"unless competition is de-emphasised, those who compare less favourably will always be at risk of withdrawal"* (p.4). An example of how personal goal setting worked well when coupled with personal motivation is evident in a reflection I shared with my critical friend;

This [personal motivation] seemed to work very well as the children who made their own goals worked hard to achieve these but ... the other players [who didn't like competition] didn't seem under pressure and could play the games at their own pace

(CF Reflection, Week 4)

The pedagogy of personal goal setting, where children set individual goals for the tag rugby unit, is one pedagogical approach I used to motivate children to actively participate and persist in their learning. This pedagogy provides ways for participants to use personal goal setting to identify individual areas of improvement that resulted in pupil's sense of accomplishment in achieving their goals. Personal goal setting encouraged pupils to engage with activities on a personal level, encouraging participants to have a meaningful tag rugby experience. The section highlights the ways I used personal goal setting as one way to provide personally meaningful PE experiences for participants. In the next section I describe the pedagogy of 'learning with the head, the heart and the hands'.

4.4.2   Learning with the Head, the Heart and the Hands

As with my framing of personal goal setting across domains (physical, social, and cognitive), the pedagogy of learning with the head, the heart and the hands (HHH) divided learning into three areas, and in the following sections I describe how each area encouraged and provided for children's personal meaningful engagement in activity.The section explains how, through the use of learning with the HHH, Kretchmar's (2006) criteria of improved

motor competence, fun, challenge and social interaction were addressed through the use of the pedagogy.

I adopted the HHH approach after reading work by physical education blogger Andy Vasily (2015). My main challenge when introducing the HHH was getting the children to understand the different learning focus*of each stage of the pedagogy.*

4.4.2.1 Learning with the Head

Learning with the head encouraged pupils to understand how the games were played, what the rules were and, in line with the TGfU model, encouraged pupils to think tactically about the different activities. Learning with the head provided for the Irish PE curriculums objective of *"knowledge and understanding"* (p.12). Learning with the head was introduced with the following poster presentation during our group discussion.

Learning with the head
How I think
What I know
What I remember
Learning the rules in the tag rugby games I play.
Thinking about the way I move and use different skills
Thinking about safety

Table 4.6- *(*Adapted from a Lesson Poster, Week 7*)*

Through my emphasising of learning with the head children became more aware of how they could impact on their team's performance: *"I learned [with the head] by thinking how and where I would pass to"* (Pupil Reflection, Week 8). The development of pupils' tactical understanding through learning with the head was evident in how they demonstrated thinking tactically about how to make and move into space as evidence from the subsequent pupil reflection. For example, one pupil wrote: *"I learned how to think where to go with the ball"* (Pupil Reflection, Week 7). Learning with the head also supported the development of children's increased motor competence: tactical understanding allowed them to understand why they were learning and practicing a skill and how they could use that skill.

4.4.2.2 Learning with the Heart

Learning with the heart involved children focusing on their feelings and emotions while participating in an activity which supported childrens *"social and personal development"* (Physical Education Curriculum 1999, p.11). Learning with the heart was used to encourage peer praise and to encourage participants to focus on the positive social elements of the tag rugby unit. I introduced learning with the heart to the group in the form a poster, which I adapted from Andy Vasily's (2015) online example, before our lesson (http://www.pyppewithandy.com/pyp-pe-blog/archives/01-2015).The poster described for the pupils what learning with the heart was and how we might use our heart in learning. We went through the poster collectively as a group and the children discussed at their tables what the different elements meant and what they might look like in an activity.

Learning with the heart
Thoughts and feelings about myself.
How I communicate to others.
How helpful I am to others.
Believing in myself
Teamwork, Reflecting
Positively communicating
Encouraging and praising others
Controlling my anger when I loose
Showing good sportsmanship
Listening
Not giving up

Table 4.7- (Adapted from Lesson Poster, Week 5)

An emphasis on learning with the heart promoted peer praise and encouragement among the participants. Pupils remarked how happy they felt hearing praise from their peers, for example: *"It [praise] makes me feel very happy because I am hearing something good from my classmates"* (Pupil Reflection, Week 5). Learning with the heart also promoted pupils' self-belief and encouraged teamwork. One pupil wrote: *"We were working as a team, we were passing the ball to each other and I believed in myself. I was very happy when we*

were playing tag rugby" (Pupil Reflection, Week 5). These examples demonstrate how the experiences were meaningful to the children, highlighting particularly, the presence of Kretchmar's (2006) criteria of fun, social interaction and improved motor competence. From the above pupil reflection the element of fun was present as they were happy playing tag rugby, social interaction was present as they were working as a team and improved motor competence was present as they were practicing passing skills in the lesson. This demonstrates that learning with the heart was a successful method for promoting meaningful participation in activities.

4.4.2.3 Learning with the Hands

Learning with the hands was also introduced through the following poster (Figure 4.3) adapted from Andy Vasily's (2015) PE blog.

Learning with the hands 🖐🖐
Important PE skills using my hands, body and feet
Holding the ball in two hands
Catching the ball
Passing
Tagging
Making space
Scoring a try
Using my feet

Table 4.8- (Adapted from Lesson Poster, Week 6)

By using the approach of learning with the hands children became aware of all the different ways they could learn and enhance their physical skill development. Learning with the hands supported Irish PE curriculums objective of "physical and motor development" (p.11). One pupil's awareness of their learning in the physical domain was evident in the following quote: *"I was running, dodging, passing, I was stretching trying to get a tag. I was also catching"* (Pupil Reflection, Week 6). Learning with the hands highlighted to the children what skills they practiced in a lesson but also how much they had developed and learned during the tag rugby unit. The following example demonstrates how a child wanted to show his friends his new tag rugby skills when they were playing together: *"I like playing with my friends to show my skills and what I can do"* (Pupil Reflection, Week 6). Adopting the

approach of learning with the hands promoted childrens meaningful engagement with activities by supporting the criteria of social interaction, challenge and increased motor competence.

The pedagogy 'learning with the HHH' details how learning was divided into the three areas of tactical understanding (cognitive), feelings (social) and motor skills (physical). Learning with the HHH proved very successful in supporting pupil's meaningful engagement in activity through the use of learning with the HHH Kretchmar's (2006) criteria of improved motor competence, social interaction, fun and challenge were present in lessons. The use of spirit points are discussed in the next section.

4.4.3   Spirit Points Score Sheet

In this section I explain how time for reflection was provided both independently and collectively to encourage children to identify areas they found meaningful in the activities and share these moments with their team mates. I explain how the spirit points score system allowed children to see the games from different viewpoints and perspectives, highlighting how everyone can take multiple meanings and experiences from the same activities.

The spirit points score sheet was an extremely useful method for promoting meaningful learning as it encouraged the children to take ownership of their learning in the social domain.This provided for greater opportunities for meaningful participation as activities related to and were of interest to participants. *"All players are responsible for administering and adhering to the rules. [It] relies upon a Spirit of the Game that places the responsibility for fair play on every player"* (WFDF, 2016). The spirit points score sheets required the children to discuss their team's performance based on the success criteria which I identified during observation of previous lessons. The chosen criteria were skill and knowledge use, praise, inclusion and controlling anger. These criteria were chosen as during observations I noticed certain participants got very competitive in games and got angry when their team did not win – a point supported by one pupil's claim that tag rugby often got too competitive (see Section on Personal Goal Setting). The spirit criteria were chosen as *"meaningful accomplishments are those that have criteria, rules, standards for success and criteria for excellence"* (Kretchmar 2006, p.352). The score sheet was used as it promoted social interaction among pupils during their team discussions on their performance, one of Kretchmar's (2006) criteria for promoting meaningful participation. Spirit points promoted

an appropriate level of competition in games but at the same time highlighted "healthy" competition "*... should never sacrifice the mutual respect between players, adherence to the agreed-upon rules of the game, or the basic joy of play*" (WFDF, 2016).This was important as it demonstrated to the children that games can be joy-oriented and fun when you respect your team mates and play with the rules of games.

Spirit Of The Game <u>Self</u> Score Sheet		Team:		
		Game 1	**Game 2**	**Game 3**
Your whole team should be involved in rating each game/team! Circle one box in each of the three lines and sum up the points to determine the SOTG score.		1 = Poor 2 = Not Good 3 = Good 4 = Very Good 5 = Excellent	1 = Poor 2 = Not Good 3 = Good 4 = Very Good 5 = Excellent	1 = Poor 2 = Not Good 3 = Good 4 = Very Good 5 = Excellent
Rules and Knowledge use: They did not misinterpret the rules on purpose. They passed the ball (backwards), they handed back the tag after they tagged a person.	**Rules**	0, 1, 2, 3, 4	0, 1, 2, 3, 4	0, 1, 2, 3, 4
Praise: They praised each other as a team. They did not give out to each other if they missed a pass or a tag. They supported and encouraged each other during the game. E.g. "Great pass" "Really good use of space" "That was a great run" etc.	**Praise**	0, 1, 2, 3, 4	0, 1, 2, 3, 4	0, 1, 2, 3, 4
Positive Attitude and Self-Control: They played with good intensity regardless of the score. They didn't lose their temper during the game.	**Attitude + Control**	0, 1, 2, 3, 4	0, 1, 2, 3, 4	0, 1, 2, 3, 4
Inclusion: Did they include all their team mates? Did everyone get the ball equally? Did they encourage their team mates to move into space to get the ball?	**Inclusion**	0, 1, 2, 3, 4	0, 1, 2, 3, 4	0, 1, 2, 3, 4

Table 4.9- (Spirit Points Score Sheet, Week 7: Adapted from WFDF, 2015)

The above spirit points score sheet (Fig 4.4) was used at three different stages within lessons: specifically, it promoted a play-pause-play approach, where a game was played, paused to discuss the game and then played again. The score sheet was planned to allow the children to reflect on the lesson content and experience, both independently and collectively

in order to identify salient moments in their learning. This approach is evident from my reflection to my critical friend: *"The children will be encouraged to discuss as a team (class discussion) how they think they did according to the success criteria. They will then be encouraged to think of ways they can improve their score and try and implement these changes in the next activity"* (CF Reflection, Week 7).

After the children first played the tag game in week seven they discussed and scored their performance in their teams based on the success criteria. The groups were encouraged to discuss with their teammates ways of improving their spirit scores in the next round of games. The success of the group discussions at promoting social interaction and increasing tactical understanding was commented on by my independent lesson observer: "[A child told his team] *'You should try get back passes because that helps more' -> Meaning-making/ Good discussion between groups about spirit"* (Observation document, week 7). After the game resumed and the groups had more time playing, the teams again scored their performance, discussing how and if their spirit scores improved from the first round. The following example demonstrates how a team discussed their performance and then gave reasons for their score: *"Nobody lost their temper or fouled"* (Pupil reflection, Week 7). Finally the groups played the game one last time and tried to improve on their previous two spirit scores. At the end of the lesson the groups discussed their performance in the activity, discussing areas they enjoyed most and what they would like to improve on in future activities. Although the spirit points system was a very successful method for promoting meaningful participation in activities, it required a large amount of explanation before and after it was first introduced. The success of the score sheet depended on pupils' understanding, cooperation and engagement with the rubrics.

In this section I explained how spirit points were used as a pedagogical approach to increase peer praise and promote social interaction among the children. The spirit points score sheet was used to give pupils a sense of ownership by self-assessing their learning in the social domain while also identifying areas they wanted to improve on. The spirit points system promoted meaningful participation between the children by encouraging Kretchmar's (2006) criteria of social interaction and appropriate levels of challenge.

4.4.4 Reflections

In the following section I explain how written reflections, focus group interviews, and picture drawings were used in order to support pupil's meaningful engagement in physical activity.

4.4.4.1 Written Reflections

Reflections written by pupils were a significant source of data from the tag rugby unit that provided evidence of children's learning and thoughts about their experience. Reflections were chosen as a pedagogy to support meaningful participation as a growing number of studies are starting to indicate that *"children's thoughts about different curriculum subjects can help to throw light upon ways in which the teaching of these subjects can be made more meaningful"* (Chedzoy and Burden 2009, p.185).

Reflections were used as a data collection tool but they were also used to collect data in the form of pupil feedback and to assess for meaningful PE experiences. I used reflections in lessons as there is "*great significance in the thoughts that children have about their development and educational experiences*" (Chedzoy et al. 2009, p.185). Reflections were used to gain insight into children's experiences of activities and to assess their tag rugby development and my teaching of the tag rugby unit. Reflections were a useful tool for promoting children's meaningful engagement as the children were encouraged to pause and reflect on what they were participating in during activities. The promotion of individual and group reflection allowed pupils to share their experiences with classmates while also allowing them to experience the meaning other pupils took from activities.

Group reflections, where children wrote both shared and individual reflections, worked well at promoting discussion between the children and thus provided for Kretchmar's (2006) criterion of social interaction. Reflections allowed pupils to take personal meaning from the activities they were participating in while also being active members in the planning process through providing recommendations and feedback. This gave children a sense of ownership over their learning and the tag rugby content. I found reflections to be a very useful method of getting honest feedback from pupils on games and activities. For example, one student wrote about how changing the space and rules of the game would make it more fun and enjoyable: *"Maybe if there was more space and you could move with the ball"* (Pupil Reflection, Week 1). This example demonstrates how the children's feedback was used by me to get information on how to change and improve activities. Through the

use of anonymous written reflections, both group and individual, pupils were able to share their opinions without fear of bias or judgement from my own personal view on a topic.

4.4.4.2 Focus Group Interviews

Focus group interviews were a useful method for facilitating and promoting group reflection, supporting Kretchmar's (2006) criterion of social interaction. Focus group interviewing was an extremely useful technique as *"asking a group a set of questions will also capture the group dynamics in response to the question you asked the group"* (Samaras 2011, p.184). Focus group interviews provided an opportunity to ask specific and general questions on the children's tag rugby experience. The interviews were used to assess for the presence of Kretchmar's (2006) criteria for meaningful participation. Focus group interviews were carried out at three different stages during the tag rugby unit: The first focus group took place after our third week of tag rugby. The second interview was carried out after our sixth week of tag and third focus group interview took place after our final tag rugby lesson. Each focus group consisted of four participants. The method allowed me to gather descriptive data on participants' points of view on the tag rugby unit. This allowed me to adapt activities to cater for pupil's needs and interests and make activities more personally meaningful for participants. The following is an example of how I used the focus group to question the participants, specifically looking for evidence of the criteria of increased motor competence;

> *Teacher - Do you think over the past few weeks, have your tag rugby skills improved?*
>
> *Pupil- Ya because of the dodging and we know the rules now because if they go out past the white line then it's the other teams ball*
>
> (Focus Group, Week 6)

Focus group interviewing was a pedagogy that allowed me to support children's meaningful participation in the tag rugby unit by understanding their experiences.

4.4.4.3 Picture Drawing

During the tag rugby unit I used a picture a child drew in class about tag rugby as a starting point for discussion in an individual interview. The picture (See Ch.3 section 3.5.4) was drawn in a previous lesson by the child being interviewed. It allowed them to engage easily in the interview process by explaining the personal meaning behind the picture.

Pupil- Well it's about friendship kind of and how you play tag rugby. There's two people saying hi five and there's another man passing with his friend.

Teacher- What does the hi-five and two guys passing represent?

Pupil- The friendship of teams.

(Focus Group, Week 8).

By encouraging the children to explain the meaning of their pictures, the focus was shifted from the empirical objective, of what the picture depicts, to what it means to the person being questioned (Armour et al, 2012). It was only through questioning that the true meaning of the picture for the child was revealed. The picture and subsequent explanation of its meaning highlighted that this particular pupil found lessons most meaningful when he was having fun playing with his friends, supporting Kretchmar's (2006) criteria of social interaction and fun.

Written reflections, focus group interviews, and picture drawings were data collection tools that supported the overall reflection pedagogy and worked well at encouraging children's meaningful engagement in physical activity. Written reflections facilitated individual and group work, allowing participant's time to generate and share their opinions with their classmates. While reflections supported children's meaningful participation by giving children the opportunity to take their own meaning from the different activities and to identify what made lessons personally meaningful for them. Picture drawings supported children's meaningful participation as it ensured children's individuality and originality was supported in lessons.

4.4.5   Play-Teach-Play Approach

In the following section I explain how I adopted the play-teach-play approach when using the TGfU model. In this section I also give an example of how I planned for the implementation of the approach in my planning documents.

The effectiveness of the use of the play-teach-play approach for the development of tactical understanding was identified in my peer observation document: *"Discussing dodging, finding space, pauses game after a while, good progression in second game using skills from first game"* (Observation Document, Week 7). This example demonstrates how

through the use of play-teach-play, participants' tactical understanding and skill development was provided for.

The following example demonstrated how I implemented the play-teach-play approach into my lesson planning;

Step 1	• Mini-games of tag rugby where the class try use what they learned in the previous lessons and put these into a game.
Step 2	• Diagonal passing: the class will practice in groups of four. This will encourage the class to use depth in attack in the games.
Step 3	• Return to mini game to allow the children implement what they learned in the passing segment.

Table 4.10 - (Adapted from Planning Document, Week 5)

The lesson began with the children playing mini-games of tag rugby where they were encouraged to elicit and implement any prior knowledge from previous experiences into the mini games. After a time the game was paused and we discussed how they were finding the game. After some discussion and direction from me as facilitator-observer, in this particular instance the group identified they were aligned in a very flat formation relative to the defensive team's alignment. This area for improvement identified by the children led on to the pre-planned diagonal passing segment, where the children practiced their passing and holding depth when receiving the ball. The teams then returned to another mini-game of tag rugby.

The play-teach-play pedagogy describes how a more meaningful PE experience was supported by allowing children to play a game, identify areas for improvement and practice these identified areas before returning to the game. The pedagogy supported meaningful learning by allowing activities to become self-directed through discussion and appropriately challenging for children, aligning with two of Kretchmar's criteria.

In the following section I will explain how I used the teaching by invitation model to give participants a choice and a voice in their learning.

4.4.6   Teaching by Invitation

Teaching by invitation was a pedagogy I used to adapt tasks and activities to allow for individual differences within lessons. I used teaching by invitation as it was a *"way of allowing children to adjust the task so they can be successful – and challenged"* (Graham 2008, p.106). Using a teaching by invitation approach required me to adopt the role of facilitator for pupils learning rather than directing it. I planned lessons in a way that allowed pupils to take ownership of their learning by using pupil feedback in lesson planning and allowing participants to guide the direction of activities.The teaching by invitation model allowed children to take charge of their learning as it encouraged participants *"to think for themselves and modify their task choices based on assessment of their own performance"* (Griffey et al 2007, p.45).

An example of how I used teaching by invitation as a pedagogy for meaningful PE is evident in my week seven planning document:

"In the playing areas I will encourage the children to pass in 3's on the move. If the groups don't feel confident passing on the move to begin with they will be given the option of playing big clock, little clock to practice passing"

(Planning Document, Week 7)

My allowing pupils to direct lessons was recognised during my lesson observation in week seven when my peer commented: *"Good differentiation between groups. Passing in circles rather than line for some groups"* (Observation Document, Week 7). The approach allowed pupils to have an appropriate level of challenge within lessons while also improving their individual skills, providing for two of Kretchmar's (2006) criteria for meaningful participation. Specifically, it addressed improved motor competence by practicing skills that best suited their level of ability, and appropriate challenge.

In this section I described how the teaching by invitation approach was used to provide an appropriate level of challenge for the children. I detailed how the approach of teaching by invitation was used to provide participants with a sense of control over their learning. In the next section the pedagogy of 'making learning personally relevant' is described, highlighting how participants were supported in making connections between what they learned during tag rugby to the other sports and games they play outside of lessons.

4.4.7   Making Learning Personally Relevant

The method of making learning personally relevant was used to adopt a holistic approach to my teaching by engaging participants at the personal, emotional, physical and mental level. The approach was also used to relate what we were doing during the tag rugby unit to other sports and games. Therefore I was aiming to support pupil's understanding of their experiences so that they *"would not be limited to the school day or in-class instruction"* (Kretchmar 2006, p.352). I used the pedagogy in my teaching to support children in *"making connections across areas of activity, and to understand similarities and differences between activities and learning as well as enhancing pupils understanding"* (Capel et al, 2013, p.30).

By connecting PE to other sporting experiences during lessons, I supported pupils in understanding and relating how certain tag rugby skills can be transferable to other sports and games but also to other aspects of their lives outside of PE. The participants were encouraged to move their thinking beyond just PE to their wider community. For example, I put forward a range of different questions to pupils that encouraged them to make connections between certain skills and activities, such as: "Where else could this skill be used? Where else could you have seen this skill? How could you use this skill in X?". This approach to questioning encouraged children to make meaningful connections between what they learned in the tag lessons and how these skills could benefit them in other activities outside of school.

Evidence from some pupils suggested they were able to observe the transferability and thus personal relevance of experiences in the tag rugby unit. For example, one student wrote: *"I want the skills I learn in tag rugby to help me with sidestepping in soccer"* (Pupil reflection, Week 2). This pupil reflection demonstrates how the pupil wanted to improve his sidestepping skills through tag rugby and wanted his improved ability to sidestep to help him in playing soccer also. This highlighted how the children understood how skills can be transferable to a vast majority of sports and games. Making connections encouraged pupils to make links between the skills they were practicing and learning in tag and how these skills could apply to other areas of sport and play. This encouraged children's meaningful learning as *"meaning in general are most easily nurtured in connection with things that are already important, familiar and understood"* (Kretchmar 2008, p.164).

The pedagogy of 'making learning personally relevant' allowed me to create an integrated learning environment where children used both new and prior knowledge in their tag rugby experience. Children were encouraged to use their prior sporting experience and

integrate the various skills, such as passing and catching and using footwork, into the tag rugby unit. I explained how the children were encouraged to no longer view skills in isolation to different activities, instead understanding how all skills are connected.

4.5 Conclusion

In this section I have outlined the pedagogies used to support meaningful engagement. Kretchmar's criteria of fun, challenge, improved motor competence and social interaction were evident in various ways and with various levels of emphasis in the participant's responses and reflections, illustrating the effectiveness of these pedagogies in supporting meaningful participation. In the In the following section the pedagogies of personal goal setting, learning with the head, the heart and hands, lesson reflections, the play-teach-play approach, teaching by invitation and making learning personally relevant will be discussed.

The following chapter will discuss the main findings of the research. Firstly the seven pedagogies which I identified as supporting childrens meaningful engagement will be discussed. Then, the developments and benefits I saw in my own practice as a result of using self-study research will be addressed.

5 Chapter 5: Discussion

In this chapter, the key findings with regard to the research question are discussed and general conclusions are described. Firstly, the benefits of self-study for professional learning and the importance of the role of the teacher in providing for children's meaningful experiences will be discussed. I will also discuss the developments I saw in my own practice as a result of using the self-study research methodology. Then, the seven pedagogies that supported children's meaningful participation in PE that were developed and implemented during the course of the 9 week intervention will be discussed.

5.1 Learning to Teach in ways that Support Meaningful Experiences

Through the theme 'Learning to teach in ways that support meaningful experiences', I will discuss my experience of implementing an approach that facilitated meaningful learning. The effectiveness of the use of the self-study methodology for improving educative practice, particularly its interactive nature, will be discussed using my own research as an exemplar. The following section will also discuss the importance of teacher engagement and the role the teacher has in supporting children's meaningful learning in PE.

The first section of the findings chapter focused on my personal experience of implementing pedagogies designed to promote meaningful PE experiences. The findings focused on my experiences of (a) learning to teach PE and (b) learning to teach meaningful PE. Areas highlighted were the importance of gaining experience as a newly qualified teacher and learning about the children I was teaching. A key theme which emerged during analysis of the findings was how Kretchmar's (2006) criteria for meaningful participation became my guide for planning and assessing lessons. Self-study methodology proved invaluable in my development as a facilitator of meaningful physical education. From the benefits I experienced of using-self-study, the advantages for beginning teachers in using self-study for professional learning will be discussed using my own research as reference.

The importance of my role as teacher in providing for children's meaningful learning was supported by the research of Skinner and Belmont (1993). In their research into how teacher behaviour influenced student engagement and experience in lessons, Skinner and Belmont (1993) *"revealed that teacher involvement was central to student's experiences"* (p.571). Equally evident in this research was the role, influence and responsibility I had as a teacher in providing children opportunities for meaningful PE experiences during the tag

rugby unit. There is significant research supporting the finding that an educator's interpersonal relationship with their pupils plays an important role in creating a positive learning environment (Birch and Ladd 1998, Pianta et al. 2002 and Baker 2006). Supporting the view shared by DeVries and Zan (2005), the relationships which developed between me and the children was important in supporting their meaningful PE experience. Our relationship grew through the constant interaction between us. Importantly, this occurred on several levels. On a personal level, I shared my own experience of learning in sport and attempted to relate their experiences to my own. I also questioned children on their own experiences either during our group discussions or individually during activities.

An element which was vital in creating a meaningful tag rugby experience was the development of a respectful environment where children's feedback and viewpoints were genuinely valued. The acknowledgment of pupil voice supported the development of an environment where Kretchmar's (2006) criterion of social interaction was fostered. The development of a respectful environment was evidenced by the use of pupil's feedback in adapting and changing activities. During their study on the influence of teacher and peer relationships on students engagement and motivation, Furrer and Skinner (2014) remarked that "*when teachers treat students with respect, seek out and listen to and value their opinions, students are more willing to commit themselves to the hard work entailed in learning*" (p.106). This viewpoint is supported in the research of Reeve and Jang (2006) and Stefanou et al. (2004). I developed this respectful environment in my practice by planning lessons based on pupils' feedback and interests in order to increase the level of motivation and meaningful engagement in activity.

Equally the use of teacher feedback was an important factor in creating opportunities for participants' meaningful engagement during the tag rugby unit. By using teacher feedback I encouraged the children to think of ways to make activities more or less challenging, supporting Kretchmar's (2006) criterion of challenge. Teacher feedback supported children's confidence as it highlighted to participants areas they were doing well but also gave them areas to work on and improve in future lessons, supporting Kretchmar's (2006) criterion of improved motor competence. Teacher feedback supported pupil engagement as "*the way a teacher listens and talks to children helps them become learners who think critically and deeply*" (Fosnot 2005. p. 102). Evertson et al. (1980) in their research also found the use of teacher feedback to be an effective technique for increasing meaningful pupil-teacher interaction.

Dinkelman (2003) writes that teacher educators who study their own practice make changes in their pedagogy and can then recommend changes to policy through discussion and collaboration with peers. Similarly, my experience suggests that beginning teachers can also use self-study as means of professional learning by improving their practice and sharing their new ideas. Self-study methodology was invaluable in supporting my personal and professional development (Ovens and Fletcher, 2014). My research clearly led to the improvement of my practice. This dual purpose of identifying meaningful pedagogies and improving my practice supported Shulman's (1986a) belief that good practice requires teachers to have good pedagogical content knowledge and understand what makes the learning of topics easy or difficult for participants. Learning about and understanding children's experiences enabled me to meet the diverse needs of participants in relation to meaningful experiences. As Hamilton and Pinnegar (2000) wrote, one of the advantages of using self-study is that it enables us to confidently *"change our practice without waiting for new research from others"* (p.238). Throughout the research process I identified problems occurring in my practice and looked for solutions, such as, over focusing on the cognitive dimension of learning and having to reduce the level of competition in activities. Reflecting on and analysing the multiple data sources collected in the research supported not only a deeper understanding of my practice (Brandenburg, 2009) but of the children's perspectives of the tag rugby unit also.

Prior to this investigation I had no previous experience of carrying out academic research, therefore it was major learning process. For that reason the use of LaBoskey's (2004) criteria for self-study and Kretchmar's (2006) criteria for meaningful participation as guidelines in designing and implementing the research provided for an appropriate level of rigour. The use of multiple forms of qualitative data supported claims about trustworthiness in the study. Collaboration with a critical friend and independent observer ensured the research stayed on task and prevented the occurrence of 'naval gazing'.

LaBoskey's (2004) third element in self-study research design refers to the importance of interactivity. This interactive nature of self-study enabled me to focus on the self, while also engaging in reflection with a critical friend (Cochran-Smith, 1999). Being interactive supported the use and sharing of my reflections, both written and verbal, which aided in the development of my practice. Through the use of weekly critical friend reflections and an independent observer observation, I contextualised and made sense of my teaching from the perspective of an outsider in tandem with my own insider perspective.

The collaborative nature of self-study allowed me to shed light on areas of my practice I may have otherwise overlooked as I was receiving a different viewpoint on my teaching (Maxwell, 1992). It was during this time of discussion with my critical friend and independent observer that new ideas about practice were generated and questions answered. The self-study process enabled me to implement a rigorous inquiry into what has shaped my experiences and my teaching, thus supporting me in improving my practice. In turn, sharing these insights may help others to better understand their own practice, particularly in relation to providing meaningful experiences for children in PE. The advantages for the use of self-study for beginning teachers as a methodology for improving professional practice are therefore multiple. Evidence from my research suggests that self-study methodology supports a reconceptualisation of one's practice and beliefs. The findings of the study indicate that conducting self-study research into one's practice supports academic growth, continuous personal and professional development, knowledge generation, and the enrichment of self-confidence (Lunenberg et al, 2011).

Carrying out my research into identifying meaningful pedagogies required me to separate my own experience of sport from my teaching of physical education to others. Fellow researchers have also commented on the difficulties of separating their own personal experience from their research (Oda, 1998). As self-study research into teaching practices and beliefs can involve a large range of perspectives, it was important my experience of rugby was acknowledged in terms of how it shaped the development of and my outlook on lessons. By coming to better understand the nature of my own sporting experience from the outset I was able to view my teaching with a fresh outlook. It prompted me to reflect on what I can do as a teacher to make lessons more meaningful and enjoyable for my participants, highlighting the importance of reflection in improving educative practice (Valdez, 1992). Separating my own experience of elite sport gave me the freedom to try new pedagogies in my teaching as I no longer felt the pressure to reflect my own method of sport participation into my teaching.

The research process was a major learning experience for me as an educator. As a result of the research I have improved my ability to teach meaningful physical education and, based on the findings, I have clearly learned how to implement pedagogies that support meaningful participation in PE. As previously mentioned, an important element of self-study is that it is improvement aimed. I have improved the quality of my practice by learning how to implement pedagogies oriented toward meaningful experiences in my teaching. During

the course of the research I found myself developing as a facilitator of meaningful physical education. An example of this was when I moved from over focusing on children's cognitive understanding to instead prioritising participant's affective (social and emotional) learning. As my confidence grew, children becoming in touch with their feelings while participating in activities became more rewarding for me than focusing on 'how much' they were learning. This supported a view held by Adelman and Taylor (2000) who argued that if schools focused solely on academic instruction and management rather that supporting children's social and emotional learning, they would fail to provide a positive learning experience. My changing perception over the course of the research supports the belief of how what we view as important can change over time and engaging in self-study facilitated this change in view (Richardson et al., 1991). On review of the data I found my viewpoints had changed through the use of the meaningful pedagogies (Richardson, 1998). By judging the success of a lesson using Kretchmar's (2006) meaningful criteria, I demonstrated how I had learned to provide for children's meaningful learning in activities. On consideration of the findings it is clear that I have successfully reconceptualised my practice and have adopted new meaningful pedagogies in my teaching (Britzman, 1991).

5.2 Pedagogies that Supported Meaningful Experiences in Physical Education

Prioritising meaningful learning involves children becoming active members in their PE environment and see's the teacher adopting the role of facilitator in lessons. Meaningful learning refers to knowledge that has value to the learner. Seven pedagogies were adopted into my practice during my use on an approach that fosters children's meaningful learning. It was when a combination of these pedagogies were used in tandem that meaningful participation was fostered. The approach that prioritised meaningful engagement had a positive effect on children's learning and supported a meaningful PE learning experience for the children. Findings illustrate the effectiveness of the meaningful pedagogies in creating a meaningful experience where children had a voice in their learning.

Seven pedagogies that supported children's meaningful participation were investigated and implemented. Kretchmar's (2006) criteria were used as a guide to evaluate the effectiveness of each pedagogy in promoting and facilitating meaningful engagement. The effectiveness of the pedagogies was evidenced by the presence of social interaction, improved motor competence, challenge and fun in children's experiences. The children's

reflections provided examples of social interaction, improved motor competence, challenge and fun, which demonstrates the value of Kretchmar's (2006) criteria as a framework for pedagogies that help foster meaningful engagement in PE.

Six of the pedagogies promoted participation that reflected at least one of Kretchmar's (2006) criteria for meaningful participation. The seven pedagogies will now be discussed in terms of how the pedagogies supported meaningful participation in PE.

1. Learning with the Head, Heart and Hands: The pedagogy of learning with the HHH supported meaningful participation in activity by the children. The pedagogy provided learners with a structured framework to make sense and take meaning from the learning activities, an element Dyson et al (2004) viewed as important for teaching tactical games. Learning with the HHH was an effective pedagogy that used the student-centred approach to facilitate meaningful participation. Learning with the HHH supported a complete learning experience as children's cognitive, affective and psychomotor learning were provided for (Rovai et al, 2009). Activities that clearly promoted a positive learning environment and supported the use of the affective dimension of learning were viewed as supporting children's meaningful participation in activity.

Learning with the HHH was divided into three learning areas when it was introduced and this proved very successful. For instance, Learning with the head was aligned with learning in the cognitive domain. It provided for children's tactical understanding and rule use which supported the use of the TGfU model and Kretchmar's (2006) criterion of challenge. Willis (2007) in his research found that challenging students at reasonable, appropriate levels to be one of the most powerful strategies for success. He found appropriate challenge can lead to a brain state of disequilibrium and the curiosity it stimulates can be a powerful motivator for learning. Learning with the heart focused on children's emotions and feelings during the tag rugby unit which aided my promotion of the affective dimension. During their research into the games sense approach Mandigo and Corlett (2010) also found that using a student-centred environment supported participants in experiencing positive affective states of learning. Dyson et al (2004) in their research encouraged the use of a student centred environment as *"the teacher purposefully shifts responsibility to the student engaged in authentic, meaningful, and learning tasks"* (p.226). Through the use of learning with the heart I encouraged group discussion and peer-praise, supporting Kretchmar's (2006) criteria of social interaction and fun. Finally, learning with the

hands focused on children's skill development (psychomotor domain), which aligned with Kretchmar's (2006) criterion of increased motor competence. When each part of the HHH approach was combined together it aligns with four out of five of Kretchmar's (2006) criteria for meaningful participation, specifically: social interaction, improved motor competence, challenge and fun. The delight criterion was not evident in the findings in relation to this pedagogy. The presence of four of the meaningful criteria leads me to conclude that learning with the HHH was a pedagogy that fostered participant's meaningful engagement in PE lessons.

2. Personal Goal Setting: Personal goal setting was a pedagogy used to support children's meaningful participation in activity as it encouraged the children to set goals that were meaningful and authentic to each individual. Although the pedagogy aligned with Kretchmar's (2006) criteria of fun, improved motor competence and challenge it did not show clear linkages with social interaction or delight. Thus, the approach of personal goal setting, while successful at supporting meaningful participation, was not as comprehensive in aligning with the breadth of Kretchmar's (2006) criteria as other pedagogies in this case.

There is gathering research on the use of personal goal setting in classroom settings. For example, Mountain (1998) researched the implications of using personal goal setting in American, Canadian and New Zealand schools. She found goal setting had a positive effect on pupil behaviour and engagement. Nicholls (1984) found that observing the differences between children's personal goals worked as a means of understanding and interpreting what children saw in terms of success and failure in lessons. In this research the pedagogy worked well at reducing the level of competition in activities and promoted whole class participation. Personal goal setting helped to reduce the level of competition in lessons as I encouraged children to strive to reach their own goals without putting unwanted pressure on other participants. The pedagogy reduced the level of competition by providing for those who did not like the competitive element that emerged in early lessons. I encouraged the children to compete intrapersonally, to develop some goals which aligned with meeting personal bests. This was an important finding as often not all children like to participate in activities that are overly competitive, which can have implications for participation inside and outside of physical education classes (Gould et al., 1996). Thus personal goal setting provided an outlet for all the participants to engage in activities in ways that made the

accomplishment of tasks personally relevant and appropriate for their individual developmental needs.

Teacher questioning that increased awareness on activities and encouraged self-reflection was also used to help the children to think about their current position related to their goal. Children were encouraged to reflect on what they needed to do during lessons to achieve their goals. Encouraging the pupils to set their own goals can improve not only their self-belief but their commitment to attaining their goals (Schunk, 1985). In their writing Gipps, Hargreaves and McCallum (2015) also found that in order for *"a learner to improve she must have a notion of the performance"* before setting goals (p.11). Asking the children to set their tag rugby goals after the second week of lessons, rather than at the beginning of the unit, worked well as the participants had a sense of the tag rugby unit and areas they wanted to improve on and practice. The benefits of using personal goal setting during activities is that teachers, by teaching the basic skills of goal setting, can engage their pupils in an authentic learning experience and encourage them to draw personal meaning from their learning.

3. Spirit Points: The spirit points system was a pedagogy that promoted children's meaningful participation by aligning with Kretchmar's (2006) criteria of social interaction and challenge. Spirit points promoted group discussion and peer praise among the children. These strategies can increase their levels of confidence and motivate participants to develop and maintain a positive sense of self (Swan 1990). Similar to personal goal setting the use of success criteria and the spirit points system allowed the children to see first-hand areas they needed to improve on and areas they were succeeding in (Martin, 2008). The children explained and discussed their group performance successfully in their groups. The spirit points system supported children's meaningful participation as the group discussions held after games allowed participants to identify salient moments in their learning. Similar to findings elsewhere Iserbyt et al. (2010) and Van de Broek et al. (2011), children claimed to take more value from lessons when peer assessment was used, than when solely using teacher feedback. Involving the children in the design of the spirit point score sheet (Ofsted, 2006) may give the children a greater sense of ownership over their learning as well as help the teacher to identify other areas children want to improve on.

4. Reflections: Reflections were used to explore children's experiences of activities and to identify what made lessons personally meaningful for participants (Walker and Logan, 2008). Pupil reflections worked well at promoting pupil engagement and increasing pupil responsibility. Hawkes (2001) discovered that teachers who introduced reflection as a teaching strategy created a classroom climate that encouraged pupils to be more responsible for themselves and their work. Completing reflections engaged participants and encouraged deep thinking on their lesson experience. Reflection tasks supported children's meaningful participation in activities by helping them to identify and reflect on personally meaningful experiences in their learning. Alternating between written and verbal reflections ensured participants engaged with the reflection process in different ways, allowing them to communicate their thinking in several modes and providing me with access to their thoughts. Children were given the option of drawing a picture expressing how they felt about the lessons for differentiation purposes. This ensured that participants who were not confident in writing their opinions could express their views through drawing. During her research into the role of drawing in children's learning Ring (2001) discovered that children use drawing to convey their "hidden" ideas. She found that drawings acted as a form of silent language which enabled children to share ideas they could not express verbally. The use of lesson reflections supported Kretchmar's (2006) criteria of social interaction through promoting group discussion between participants. Sufficient time for reflection is important in order to get valuable worthwhile reflections. This reflects Costa and Kallick's (2008) belief that teachers who promote and foster reflective classrooms ensure that pupils are fully engaged in the process of meaningful learning.

Reflections acted as a form of feedback which informed my teaching (Hudson 2007). Chedzoy and Burden (2009) also used reflections to seek suggestions from children for ways to improve PE lessons. Reflections gave the children opportunities to share feedback on ways of making lessons more enjoyable and how to change activities to make them more challenging. This supported the criteria of challenge and fun which encouraged children's meaningful participation in activity.

5. Play-teach-play and 6 Teaching by Invitation: The play-teach-play pedagogy and teaching by invitation have been discussed together as I found the pedagogies complemented eachother well and provided for more of Kretchmars (2006) criteria when used together. The play-teach-play approach provided a more meaningful PE experience by

allowing the participants to play a game, identify areas for improvement and practice before returning to the game. This aligned with the TGfU model in lessons. The pedagogy enabled activities to begin quickly with reduced time being given to explaining how to play the different games. The play-teach-play approach can be used to promote reflection in activity, through group discussion, and encourage participants to identify areas that they would like to improve, rather than telling them 'what' to practice (Bandura, 1977). Although the play-teach-play approach encouraged participants to be active in lessons, it only aligned explicitly with two of Kretchmar's (2006) criteria for meaningful participation, which were challenge and improved motor competence. Even though the pedagogy did not provide for other criteria, I found when the approach was combined with the 'teaching by invitation' pedagogy it did allow participants to more readily self-direct the lessons, giving the children a sense of autonomy in their learning. The 'teaching by invitation' pedagogy had similarities to the method used by Nilges (2004) during his investigation into making dance more meaningful for his participants. In his research Nilges (2004) used open ended tasks that invited participants to invent and explore their own movements. Similarly 'teaching by invitation' encouraged participants to explore their own movements in activity through the use of tasks that best suited their ability.

The two pedagogies of play-teach-play and 'teaching by invitation' complemented each other quite well in terms of providing meaningful PE experiences. When games were paused for our class discussion (play-teach-play) on the activity, participants were given different skill options (teaching by invitation) to practice and implement when the games restarted. Allowing children to choose activities that best suited their ability supported the provision of 'just right' challenges in lessons. The combined approaches of play-teach-play and teaching by invitation encouraged the acquisition of self-regulatory abilities for participants to preside over their own learning (Zimmerman, 1989a, 1990). The implementation of these pedagogies was not without its challenges. Initially, the children found the concept of being able to decide what tag rugby activities to participate in during lessons quite difficult. Introducing the concept of decision making, allowing the children to decide which of the pre-planned activities to engage in, from the outset of lessons could encourage participants to be active and vocal in the decision making process more easily.

Encouraging participants to self-direct their lessons supports the development of personally meaningful and reason-transcending play (play for play's sake) as evidenced from the pupil example where the child imagined the ball going over her head was a shooting star

(Kretchmar, 2006). By combining the two pedagogies of play-teach-play and teaching by invitation into activities three of Kretchmar's (2006) criteria were present. The criteria present were challenge, by choosing to participate in activities that best suited their ability, fun as the children had more time playing the games and improved motor competence as they practiced tag rugby skills through different activities. As the pedagogies encouraged participants to become self-directed I took on the role of facilitator during activities. This provided more time and opportunity to observe lessons and to identify moments of meaningful participation through teacher observation and discussion with the children.

7. Personally relevant learning:

Although making personal relevance was not explicitly included in Kretchmar's (2006) criteria, there was enough evidence from my own and the children's data that it promoted children's meaningful learning. Providing personally relevant learning drew from Deci and Ryan's (1985) self-determination theory. When people are personally motivated they play, explore and take part in activities for the innate fun, challenge and excitement of doing so (Niemiec at al., 2009). According to Deci and Ryan (1985) these behaviours stem from the self rather than external factors resulting in a sense of interest and curiosity. Therefore this interest and curiosity supported the provision of personally relevant learning.

The pedagogy of making learning personally relevant promoted and encouraged children's meaningful participation. The approach of making learning personally relevant was also adapted from a similar method McCracken (1999) used in his teaching. McCracken chose outdoor activities to include is his PE curriculum that were popular in the community where he taught. Similarly, in this research, the selection of tag rugby was viewed as culturally appropriate as Limerick is seen as the homestead of Munster rugby. As making learning personally relevant stemmed from children's interests it supported the acquisition of deep play (Blankenship and Ayers, 2010). Making learning personally relevant engaged children emotionally, supporting the use of the affective dimension and connected learning to their prior knowledge. By linking participation and games to children's own experience of activity, participants were more willing to engage with the new meaningful methods I was introducing (Alexander, 2006). Johnson and Sessions (2014) also commented on how making learning personally relevant can increase pupil's engagement in activities;

Students need a personal connection to the material, whether that's through engaging them emotionally or connecting the new information with previously acquired knowledge. Without that, students may not only disengage and quickly forget, but they may also lose the motivation to try

(P.62)

As the tag rugby unit progressed, children were more open to change as activities were planned around their own personal interests and experiences (Rapp and Ardnt, 2012). Powell (2011) posits that planning activities around children's interests allows educators to build positive relationships with their participants as they begin to learn their interests, likes and dislikes. The approach of making learning personally relevant promoted a bond to develop between me and the participants. Over time, they were becoming more comfortable with me, feeling free to share their opinions. By using the pedagogy of making learning personally relevant I felt more respected by participants – my sense is that they understood I wanted to create an enjoyable and meaningful tag rugby experience.

In conclusion the pedagogies discussed supported children's meaningful participation in activity during the course of the tag rugby unit. The pedagogies developed during this research will allow for exploration of pupil's meaningful engagement. In recent times there has been major focus on developing motor skills and increasing fitness levels of pupils in primary PE. However, there has not been a similar focus on helping physical educators develop and deliver meaningful physical activity experiences resulting in positive affective states such as delight, fun and pleasure within their lessons. Blankenship and Ayers, (2010); states, which in all likelihood, will help children develop motor skills and fitness as a result of increased participations. The findings and pedagogies identified in this research thus help to address the gap identified by Chen (1998), informing and supporting a meaningful approach to teaching PE in primary schools and helping augment the limited body of research on this topic.

The following chapter will summarise the main findings of the research. Recommendations will be given for teachers, researchers and policy makers. The strengths and limitations of the study will be outlined and the overall contribution of the research will be discussed.

6 Chapter 6: Recommendations and Conclusion

6.1   Summary of Main Findings

Seven pedagogies that supported children's meaningful participation in PE were investigated. The use of Kretchmar's (2006) criteria to guide planning and implementation of these pedagogies, as well as their evaluation, ensured participant's meaningful experiences was prioritised. My role as facilitator in providing for children's meaningful learning had an influential role in children's meaningful experiences. The benefits of the use of an approach that prioritised meaningful learning were that it promoted children's improved engagement in activity. Encouraging pupils to have a voice in their learning supported children's increased participation, as they engaged in activities that held personal interest to them. Engaging in activities that held personal interest supported the children's improved motor competence and skill awareness.

Self-study methodologies supported a systematic investigation into my practice, which allowed for professional learning and improvement. The use of self-study enabled me to identify areas of improvement and success in my teaching but also share my findings and results. The sharing of findings supports Loughran and Northfield's (1998) belief that self-study extends into *"the wider communication and consideration of ideas i.e. the generation and communication of new knowledge and understandings"* (p.15). Engaging in the research to explore pedagogies focused toward meaningful experiences resulted in an improvement of my practice through the use of new approaches, by teaching new topics and (through self-study) generating evidence that supported my claims about the effectiveness of the pedagogical approach I was enacting.

6.2   Recommendations

The findings indicate the value of incorporating pedagogies that facilitate meaningful participation into PE. Using pedagogies that facilitate meaningful engagement, guided by Kretchmar's (2006) five criteria allowed for the development of children's meaningful experiences as they participated in PE activities. Combining the separate meaningful pedagogies supported the use of the approach that prioritised children's meaningful engagement.

Meaningful experiences should also be promoted as a key outcome in the writing of PE curriculum documents, as evidenced in the Irish PE curriculum 1999 (p.2). Physical

education programs that prioritise meaningful engagement may help produce participants who love physical activity and, by enabling students to be transported from the mundane to the memorable (Kretchmar, 2013), produce lifelong movers (Blankenship and Ayers, 2010).

The findings of this research point to several research opportunities for development including, identifying children's experiences of the meaningful approach when implemented over a longer time period. As the data gathering process was carried out over a nine week period, Kretchmar's (2006) criterion of delight could not be achieved in this research. Perhaps greater consideration could be given to focusing on delight in a longer study: what does that mean and look like and how might we go about seeking it? It would be interesting to note if the approach when carried out over a longer time period would provide for the delight criterion. It would be worthwhile to record if the presence of Kretchmar's (2006) fifth criteria for meaningful participation would cause a major change to lesson outcomes and to children's experiences of activity. Also, further research across different strands would add weight to claims related to Kretchmar's (2006) criteria. The research explored seven pedagogies that supported children's meaningful participation in activity to varying levels. Therefore there is scope for further investigation into the presence of other pedagogies that support children's meaningful participation in games and other strands within PE.

Findings also indicate the value of NQT's engaging in self-study research. The self-study process enabled me to discover what type of educator I want to become. It promoted my inward reflection to discover areas of strength but also areas for improvement in my practice. Self-study is a methodology I can now draw on throughout my teaching career and support my continual professional development (CPD).

For teachers using meaningful pedagogies for the first time, I would recommend beginning with the 'learning with the head, heart and hands' pedagogy. The reasoning for this is that the approach is divided into three areas which makes it easier for explaining in lessons and introducing to children. When first using meaningful pedagogies I recommend beginning with two or three in lessons, as using a large range of different pedagogies at once can become very overwhelming and their value may be lost.

Choosing a critical friend with experience and interests in a similar field as your research is recommended. Also, ensure your critical friend is both supportive and critical. This is an important finding Griffiths (1998) identified, and commented on; having a critical friend with similar interests can make the experience more worthwhile as you are more open to being honest in reflections. A reflection template that both parties agree upon can

give structure to your reflections but also allow you to clearly track your progress as the research develops. When engaging in self-study I recommend researchers to be open to change, it was through engaging openly in the self-study processes that I have reconceptualised my thoughts and methods of teaching PE.

6.3   Strengths and Limitations of the Study

The main strength of the study is the range of evidence that has been generated to support seven pedagogies that facilitate children's meaningful participation in PE. However, as the research findings are based on my own experience as an NQT and what I found worked well in my teaching, they may not represent the experiences of all teachers. With that said, the seven pedagogies investigated in the research could be used to inform an approach that prioritises meaningful participation to teaching PE in primary schools.

The duration of the study may have impacted the data collection process. As the the tag rugby intervention took place over a nine week period there was not sufficient time to allow for Kretchmar's (2006) delight criterion.

The use of the approach for meaningful participation required extra time for conscious lesson planning and group discussion. With the extra time for planning taken into consideration the meaningful pedagogies can be used in primary classrooms. While time was taken before classes began to discuss lesson content and introduce new approaches it did not take away from children's time on activity.

6.4   Conclusion

Seven pedagogical approaches to support meaningful participation in physical education were investigated through the use of self-study research by an NQT. These pedagogies supported children's meaningful engagement in PE lessons. The findings highlight the value of using a combination of meaningful pedagogies in PE to enhance children's meaningful PE experiences. The sharing of these pedagogies that supported meaningful participation will enable teachers to plan for and implement strategies that enhance the quality of children's physical activity experiences through meaningful engagement.

Through engaging in the research I have informed my future educative practice. This research project gave me the opportunity to gain in depth knowledge of and improve my

practice by implementing meaningful pedagogies into my teaching. Sharing the actions of this study and the resulting findings can also inform future teachers by offering support for educators when engaging in self-study research.

References

- Adelman, C. (1993) *Kurt Lewin and the Origins of Action Research, Educational Action Research*, 1:1, Available:http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/0965079930010102 [Accessed 6th October 2014]

- Adelman, H.S. and Taylor, L. (2000) *Shaping the Future of Mental Health in Schools*. Psychology in the schools, 37, 49-60.

- Alexander, P. A. (2006) *The Path to Competence: A Lifespan Developmental Perspective on Reading*. Journal of Literacy Research, 37, 413-436.

- Ames, C, and Ames, R. (1984) *Systems of Student and Teacher Motivation: Toward a Qualitative Definition*. Journal of Educational Psychology, 73, 411-418.

- Armour, K.and Macdonald, D. (2012) '*Research Methods in Physical Education and Youth Sport'* Oxon: Routledge.

- Arnold, P.J. (1979) Meaning in Movement, Sport and Physical Education. Heinemann Educational Publishers.

- Ayers, S.F, and Sariscscany, M.J. (Eds.) (2011) *Physical Education for Lifelong Fitness: The Physical Best Teacher's Guide* (3rd Ed.). Reston, VA: National Association for Sport and Physical Education.

- Bain, L.L. (1995) *Mindfulness and subjective knowledge.* Quest 47: 238–253.

- Baker, J.A. (2006) *Contributions of Teacher-Child Relationship to Positive School Adjustment during Elementary School*. Journal of School Psychology*,* 44(3), 211-229.

- Bandura, A. (1977) *'Self-efficacy: Toward a Unifying Theory of Behavioural Change'* Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, Psychological Review, Vol.34, No. 2, 191-215

- Barnes, D. (1998) Forward: Looking forward: The concluding remarks at the Castle conference. In M. L. Hamilton, with S. Pinnegar, T. Russell, J. Loughran, & V. LaBoskey (Eds.), Reconceptualizing teaching practice: Self-study in teacher education (pp. ix–xiv). London: Falmer Press.

- Birch, S. H., & Ladd, G. W. (1998) *Children's interpersonal behaviors and the teacher-child relationship.* Developmental Psychology, 34, 934–946.

- Blankenship, T. L. (1995) *How to Motivate Students . . . Without Standing on Your Head!* Journal of Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, 66, 36–39.

- Blankenship, B.T, and Ayers, S. F. (2010) *The Role of PETE in Developing Joy-Oriented Physical Educators.* Quest, 62(2), 171-183.

- Blount, J.M. and Napolitano, R. (2014) '*Leading Classroom Discussion'* [Online], available: http://www.celt.iastate.edu/teaching-resources/classroom-practice/teaching-techniques-strategies/leading-classroom-discussion/ [Accessed 08 December 2014]

- Blumberg, P. (2009) *Developing Learner-Centered Teaching*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, A Wiley Imprint

- Bohnsack, R. (2008)*The Interpretation of Pictures and the Documentary Method*. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, *9*(3), Art. 26, http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0114-fqs0803267

- Bonwell, C., Eison, J. (1991) *Active Learning: Creating Excitement in the Classroom AEHE-ERIC Higher Education Report* No.1. Washington, D.C: Jossey-Bass.

- Braun, V., and Clarke, V. (2013) *Successful Qualitative Research*. London: Sage.

- Brandenburg, R., (2009, American Educational Research Association Conference) *Disciplined Inquiry: Education research in the Circle of Knowledge. Symposium Presenter: A Socio-cultural Perspective on the Outgrowth and Development of the Self- Study School.* (Discussant: Ken Zeichner), San Diego (April 13 -17, 2009).

- Britzman, D.P. (1991). *Practice Makes Practice: A Critical Study of Learning to Teach*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

- Brown, L.G. (2006) *Physical Education Assessment Toolkit*. USA: Human Kinetics

- Brown, T. D. and Payne, P. G. (2009) *Conceptualizing the Phenomenology of Movement in Physical Education: Implications for Pedagogical Inquiry and Development.* Quest, 61, 418-441.

- Bullough, R.V., Jr and Pinnegar, S. (2001) 'Guidelines *for Study in Autobiographical Forms of Self-Study Research*' *Educational Researcher*, 30(3), 13-21.

- Bunker, D., and Thorpe, R. (1982) *A Model for the Teaching of Games in the Secondary School.* Bulletin of Physical Education, 10, 9-16.

- Burns, N. and Groves'. (2003) *Understanding Nursing Research.* USA: Saunders

- Campbell, M.R. and Thompson, L.K. (2014) *A critical analysis of qualitative research on learning to teach music in pre-service music education* (pp, 448–478). In C. Conway (Ed), *The Oxford handbook of qualitative research in America music education.* New York: Oxford University Press.

- Capel, S. and Whitehead, M. (2013) *Learning to Teach Physical Education in the Secondary School: A companion to School Experience* Oxon: Routledge.

- Chedzoy, S. and Burden. (2009) *'Primary School Children's Reflections on Physical Education Lessons: An Attributional Analysis and Possible Implications for Teacher Action'*. Thinking skills and Creativity (4) 185-193.

- Chen, A. (1998)*'Meaningfulness in Physical Education: A Description of High School Students' Conceptions'* Journal of Teaching in Physical Education*, 17*, 270-306

- Chen, A. and Ennis, C.D. (2004) *Goals, Interests, and Learning in Physical Education*. The Journal of Educational Research, 97:6, 329-339.

- Clandinin, D. J. and Connelly, F. M. (2000) *Narrative Inquiry: Experience and Story in Qualitative Research.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

- Clark-Ibanez, M. (2007) *Inner City Children in Sharper Focus: Sociology of Childhood and Photo-Elicitation Interviews.* In G. C. Stankzak (Ed.) Visual Research Methods: Image, Society and Representation (p.167-195) London: Sage.

- Clark, M. I., Spence, J. C., and Holt, N. L. (2011). *'In the Shoes of Young Adolescent Girls: Understanding Physical Activity Experiences through Interpretive Description*' Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*, 3*(2), 193-210.

- Cochran-Smith, M. (1999, April) *Discussion: Advancing the Scholarship of Teaching.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Montreal, Canada.

- Costa, A.L. and Kallick, B. (2008) *'Learning and Leading with Habits of Mind: 16 Essential Characteristics for Success'* ASCD Book.

- Dadds, M. (1993)*'The Feeling of Thinking in Professional self-Study'*, in Elliott. J, (Ed) (1993) Reconstructing Teacher Professional Development, London, Falmer press.

- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (1985). Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human behavior. New York: Plenum.

- DeVries, R., Zan, B. (2005) In Fosnot, C. (ed.). *Constructivism: Theory, Perspectives and Practice.* New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

- Dinkleman, T. (2003) *Self-study in teacher education as a means and ends tool for promoting reflective teaching.* Journal of Teacher Education, 54(1), 6-18.

- Drucker, P. (1954), *The Practice of Management*, Harper and Row Publishers, New York, NY

- Dweck, C.S. and Elliott, E.S. (1983) *Achievement Motivation*. In P.H. Mussen (Ed), Handbook of child psychology (4th Ed., Vol. 4, pp. 644-691) New York: Wiley.

- Einarsdottir, J., Dockett, S., and Perry, B. (2009) 'Making *Meaning: Children's Perspectives Expressed Through Drawings*. Early Child Development and Care' 179(2), 217-232.

- Eison, J. (2010) *Using Active Learning Instructional Strategies to Create Excitement and Enhance Learning.* Retrieved from
  http://www.cte.cornell.edu/documents/presentations/Eisen-Handout.pdf.

- Eleanor, M. (1968) *Movement and Meaning.* University of Michigan: McGraw-Hill

- Ellis, Carolyn; Adams, Tony E. andBochner, Arthur P. (2010) Auto ethnography: An Overview [40 paragraphs]. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, *12*(1), Art. 10, http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:0114-fqs1101108.

- Elmore, R. F. (1996) *Getting to Scale with Good Educational Practice. Harvard Educational Review.*

- Evertson, C. M, Emmer, E.T., and Brophy, J.E., (1980) 'Predictors *of Effective Teaching in Junior High Mathematics Classrooms.*Journal for Research in Mathematics Education'11(3), 167-178.

- Fecho, B. (2000) *Developing Critical Mass: Teacher Education and Critical Inquiry Pedagogy.* Journal of Teacher Education (2000) 51:194.

- Feldman, A. (2003) *Validity and Quality in Self-Study.* Sage, Available:
  http://edr.sagepub.com/content/32/3/26 [Accessed 15th October 2014]

- Fosnot, C.T. (2005a*) Epilogue. Constructivism revisited: implications and reflection*. In Fosnot, C. (Ed.) Constructivism. Theory, perspectives, and practice (pp. 276-291) (Second ed). New York, N.Y: Teachers Collage Press.

- Freire, P., and Macedo, D. (1987) *Literacy: Reading the Word and the World.* South Hadley, MA: Bergin and Garvey.

- French, G. (2007) *Children's Early Learning and Development*. NCCA and Enhance Learning' University of South Florida.

- Furrer, C.J., Skinner, E. A. and Pitzer, J. R. (2014). *The Influence of Teacher and Peer Relationships on Students' Classroom Engagement and Everyday Motivational Resilience.* National Society for the Study of Education, Volume 113, Issue 1, pp. 101-123

- Geertz, C. (1973) *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays.* New York: Basic Books.

- Gipps, C.V., McCallum, B. and Hargreaves, E. (2015) *What Makes a Good Primary School Teacher?* Oxon:Routledge

- Gould, D., Udry, E., Tuffey, S., and Loehr, J. (1996) *Burnout in Competitive Junior Tennis Players: A Quantitative Psychological Assessment.* The Sport Psychologist, 10, 322-340.

- Griffin, L.L., Oslin, J.L., and Mitchell, S.A. (1997). *Teaching Sports Concepts and Skills: A Tactical Games Approach.* Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics

- Griffin, L. and Butler, J. (2005) (Eds.). *Teaching Games for Understanding: Theory, Research, and Practice.* Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

- Graham, G. (2008) *Teaching Children Physical Education: Becoming a Master Teacher*, Human Kinetics.

- Griffey. D.C andHousner. L.D (2007) *Designing Effective Instructional Tasks for Physical Education and Sports*, Human Kinetics.

- Hamilton, M. L., andPinnegar, S. (1998) *Conclusion: The Value and the Promise of Self-Study.* In M. Hamilton (Ed.), *Reconceptualizing Teaching Practice: Self-Study in Teacher Education.* London: Falmer Press.

- Hawkins, A. (2008) *Pragmatism, purpose, and play: Struggle for the soul of physical education.* Quest, 60, 345–356.

- Hendershott, A. and Wright, S. (1993) *Student focus groups and curricular review.* TeachSocial.21:154-59

- Hoey, B. A, '*A Simple Introduction to the Practice of Ethnography and Guide to Ethnographic Fieldnotes'* Marshall University Digital Scholar (June 2014). Available at: http://works.bepress.com/brian_hoey/12

- Hopper, T. A., and Darren, K. (2002). '*Teaching Games for Understanding: What does it look like and how does it influence student skill learning and game performance?'* Avante.

- Howard-Hamilton, M.F., Richardson, B.J. and Shuford, B. (1998) *Promoting Multicultural Education: A Holistic Approach*, College Student Affairs Journal18 (1), (pp.5-17).

- Hudson, A. (2007) *The voice, role and participation of children and young people: Summary of existing research.* General Teaching Council for England.www.gtce.org.uk/shared/contentlibs/126815/211152/Pupil voice researc.pdf.

- Ignelzi, M. (2000) *Meaning-Making in the Learning and Teaching Process. New Directions for Teaching and Learning*. Vol.82, 5-14.

- Iserbyt, P., Elen, J. and Behets, D. (2010) *Instructional Guidance in Reciprocal Peer Tutoring with Task Cards.* Journal of Teaching in Physical Education, 29, 38-53.

- Jefferson, G. (2004). *Glossary of transcript symbols with an introduction*. In G. H. Lerner (Ed). Conversation Analysis: Studies from the First Generation. (pp: 13-31). Amsterdam: John Benjamins

- Johnson, A. (1996) *'It's Good to Talk': The Focus Group and the Sociological Imagination*, The Sociological Review 44 517-36

- Johnsons, B. and Sessions, J. (2014)*'What Schools Don't Teach: 20 Ways to Help Students Excel in School and Life'* New York: Routledge

- Kitzinger, J, (1995) '*Qualitative Research: Introducing Focus Groups'* BMJ 311 doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1136/bmj.311.7000.299 (Published 29 July 1995)

- Knoblauch. H, Baer, A. Laurier. E, Petschke. S and Schnettler, B. (2008) *Visual Analysis. New Developments in the Interpretative Analysis of Video and Photography.* FQS, 9(3).

- Kretchmar, R. S. (2000) *Movement Subcultures: Sites for Meaning.* Journal of Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, 71:5, 19-25,

- Kretchmar, R. S. (2001) *Duty, Habit, and Meaning: Different Faces of Adherence*. Quest, 53:3, 318-325.

- Kretchmar, R.S. (2005) *Practical philosophy of sport and physical activity* (2nd ed.). Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

- Kretchmar, R. S. (2006a) *Ten more reasons for quality physical education.* Journal of Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, 77(9), 6-9.

- Kretchmar, R. S. (2007) *What to Do With Meaning? A Research Conundrum for the 21st Century.* Quest, 59(4), 373-383

- Kretchmar, R.S. (2008) *The Increasing Utility of Elementary School Physical Education: A Mixed Blessing and Unique Challenge.* The Elementary School Journal*, 108(3), 161-170.

- Kretchmar, R. S. (2013) *Tensions, Integrations, Messiness, and Hope for the Future.* Kinesiology Review, 2, 103-106.

- Krueger, R.A. (2002) *'Designing and Conducting Focus Group Interviews'* University of Minnesota, available: http://www.eiu.edu/ihec/Krueger-FocusGroupInterviews.pdf

- Kurzman, C. (2011) *Meaning-Making in Social Movements.* University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, 5-15

- LaBoskey, V. K. (2004) *The Methodology of Self-Study and its Theoretical Underpinnings.* International handbook of self-study of teaching and teacher education practices (pp. 817-869): Springer.

- Lavay, B.W., French, R.W., Henderson, H. (2006) *Positive Behaviour Management in Physical Activity Settings.* Human Kinetics.

- Locke, E. (1968) *Toward a Theory of Task Motivation and Incentives.* Organ. Behave. Hum. Perform, 3, p. 157-189.

- Loughran, J.J. (2004). *A History and Context of Self-Study of Teaching and Teacher Education Practices.* In J.J. Loughran, M.L. Hamilton, V.K. LaBoskey, and T. Russell (Eds.), International handbook of self-study of teaching and teacher education practices (pp. 7–39). Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

- Loughran, J. (2013). *Pedagogy: Making sense of the complex relationship between teaching and learning.* Curriculum Inquiry, 43, 118-141.

- Loughran, J. J., and Northfield, J. (1998) *A framework for the development of self-study practice.* In M. L. Hamilton, with S. Pinnegar, T. Russell, J. Loughran, & V. K. LaBoskey (Eds.), Reconceptualizing teaching practice: Self-study in teacher education (pp. 7–18). London: Falmer Press.

- Louie. B. Y, Drevdahl. D. J, Purdy. J.M and Stackman. R.W. (2003) *Advancing the Scholarship of Teaching Through Collaborative Self-Study.* The Journal of Higher Education, Vol.74, no.2 (March-April 2003), p.150 -171. Ohio State University Press. Available: http://www.jstor.org/stable/3648253 Accessed: [11\11\2014]

- Lui, A. (2012) *Teaching in the Zone: An Introduction to Working within the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) to Drive Effective Early Childhood Learning.* Children's progress, 2-10.

- Lundenberg, F.C. (2011) *Curriculum Development: Deductive Models*. Sam Houstan State University, Vol. 2, no.1.

- Mahn, H. (2012) *Vygotskys Analysis of Children's Meaning-Making Processes.* International Journal of Educational Psychology. 1(2), 100-126.

- Maivorsdotter, N., Lundvall, S. and Quennerstedt, M. (2014) *Being a competent teacher? Aesthetic experiences in physical education teacher education.* Sage.

- Mandigo, J.and Corlett, J. (2010) *Teaching games for an understanding of what? TGfU's role in the development of physical literacy.* In: Butler J, and Griffin, L (eds): More teaching games for understanding: moving globally. Human Kinetics, Champaign: Illinois, 69-87.

- Maslow, A. (1999) *Toward a Psychology of Being.* Wiley and Sons

- Mason. P (2005) *Visual Data in Applied Qualitative Research: Lessons from Experience.* Sage, 5(3), 325-346

- Maxwell, J. A. (1992) *Understanding and Validity in Qualitative Research.* Harvard Educational Review, 62(3), 279-300.

- Miller, K. and Zhou, X. (2007) *Learning from Classroom Video: What makes it compelling and what makes ithard.* In: Goldmann R, Pea R, Barron B, et al. (Eds) Video Research in the Learning Sciences. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, pp.321–334.

- Moyles, J. (2001) *Just for fun: the child as active learner and meaning maker*. In Collins, J., Insley, K. and Soler, J. (eds) Developing Pedagogy: Researching Practice, (pp. 4-10), London: Paul Chapman Publishing.

- National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) (2008) Primary Curriculum Review, Phase 2: Final Report, Dublin: NCCA. Published at www.ncca.ie.

- Nicholls, J.G. (1984) *Achievement Motivation: Conceptions of Ability, Subjective Experience, Task Choice and Performance.* Psychological Review. 91, 328-346.

- Nicholls, J., Chueng, P.C., Lauer, J., and Patashnick, M. (1989) *Individual Differences in Academic Motivation: Perceived Ability, Goals, Beliefs and Values.* Learning and Individual Differences (1), 63-84.

- Niemiec, C. P., Ryan, R. M., and Deci, E. L. (2009) *The path taken: Consequences of attaining intrinsic and extrinsic aspirations in post-college life*. Journal of Research in Personality, 43, 291-306.

- Nilges, L. M. (2004) *Ice Can Look Like Glass: A Phenomenological Investigation of Movement Meaning in One Fifth-Grade Class During a Creative Dance Unit.* Research quarterly for exercise and sport, 75(3), 298-314.

- Oda, L. K. (1998) *Harmony, Conflict and Respect: An Asian-American Educator's Self-Study.* In M. L. Hamilton, S. Pinnegar, T. Russell, J. Loughran, and V. LaBoskey (Eds.), *Reconceptualizing teaching practice: Self-study in teacher education* (pp. 113-123). London: Falmer Press.

- Ofsted. (2006) *The annual report of her majesty's inspectors of schools.* London: HMSO

- O'Neil G. and McMahon, T. (2005) *Student-Centered Learning: What Does it Mean for Students and Lectures?* Retrieved on March 10, 2015 from:
  http://www.aishe.org/readings/2005-1/oneill-mcmahonTues_19th_Oct_SCL.htm

- Olson, M. R. (1996) '*Collaborative Reflections: Letter Writing as a Form of Collaborative Self-Study*' Paper presented at the annual meeting of at the American Educational Research Association, New York.

- Ovens, A. and Fletcher, T. (Eds.). (2014). *Self-Study in Physical Education Teacher Education: Exploring the Interplay of Practice and Scholarship.* (e book) Dordrecht: Springer.

- Ovens, A., and Tinning, R. (2009) *Reflection as situated practice: A memory-work study of lived experience in teacher education.* Teaching and Teacher Education, 25, 1125-1131.

- Pauwels, L. (2006) '*Visual Sociology Reframed: An Analytical Synthesis and Discussion of Visual Methods in Social and Cultural Research,* Sage, Available: http://smr.sagepub.com/content/38/4/545[Accessed 8th October 2014]

- Personal. Psu.edu (2014) 'Writing Instructional Goals and Objectives' [Online], available: http://www.personal.psu.edu/bxb11/Objectives/ [accesses 04th March 2016].

- Phoenix, C. (2010) *Seeing the World of Physical Culture: The Potential of Visual Methods for Qualitative Research in Sport and Exercise.* Qualitative research in Sport and exercise, 2(20), 93-101.

- Pianta, R. C., La Paro, K. M., Payne, C., Cox, M., and Bradley, R. (2002) *The relation of kindergarten classroom environment to teacher, family, and school characteristics and child outcomes.* The Elementary School Journal, 102 (3), 225–238.

- Pink, S. (2001)*Doing Visual Ethnography: Images, Media and Representation in Research.*London: Sage.

- Power, F.C., Nuzzi, R.J., Narvaez, D., Lapsley, D.K., Hunt, T.C. (2007) *'Moral Education: A Handbook'*: Greenwood Publishing.

- Powell, W. and Powell, O. K. (2011) *'How to Teach Now: Five Keys to Personalised Learning in The Global Classroom'* ASCD: USA

- Rapp, W.H. and Arndt, K.L. (2012) *'Teaching Everyone: An Introduction to Inclusive Education'*. Brookes Publishing: Baltimore.

- Reeve, J., and Jang, H. (2006) *What teachers say and do to support students' autonomy during learning activities.* Journal of Educational Psychology, 98, 209-218.

- Richardson, V., Anders, P., Tidwell, D., and Lloyd, C. (1991) *'The Relationship Between Teachers' Beliefs and Practices in Reading Comprehension Instruction'.* American Educational Research Journal, 28(3), 559-586.

- Ring, K, (2001) *'Young Children Drawing: The Significance of the Context'* accepted for the British Educational Research Association Annual Conference (2001), September.

- Rovai, A.P., Wighting, M.J.,Baker, J.D. and Grooms, L.D. (2009) *Development of an Instrument to Measure Perceived Cognitive, Affective, and Psychomotor Learning in Traditional and Virtual Classroom Higher Education Settings*. The Internet and Higher Education, Volume 12, Issue 1, Pages 7-13

- Rubin, H.J. and Rubin, I.S. (2005) *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data.* London: Sage.

- Ryan, R.M. and Deci, E.L. (2000) *Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivations: Classic Defenitions and New Directions.* Contemporary Educational Psychology 25, 54-67.

- Samaras, A.P., and Freese, A.R. (2006) *Self-Study of Teaching Practices.* New York: Peter Lang

- Samaras, A. P., DeMulder, E.K, Kayler, M. A, Rigsby, L.C, Weller, K.L, and Wilcox, D.R. (2006) *'Spheres of Learning in Teacher Collaboration'*. In C. Kosnik, C. Beck, A.R. Freese, and A.P. Samaras (Eds) *Making a Difference in Teacher Education Through Self-Study: Stories of Personal, Professional and Program Renewal* (pp. 147- 163) Dordrecht: Springer.

- Samaras.A (2011) '*Self-Study Teacher Research: Improving Your Practice Through Collaborative Inquiry'*, Sage Publications Inc.

- Schunk, D. H. (1985) *Self-Efficacy and Classroom Learning. Psychology in the Schools.* 22(2), 208-223.

- Shulman, L.S. (1986) *Paradigms and Research Programs for the Study of Teaching.* In M.C. Wittrock (Ed.), Handbook of Research on Teaching (3rded). New York: Macmillan.

- Siedentop, D. (1994). Sport education: Quality PE through positive sport experiences. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

- Simon, C.A. (2014) *Strategy guide: Using the Think-pair-share technique.* Retrieved from http://www.readwritethink.org/professionaldevelopment/strategy-guides/using-think-pair-share-30626.html

- Skinner, E., Belmont, M. (1993) *Motivation in the Classroom: Reciprocal Effects of Teacher Behaviour and Student Engagement across the School Year.* Journal of Educational Psychology. 85 (4) 571-581.

- Sparkes, A.C. (2000) *Autoethnography and Narratives of Self: Reflections on Criteria in Action.* Sociology of Sport Journal17 (1): 21–43.

- Spiro, R. J. (1988) *Cognitive Flexibility Theory: Advanced Knowledge Acquisition in Ill-Structured Domains.* Technical Report No. 441.

- Stefanou, C., Perencevich, K., DiCinto, M., and Turner, J. (2004). *Supporting autonomy in the classroom: Ways teachers encourage student decision making and ownership. Educational Psychologist*, *39*(2), 97–110.

- Swann, W. B. (1990) *To Be Adored or to Be Known? The Interplay of Self-Enhancement and Self-Verification.* In Higgins, E. T. S., (ed.) Handbook of Motivation and Cognition, New York: Guilford Press, 408 - 448.

- Taggart, B., Sylva, K., Siraj-Blatchford, I., Melhuish, E.C., Sammons, P. and Walker-Hall, J. (1999). *The Effective Provision of Pre-School Education (EPPE) Project: Technical Paper 5 - 38 Characteristics of the Centres in the EPPE Sample: Interviews.* London: DfEE / Institute of Education, University of London.

- Thorpe, R., and Bunker, D. (1989) *A Changing Focus in Games* Education. In L. Almond (Ed.) The Place of Physical Education in Schools (pp. 42-71). London: Kogan Page

- Tschanz, Manuela and Krause, Christina (1992) *Wie Grundschüler die ReaktionihrerEltern auf Zensurenreflektieren – eineLängsschnittanalysethematischerKinderzeichnungen. Psychologie in Erziehung und Unterricht, 39 (4), 264-276.*

- Valdez, A. (1992) *Changes in Teachers' Beliefs, Understandings, and Practices Concerning Reading Comprehension Through the use of Practical Arguments: A Follow-Up Study* [Unpublished dissertation], Tucson, AZ: College of Education, University of Arizona.

- VandeBroek, G., Boen, F., Claessens, M., Feys, J. and Ceux, T. (2011) *Comparison of Three Instructional Approaches to Enhance Tactical Knowledge in Volleyball among University Students.* Journal of Teaching in Physical Education, 30, 375-392.

- Vasily, A. (2015) '*Learning With The Head, The Heart and The Hands'* Pyppe with Andy [Online], 20th Jan, available: http://www.pyppewithandy.com/pyp-pe-blog/archives/01-2015 [accessed 03rd February 2015].

- Walker, L., and Logan, A. (2008) *Learner Engagement. A review of learner voice initiatives across the UK's education sectors.* Available from: www.futurelab.org.uk

- Wang. J. C. Kand Liu. W.C. (2007) *Promoting Enjoyment in Girl's Physical Education: The Impact of Goals, Beliefs and Self-Determination.* European Physical Education Review June 2007 vol. 13 no. 2 145-164.

- Willis, J.A. (2007) *The Neuroscience of Joyful Learning*. Educational Leadership, Journal of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. Vol 64.

- Winiecki, T. (2013) *'Promote Physical Education by Making Connections'.PELINKS4U,* available:http://www.pelinks4u.org/articles/winiecki10_2013.htm [accessed 09th March 2015].

- World Flying Disk Federation (2016) *'What is Spirit?'* [Online], available: http://www.wfdf.org/sotg/about-sotg [accesses 04th March 2016].

- Zeichner, K. (1999)*The New Scholarship in Teacher Education.* Educational Researcher, 28, 4-15.

- Zimmerman, B.J. (1989a) '*Models of Self-Regulated Learning and Academic Achievement'*. In B. J. Zimmerman and D. H. Schunk (Eds) *Self-regulated learning and academic achievement: Theory, research and practice* (p.p. 1-25). New York: Springer – Verlag.

- Zimmerman, B.J. and Martinez – Pons, M. (1990) *Student Differences in Self-Regulated Learning: Relating Grade, Sex and Giftedness to Self-Efficacy and Strategy Use.* Journal of Educational Psychology, 82, 51-59.

Appendices
Appendix A

Masters of Arts in Education Postgraduate Research Study

Lesson Plans

Ainm/ Name	Ciara Griffin
Rang/Class	4th Class
Strand	Invasion Games
Strand Unit	Tag Rugby
Dáta/ Date	15-03-15
Title	Tag Rugby
Am/Time	10 am and 1 pm
Cuspóirí/ Objectives	The child should be enabled to: **Knowledge**: • Understand that you must tag a person in order to defend in tag rugby. **Skills :** • Learn and practice the skills of passing and catching. **Attitudes :** • Become familiar and comfortable with the shape of a rugby ball through a range of ball familiarisation activities.
Fearas /Resources	Rugby balls, tag belts, cones, markings.
Ábhar	**ModhMúinte**
Introduction	• Begin with children playing in the jungle as a warm up activity, which incorporates a range of dynamic stretching. • Play' grab a tag' with the pupils divided into equal groups to practice the skill of tagging.
Development	• Divide the children into equal groups in order to carry

Step 1
 	
Ball familiarisation
	out a relay.
	
	• The relays will incorporate a range of ball manipulation tasks for the children to gain a sense of confidence in handling a rugby ball.
	
	  - Pick up the ball round around the cones and place it down.
	
	  - Put ball through the legs coming back.
	
	  - Put the ball around the waist.
	
	  - Instead of placing the ball pass it to your team mate.

Step 2 Passing and catching	• Demonstrate to the class how to pass the ball and go through the teaching points. • Divide the class into groups of three to practice passing. • Develop the passing further: Take two steps back, clap your hands before you catch it, pass from the other side. • Passing box: pupils must move around the box passing to their teammates and evade other groups. This practices dodging, calling for the ball and accuracy when passing. • To practice moving without the ball, accuracy, evasion and passing divide the teams into equal groups.
Step 3 Endball	• Endball involves a team passing the ball from one end of the playing area to a team mate on opposite side in order to score a point. • Players cannot run with the ball but must pass to a team mate in space. It is a non-contact game and passes cannot go above shoulder height. • Players who do not have a ball can move around the

Conclusion	area making space to receive the ball.
	• A score is achieved when the ball is passed over the goal line to another player.
	• Conclude by recapping on what we did during the lesson, the skills practiced and how they felt.
	• Write in their reflection sheet, what the thought of the lesson.
Assessment	• Observation, questioning, Reflections

Ainm/ Name	Ciara Griffin
Rang/Class	4th Class
Strand	Invasion Games
Strand Unit	Tag Rugby
Dáta/ Date	25-01-15
Title	Lesson 2
Am/Time	10 am and 1pm
Cuspóirí/ Objectives	The child should be enabled to:
	Knowledge:
	• Develop a sense of tactical awareness in possession passing.
	Skills :
	• Practice and implement the skill of side stepping.
	• Develop and improve their level of passing.
	Attitudes :
	• Improve their sense of spacial awareness through a range of different activities (Crossover and endball).
Fearas /Resources	Rugby balls, cones, tags, feet markers, bibs, whistle

Ábhar	ModhMúinte
Introduction	• Begin warm up activity of grab a tag. • Develop onto shark attack where two attackers in a grid try and get as many tags on their belt in a limited time.
Development **Step 1** Spacial awareness	• Introduce the game of cross over to the children. This is a game that practices the skills of evading, dodging and team work. • Pupils on opposing teams must attempt to get from their end zone to their safe zone without being tagged.
Step 2 Passing and catching **Step 3** Endball **Conclusion**	• Big clock, little clock passing game in order to practice their skills. • Develop on the game of endball using the ideas given by the children. This time they can take 3 steps with the ball and everyone must touch the ball before they can score. • Cool down activities: Trip to the dentist (whole body stretching). • Lesson recap.

Ainm/ Name	Ciara Griffin
Rang/Class	4th Class
Strand	Invasion Games
Strand Unit	Tag Rugby
Dáta/ Date	15-04-15
Title	Attacking and Defending, running straight, drawing the defender.
Am/Time	10 am and 1 pm

Cuspóirí/ Objectives	The child should be enabled to: **Knowledge**: • Understand the importance of running straight lines in order to create space. **Skills :** • Practice the skill of attacking and defending in game scenarios**.** **Attitudes :** • Develop an understanding of why and how you draw a defender when attacking.
Fearas /Resources	Rugby balls, tags, bibs, cones, markers, whistle
Ábhar	**ModhMúinte**
Introduction	• Warm up with the ball familiarisation activity of overs and unders where the children manipulate the ball with in their group. • The game of apples and oranges will be played in order to improve pupil's co-ordination skills and footwork. This activity practices both tagging and avoiding the defender.
Development **Step 1** **3v**	• This is an attacking and defending drill. The aim is for the 3 attackers to beat the one defender. The groups will have to come up with tactics to beat the defender (i.e. draw the defender, follow the pass etc.). • This activity will give attackers a sense of confidence in beating the defender. This drill is predominantly attack focused although defence is also touched on.
Step 2 4v2	• Once the group has become competent in attacking a single defender an extra attacker and defender will be introduced into the same grid. This will make the drill

	more defence orientated as space with an extra defender will allow for easier defending. Giving the defence a greater sense of confidence in defending their try line. This will enable the class to get an understanding of the basic components of attacking and defending in tag. This understanding can then be transferred to the large game when it is played the following week.
Step 3 **Activity** **Rugby Netball** **Conclusion**	• Similar to endball in that the children can pass the ball in any direction. The children can run with the ball and everyone must touch the ball before the team can score. • A team scores by knocking a rugby ball of a cone within the score zone. • Recap the main points of the lesson and perform a cowl down ensuring the class stretch.
Assessment	• Focus group interview and questioning

Ainm/ Name	Ciara Griffin
Rang/Class	4th Class
Strand	Invasion Games
Strand Unit	Tag Rugby
Dáta/ Date	22-04-15
Title	Running into and making space
Am/Time	10 am and 1pm
Cuspóirí/	The child should be enabled to:

Objectives	**Knowledge**:
	• Understand the importance of making space in attack in tag rugby (and transfer this understanding to and from other sports) and game situations.
	Skills :
	• Practice the skills of side stepping and quick feet in making space.
	Attitudes :
	• Vision how this skill can be used in a game and make links with last week's lesson in drawing the defender.
Fearas /Resources	Rugby balls, bibs, cones, markers, tags, whistle
Ábhar	**ModhMúinte**
Introduction	• Begin with the warm up activity of apples and oranges, in order to improve pupil's decision making and reaction skills.
	• Play a warm up game of stuck in the mud with the class. This will build onto the 51% funnel as it introduces the concept of moving into space and avoiding a defender.
Development **Step 1** **51% Funnel** **Step 2** **Groups of 4**	• Play mini games of tag rugby to get children thinking about how to make space and attack it. • Attacking game where the attacker moves from smaller space into larger space (i.e. in a funnel shape) against a defender. Aim is for the players to practice go forward ball, fix the defender (face) and run at space • Passing segment in which three children are passing in a straight line and must attempt to get past the defender without getting tagged. The aim is for the class to understand in order give a person more time on the ball without a defender tagging, you must hold depth. This thinking will develop onto mini-games where the class practice holding depth.

Step 3 **Activity 2:** **Mini Games**	• Play mini games of 5v2 and 4 v 3. These games are designed in order to allow the children gain more experience of identifying space and attacking it without the pressure of a large number of defenders.
Conclusion	• Dynamic cool down activity and reflection

Ainm/ Name	Ciara Griffin
Rang/Class	4th Class
Strand	Invasion Games
Strand Unit	Tag Rugby
Dáta/ Date	29-04-15
Title	Attacking and defending
Am/Time	10am and 1pm
Cuspóirí/ **Objectives**	The child should be enabled to: **Knowledge**: • Understand the use of staggered passing in attack to make space. **Skills :** • Practice the skill holding the run, passing backwards and drawing the defender. **Attitudes :** • Understand how these skills can be implemented and help in a game of tag rugby.
Fearas /Resources	Rugby balls, bibs, tags, cones, markers, whistle, hula hoops

Ábhar	ModhMúinte
Introduction	• Begin with a warm up activity of skunk tag.
Development **Step 1**	• Begin with a game of tag rugby with the class in order to get them thinking about how they can be effective in attack and defence.
Step 2 Hot potato pass + Hare and hound	• The class will be divided in half with each group performing opposite activities at the same time. G1 will play Hot potato while G2 will play hare and hound. Once each group has had sufficient time on each they will swap over to the next activity. • Hot potato introduces the concept of staggered diagonal passing to the children. This will help in attack in the later game of tag to allow pupils more time on the ball. • Hare and hound is an attack and defence grid. It begins with 1v1 and will then develop into odd numbers of attack and defence i.e. 2v1, 4v2 etc. Once an attacker is tagged they must pass the ball. If children are understanding the grid and progressing nicely I will stagger the defenders to come into the line.
Step 3 **Tag game**	• The class will return to their teams in order to play another game of tag rugby. Hopefully implementing what was learned from the drills into attack and defence in the game
Conclusion	• Cool down activity, class discussion and written reflection.

Ainm/ Name	Ciara Griffin
Rang/Class	4th Class
Strand	Invasion Games
Strand Unit	Tag Rugby
Dáta/ Date	06-05-2015
Title	Using space and passing
Am/Time	10am and 1pm
Cuspóirí/ Objectives	The child should be enabled to: **Knowledge**: • Understand the use of the long pass and the advantages of moving into space. **Skills :** • Practice the skills of tagging, using space, the long pass and drawing the defender. **Attitudes :** • Understand that when the different skills when combined together can support them in playing tag rugby.
Fearas /Resources	Rugby balls, bibs, cones, markers, tags, whistle
Ábhar	**ModhMúinte**
Introduction	• The children will play a game of octopus tag as a warm up activity. In this game they will be working on their footwork, identifying and moving into space and their tagging skills. • To make the activity more challenging the size of the grid will be changed frequently.
Development Step 1 Rugby Netball Step 2	• Similar to endball in that the children can pass in any direction (to promote identifying and moving into space) they must instead knock a rugby ball off a cone on their try line to score. • This game will be differentiated through the number of steps taken with the ball, how many passes, the size of the playing field and the distance between the scoring cone and the player.

Passing **Step 3** **Mini-tag rugby games** **Activity 2:** **Conclusion**	• To practice children's passing they will play a game of captain's table. Where the distance to pass to each team mate increases gradually each time. The children will be given the option to develop on a more challenging game of 'partner score' if they wish to. • The children will be divided into equal sized teams to play mini-games of tag rugby. Here the children will be encouraged the implement what we practiced in the warm up into the games. The groups will be encourage to use the longer pass (if they comfortable) that we practiced in the passing segment. • The games will be paused individually and I will discuss with the teams how they feel they are doing and if there's anything they would. (I will try and implement their opinions, once suitable, in changing and adapting their games). • The groups will return to playing mini-games again. • Cool down activity using 'wide as a wall, small as a mouse etc.' Class discussion.
Assessment	• Observation, pupil feedback, focus group interview and written reflection.

Ainm/ Name	Ciara Griffin
Rang/Class	4th Class
Strand	Invasion Games
Strand Unit	Tag Rugby
Dáta/ Date	20-05-2015
Title	Making space ii
Am/Time	10am and 1pm
Cuspóirí/ Objectives	The child should be enabled to: **Knowledge**: • Understand the rules of tag rugby and be able the self-referee a game.

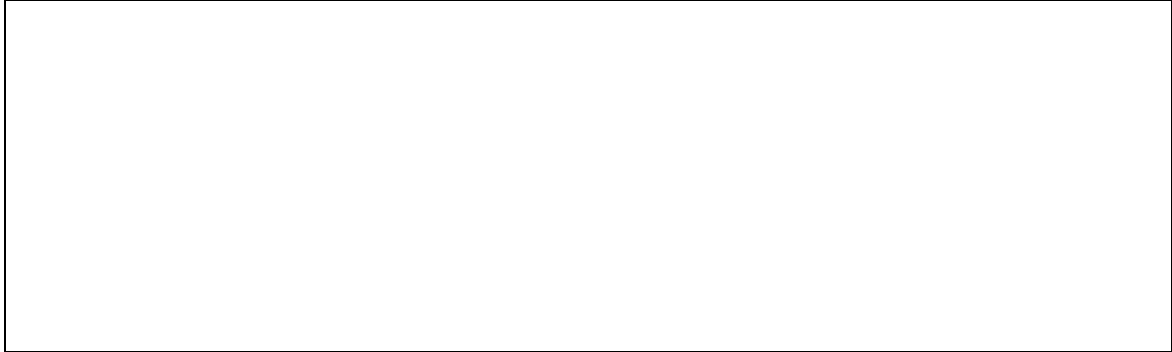|	**Skills :**
	• Practice the skills of passing, running straight lines, moving into space, attacking space and creating space (looping).
	Attitudes :
	• Develop a positive fun team attitude to reduce the level of competitiveness and self-assess their teamwork as a team using spirit points score system.
Fearas /Resources	Rugby balls, bibs, cones, markers, tags, whistle, spirit points score sheet.
Ábhar	**ModhMúinte**
Introduction	• Begin with a warm up game of shark attack as a fun warm up activity.
Development **Step 1**	• In order to recap on the ball familiarisation activities from week 1 we will play a relay in order to get pupils more confident on the ball and to bring a fun element to the lesson.
Step 2	• In order to practice the skill of passing and to encourage children to pass further distances we will play a game of over the river. This is a game similar to an activity they would play in football so I am drawing from previous knowledge. The aim of the game isthe to pass the ball over the river (2m channel) into the opponents half. The aim is to try and move the ball into the space without the other team catching it.
Step 3 **Mini –games x 3**	• The class will play mini games of tag rugby against one another. After each game they will fill out there spirit sheet. The teams will change oppositions after each game.
Conclusion	• Group discussion, Learning with the H,H,H reflection and individual and focus groups.
Assessment	• Observation, pupil feedback, spirit points score sheet and HHH reflection

Ainm/ Name	Ciara Griffin
Rang/Class	4th Class
Strand	Invasion Games
Strand Unit	Tag Rugby
Dáta/ Date	27-05-15
Title	Games Day
Am/Time	10am and 1pm
Cuspóirí/ Objectives	The child should be enabled to: **Knowledge**: • Implement the different tag rugby skills **Skills :** • Practice the tag rugby skills they've learned over the course of the 9 week unit. **Attitudes :** • Engage in fun games of tag rugby against different teams using their new knowledge.
Fearas /Resources	Cones, bibs, rugby balls, tags, whistle, reflection sheets, spirit points score sheet.
Ábhar	**ModhMúinte**
Introduction	• Begin with a fun warm up activity of bulldog (as it is their favourite warm up game). • This will then develop into a fun group came of shark attack.
Games Day	• The group will be divided into teams and each team will play one another once. • The teams will be divided into equal numbers. • The children will be using the spirit point system as a score sheet. This week the teams will score each other based on the success criteria. This is a development from self-assessment to peer assessment.
Conclusion	• We will end the class my recapping on what we did over the past nine weeks and what we found enjoyable and

	most meaningful.
	• The class will be given a summative assessment sheet to rate how they felt they developed in the unit.
Assessment	• Observations, focus group interview, summative assessment sheet.

Appendix B

Masters of Arts in Education Postgraduate Research Study

Pupil Reflection Templates

```



```

Draw your favourite part of today's lesson.

What did you think of the game Endball that we played?

_____
_____
_____

How did you feel while playing the game Endball?

_____
_____
_____

Why and how did you think\feel this?

_____
_____
_____

How was it played, what were the rules?

_____
_____
_____

What could you add or change about the game of Endball to make it more enjoyable?

_____
_____
_____

What skills did we practice in today's lesson?

_____
_____
_____

Where else could we use these skills? What other sports or games could they be used in?

_____
_____
_____

Could you use these skills (passing, dodging, tagging, side stepping etc.) outside of school? If you could, where can they be used. Tell me about it?

_____
_____
_____

What was your favourite part of today's lesson?

_____
_____
_____

What made this your favourite part of the lesson?

_____
_____
_____

Would you change or add anything about today's lesson to make it more fun?

_____
_____
_____

Thank you for doing your reflection and taking part in today's lesson

My Tag Rugby Goals

What do I want to learn about tag rugby? Why?

What skills do I want to improve on? Why?

How do I want to feel playing tag rugby with my friends? (Happy, looking forward to tag, having fun, excited) Why?

How do I want the skills I learn in Tag rugby to help me with other sports or games?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Learning with the heart ❤️

Describe how you learned with your heart in today's lesson.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Describe how you learned with your hands?

-   What skills did you use in today's lesson? How did you use these skills in the games?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

How did you feel playing the games and using these skills with your classmates?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

What makes a lesson enjoyable and fun for you?

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

What Tag Rugby means to me!

T_____

A_____

G_____

R_____

U_____

G_____

B_____

Y_____

What were your goals in this tag rugby unit?
Physically (a goal for moving or using your body)
Mentally (a goal for understanding how to play rugby)
Socially (a goal for working well with other people)

Circle the progress that you feel you made in this unit.

I made very little progress towards reaching my goals.

I made some progress towards reaching my goals

I made good progress towards reaching my goals.

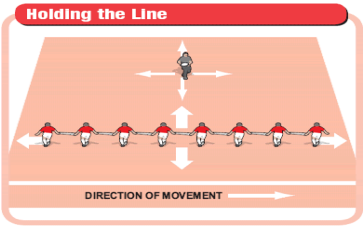I made excellent progress towards reaching my goals

Please Explain why you feel this way in the space below?

Describe how you learned with your heart?

Describe how you learned with yourhead?

Describe how you learned with your hands?

Rate how the tag rugby unit went for you?

Passing and catching a rugby ball	Running with the ball in two hands
1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Defending and tagging	Making space
1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Working as a team	Having fun
1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
Draw a picture of your favorite part of the tag rugby unit.	I think I was best at: I think I must improve on: I found it hardest to learn: I can use my new skills from tag rugby in this activity that I do outside of school:

SPIRIT OF THE GAME _SELF_ SCORE SHEET Team: _____

Your whole team should be involved in rating each team! Circle one box in each of the three lines and sum up the points to determine the SOTG score for **the other** team.

	Game 1		Game 2		Game 3

1. Rules and Knowledge use:

They did not misinterpret the rules on purpose. They passed the ball (backwards), they handed back a tag after they tagged a person.

2. Praise:

They praised each other as a team. They did not give out to one another if they missed a pass. They supported and encouraged each other during the game.

Eg: Great pass, really good use of space, that was a great run.

3. Positive Attitude and Self Control:

They played with good intensity regardless of the score. They didn't lose their temper during the game.

4. Inclusion

Did they include all their team mates? Did everyone get the ball equally? Did they encourage their teammates to move into space to get the ball?

		Poor	Not Good	Good	Very Good	Excellent		Poor	Not Good	Good	Very Good	Excellent		Poor	Not Good	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Rules		0*	1	2	3	4*		0*	1	2	3	4*		0*	1	2	3	4*
Praise		0*	1	2	3	4*		0*	1	2	3	4*		0*	1	2	3	4*
Attitude + Control		0*	1	2	3	4*		0*	1	2	3	4*		0*	1	2	3	4*
Inclusion		0*	1	2	3	4*		0*	1	2	3	4*		0*	1	2	3	4*

Appendix C

Masters of Arts in Education Postgraduate Research Study

Critical Friend Reflection and Lesson Observation Templates

Teaching for Meaning in PE

Planning and Reflection Template

Teacher Name:	Number of students:
Lesson time/ date:	Lesson duration:

Planning

Topic of the session

Note here any information you gathered since the last lesson/ Changes to your approach

What assumptions about teaching and learning are guiding some planning decisions?

What assumptions about meaning-making are guiding some planning decisions?

PLANNING/ APPROACH
How was a meaning-making approach planned for in the introduction of the lesson?
How was a meaning-making approach planned for in Main body/ Student Activity/ Participation?

How was a meaning-making approach planned for in the Close of the lesson?

REFLECTION

General reflection on the lesson:

Some specific things to consider addressing:

- How were my assumptions about meaning-making and teaching for meaning challenged?
- To what extent was I able to articulate the nature and importance of meaningful participation in physical activity clear to students? i.e., what challenges did I face in articulating the ways that meaningful participation is present in the activities I had planned? How did this seem to impact upon their learning, both about content (i.e., Tag Rugby) and meaning-making?
- How/when was I made to feel vulnerable during the lesson? How did I handle this?
- What moments were particularly meaningful for me teaching this lesson? Why were they meaningful?
- What insights and understandings about teaching and learning did I gain?
- What insights and understandings about teaching for meaning did I gain?

Meaningful PE Observation Template

Observer name:	Number of students:
Date of observation:	Class duration:

Pre-observation meeting/discussion
Note here any information you gathered from the Pre-observation discussion

Observation	
Topic of session:	
Date of report:	

FOCUS	EXAMPLES
Examples where 'meaning-making opportunities' are explicit in the lesson	
Introduction of Lesson	
Was meaning making explicit in the introduction? How?	

Any further comments about the introduction of the session?	

Main body/ Student Activity/ Participation

What students seemed to be doing during the session:	
Any further comments about the main body of the session?	

Close of Lesson

Was meaning-making explicit in revisiting the learning outcomes towards the end of the session?	
Any further comments about the close of the session?	
Examples where praise from both teacher and children are evident	

Transitioning From Shallow Play to personal meaningful play	
Examples where children are supported to foster the development of "Just-Right" Challenges.	
Examples of assessment/ how did the researcher assess for meaning and understanding throughout the lesson	

Teaching for Meaning in PE	
(note any examples where children's experiences in the lesson provide for any of the following)	
Social Interaction	
Challenge	

Skill learning	129	P a g e
Fun	
Delight	
Summary/ Comments	

Appendix D
MIREC Ethical Approval

For Office Use Only Application Reference Number:	A14-044

COLÁISTE MHUIRE GAN SMÁL
OLLSCOIL LUIMNIGH
MARY IMMACULATE COLLEGE
UNIVERSITY OF LIMERICK

Mary Immaculate College Research Ethics Committee

MIREC-4: MIREC Chair Decision Form

1	Title of Research Project

Pedagogical Approaches to Meaning-Making in Primary Physical Education

2	Applicant	
Name		Ciara Griffin
Department / Centre / Other		AEPE
Position		MA research student

3	Decision of MIREC Chair	
	Ethical clearance through MIREC is required	
	Ethical clearance through MIREC is not required and therefore the researcher need take no further action in this regard	
X	Ethical clearance is required and granted. Referral to MIREC is not necessary	
	Ethical clearance is required but the full MIREC process is not. Ethical clearance is therefore granted if required for external funding applications and the researcher need take no further action in this regard.	
	Insufficient information provided by applicant / Amendments required	

4	Reason(s) for Decision

Application fulfils MIREC requirements

5	Declaration	
Name (Print)		**Áine Lawlor**
		MIREC Chair
Signature		*Áine Lawlor*
		MIREC Chair
Date		**5/2/2015**

Appendix E

Generating Initial Codes on the Self

The Meaningful Approach Becoming My Yardstick

Observing meaningful activity

Kretchmar's (2006) five criteria

My view of a successful lesson changing

Constantly looking for meaningful opportunities.

Development of student-centeredness

Focus on pupil involvement

Relating to personal experience

Intrinsic focus

Kretchmars 5 criteria (Challenge, Social interaction, Increased motor competence, Fun and delight)

Teacher- taking personal meaning from class experience

Importance of pupil's feelings

M-m as filter for decision making

M-m as filter for judging lesson success

Student centred (l.4)

De-emphasising competition

Promoting meaningful participation

Promoting pupil sensitivity- being sensitive to needs & feelings of others

Teacher relating to personal experience of rugby

Always seeking m-m info

Highlights groups use of K's5C

Concerned about pupil learning

View development from a m-m lens

Use k's 5 criteria in lesson planning and adapting

Development as m-m facilitator

Major shift meaning/skill

Promoting transfer of knowledge

Building of Teacher Confidence

Belief as a facilitator of meaningful physical education

Moving from apprehensive to confident

Teacher as facilitator

Concerned about order and respect (L.1)

Linking activities

Vulnerability- feels unnatural (L.1)

Feeling of accomplishment

Skill layering

Balancing of approaches – tgfu & m-m

Building confidence- balancing Cog & Aff

Layering of social interaction

Layering of approach

Confidence in teaching

Settled in approach

Integration of approach – English writing

Justifying use of approaches

Going against common sense approach

Reframing of practice

Addressing vulnerability

Take confidence from pupil enjoyment

Maturing- not panicking if don't understand a game

Conscious Effort to Improve\Adapt Practice

Prioritising the affective elements

Promotion of pupil autonomy

Adapting teaching approach

Promoting pupil autonomy

Cognitive focus (l.1,2)

Teacher changing focus- Participation/skill

Teacher- separating personal sport experience

Promoting personal m-m

Rule focus (l.2)

Encouraging student ownership and autonomy

Adapting lesson for pupils needs

Teacher interaction

Conscious effort to move from cognitive to affective thinking

Moving beyond just understanding to feelings

Adapting pedagogies

Implementing pupil feedback

Planning based on pupil feedback

Questioning planning- not going through the motions (L.5)

Promoting whole class participation

Informing pupils – success criteria

Encouraging pupil responsibility

Shift in teaching

Focus on organisation and structure

View lessons as adaptable

Appendix F

Searching for Themes

Initial Codes

Use of Kretchmars 5 criteria.

Belief as facilitator.

Layering of the unit content.

Adaption of teaching.

Draft Themes

Meaning-Making Becoming My Yardstick

Judge success of a lesson based on m-m criteria- I find a lesson meaningful once I see the children making meaning and having fun with classmates

Use m-m when planning, assessing and adapting lessons

Plan m-m opportunities before I plan the content

Judge development from a m-m aspect

Using m-m as a filter for decisions (Cf Reflection 3 S.A)

What I say to pupils in a lesson has a m-m aspect (It's not about who gets the most tags/points, It's about having fun and enjoying yourself. Don't judge success by what another person tells you- you set your own goals)

Development of student-centeredness Approach (E.g C.F reflection 8+9)

Building Confidence

Becoming confident as facilitator and m-m. (e.g C.F reflection 4)

Layering of my teaching- no longer teaching skills/ideas in isolation

Not afraid to change something if it isn't working- not just sticking to the lesson plan and what 'I Know'.

Justifying use of m-m approaches and how the activities planned meet the criteria in CF reflections.

Making a Conscious Effort

Moving from cognitive to the affective (made a conscious effort the switch my teaching from being more focused on Cognitive to the Affective).

Listening to pupils thoughts and advice- make changes based on this feedback.

Review reflections

Taking a step back- providing autonomy for students

Trying new ideas and approaches

Use of Kretchmars 5 criteria.

Fun

Challenge

Social interaction

Skill development

Reducing competition

Belief as facilitator.

Layering of the unit content.

Adaption of teaching

Appendix G
Reviewing Themes – The self

<u>Conscious Effort to Adapt and Improve Practice</u>

<u>Prioritising the affective elements</u>

A clear theme which emerged in the data is how researcher prioritised the affective element of meaning-making in her teaching as the lessons developed. In week one and two there was a major focus on the cognitive element of meaning-making, focusing more on pupils understanding of an activity and being concerned with pupils staying on task. *'Giving clear concise instructions and having the pupils repeat the rules to me before they begin. This will help the pupils stay on task'*. This statement in the critical friend reflection demonstrated the researchers concern for cognitive understanding, but the idea of 'staying on task' would reduce pupil's autonomy, an element which the researcher aimed to develop.

The researcher instead promoted pupil autonomy through the promotion of focusing on affective learning in preceding lessons. However there was a didactic shift within the lessons with the researcher no longer focusing solely on the cognitive element of teaching, instead focusing on pupils emotions and feelings, *'I am focussing more on the affective as appose to the cognitive in my approach to meaning making in this lesson. I want to focus more on feeling and what they find fun rather than seeing how they can transfer the skill knowledge from tag rugby to other sports'* . The researcher made a conscious effort to move beyond merely pupils understanding, instead focusing on how pupil's felt during activities. This demonstrated an informed decision by the researcher to adapt and improve her practice, even though it challenged her previous held perception of meaning, *'This challenged my perception of meaning but it turned out it was very successful...'* Throughout the remaining lessons there was a notable focus on the pupil's feelings and their experience of carrying out a particular activity, *'a discussion circle with the class, to talk about how they felt about and during the lesson'* The researchers focus on pupil's feelings aligns with Dowling's (2008) argument for critical engagement with our feelings as a potential means for enhancing educative practice. The researcher aimed to promote pupil's meaningful participation by encouraging pupil's to reflect on how they felt while participating in tag rugby activities.

The promotion of class participation in an activity rather than solely prioritising skill execution proved to be a major developmental step in the researches promotion of the affective element. The promotion of whole class participation and focusing on pupil's experience of an activity demonstrated the researcher's student-centred approach. The change in teacher focus and their ability to separate their own personal experience of competitive sport and promotion of affective learning demonstrated the researchers focus on providing meaningful PE experiences for the participants.

<u>Promotion of pupil autonomy</u>

Another clear sub theme which emerged in the data was the researcher's conscious decision to foster a learning environment which promoted pupil autonomy. The researcher consciously decided to plan lessons and activities that required pupils to take ownership of their learning, promoting a feeling of pupil responsibility in lessons *'...will make the children feel and realise they have a very important role in the class, giving them a sense of ownership over their learning'.* The researcher endeavoured to provide pupil's with a sense of ownership and responsibly for lesson planning through the use of participant feedback. The researcher actively planned lessons that came from pupil's feedback and interests, this approach stemmed from Dewey's (1913) belief of how interest motivates the learner to participate in an activity. The conscious effort by the researcher to promote pupil autonomy in guiding lessons was clear in a comment to her critical friend *'Today I'm really focusing on the class directing the lesson and guiding their learning.'* This demonstrated the researchers concern for providing autonomy for participants but also demonstrated her acceptance of the role as facilitator within lessons. The promotion of pupil autonomy also demonstrated a didactic shift in the researchers teaching to a point where she was no longer concerned with 'maintaining order', instead promoting pupil's responsibility in guiding lessons.

Pupil autonomy is vital for the development of participant's personal playgrounds, an atmosphere which the researcher consciously attempted to provide for in lessons *'I'm using Kretchmars idea for making personal playgrounds in that I'm using his idea of play being self directed, personally meaningful and reason transcending play'.* The decision by the researcher to provide activities that were self-directed by pupils demonstrated the promotion of pupil autonomy. The researcher's perception had shifted drastically from being concerned about 'maintaining order' to instead purposely providing lessons that require participants guidance and active involvement in the direction of activities. The researcher has adopted an approach which no longer places the teacher at the centre of lesson planning, instead planning in accordance to pupil feedback highlighting the development of the student-centred approach within lessons. The researcher has adopted Kretchmar (2000) belief of the teacher changing from instructor to 'activity broker'.

Appendix H
Defining and Naming Themes- The Self

Meaningful Learning Becoming My Yardstick

An overarching theme which captures how the researcher, over the course of the tag rugby unit, became accustomed to using the meaningful approach in her practice.

<u>Observing meaningful Activity</u>

In review of the self generated data it was evident that Kretchmars criteria for meaning-making had a pivotal role in providing a meaningful learning and teaching environment for the researcher. Experiences which included such elements as challenge, social interaction, skill development, fun and delight were deemed to be successful meaningful lessons by the researcher. As the weeks developed the researcher sought for more instances of the use of Kretchmars five criteria within lessons. The criteria became a guide for successful planning and adaption of lessons which is evident in an entry from the research journal:

'I saw octopus tag was too easy, they weren't challenged enough, they weren't practicing a lot of skill (only dodging) and I could see they weren't finding it the most enjoyable either! Based on this I changed straight away to bulldog which they love! So they were having fun, playing with their friends, but also it was more challenging as I kept changing the size of the playing area which they found hard when it was tight! I found with bulldog they were practicing a lot more skills than with octopus tag, they practiced tagging, dodging, avoiding the defender, making space and moving into space. I really enjoyed today's lesson but what I found the most memorable was how the 5 criteria automatically became my guide for changing the warm-up'. (R.J 06-05-15)

This example demonstrated how the researcher had moved from resorting to what she knew to change an activity, which was evident in the beginning reflections *'... being honest Tim I used the pop passing as it is a drill we use in training'*, to now consciously planning and thinking about how each activity could develop meaningful opportunities for pupils. The researcher was constantly looking for opportunities to provide meaningful experiences for her pupils. This viewpoint resonates with Nilges' (2004) belief that helping student's access personal meaning becomes a key factor in educators curricular planning.

In the early stages of data collection the researcher appeared to judge success and development based on skill execution, there was a predominant concern for skill attainment and understanding. As the lessons progressed the researcher began to assess using a meaningful lens looking for the provision of meaningful experiences for pupils rather than judging success solely on skill attainment and execution.

'It was particularly meaningful for me during the lesson when I saw how much the children have developed from the first week of tag. They were encouraging and praising each other

throughout the lesson and I didn't have to prompt them to do this during the games. It was also extremely nice to hear the teams really discussing their performance and giving examples of where they did the criteria for points. I found this really useful for judging the success of [the] lessons...'

The extract demonstrated how the researcher's outlook has matured to instead seeing development, in pupil's meaningful participation in a lesson. The meaning-making approach became her filter for deciding the success of a lesson.

'It was extremely meaningful to me when the children were coming out to tag and I saw how excited they were and how they were saying they couldn't wait all day for tag rugby. It was also extremely meaningful in that I saw how much the children have developed and improved in their praising and how they encourage one another in a game'.

The researcher deems a lesson successful when meaningful participation is evident, skill execution is no longer the main evaluating factor. The researcher also evaluated her own practice based on the children's experiences of the tag rugby activities and used Kretchmars Criteria in her own self-assessment. This correlates with Laboskey's (2004) of what makes a quality self-study in that the research is self initiated and focused and improvement aimed. The researcher derived meaning in her teaching predominantly through positive responses (social interaction) from pupil's coupled with observations of development and improvement (Challenge- the researcher saw the children meet the challenges she had set in lessons). The researchers concern for children's learning and ensuring meaningful learning opportunities illustrated the development of her student-centeredness.

Development of a student-centred approach

Development of a student centred approach captures how the researcher prioritised her student's meaningful learning experience. The researcher developed a learning environment that encouraged 'pupil talk' and which promoted pupils active involvement in their tag rugby experience, *'since the last lesson, I listened over the pupil interviews and took what they said into consideration when planning the lesson'.* Pupils were actively involved in the lessons in both planning and lesson progression. Content was planned in accordance to pupil's feedback and areas they wished to have included in lessons. The researcher took this feedback into account in planning lessons ensuring content related to pupils interests. This relates the Chen's (1998) belief that educators can encourage meaningful activity by turning pupil's interest in an activity into personal striving and desire to participate in an activity, promoting an active learning environment.

The researcher's student-centeredness was evident in her critical friend reflections. The researchers concern for pupil's meaningful learning experience demonstrated her constant concern for pupil welfare, '*your concerns are mainly about student learning here and not necessarily about you revealing gaps in your knowledge or experience. It is showing your*

student-centredness rather than self-centredness'. The researcher created a learning environment which promoted intrinsic reflection and deemphasized competition for pupils. The researcher actively promoted the importance of meaningful participation over skill attainment and competition. An environment which promoted personal goal setting was adopted in order to demonstrate to pupils, what is viewed as successful is personal to each individual and performance should not be judged by what others say. This promoted whole class participation and put each student at the centre of lessons. This strategy related to Pagnano's (2006) belief that 'using activities that place the student at the centre of the learning process is a strategy to increase meaningfulness'. Demonstrating how the meaning-making approach became the researcher's natural and automatic method for providing a meaningful learning experience for pupils.

Building of Teacher Confidence

Moving from Apprehensive to Confident

A distinct theme evident in the data was the changing of the researchers view from being apprehensive to confident in her teaching. In the early data it was clear the researcher worried about maintaining order in lessons, with a strong focus on rules. ' ...having the pupils repeat the rules to me before they begin. *This will help the pupils stay on task. Also I am going to get the groups to walk around the perimeter of their playing area so they understand the boundaries and not disrupt another team'.* This she admitted stemmed from her own experience of sport '...*it is in my nature as a player ...'* and supports Kelchtermans and Vandenberghe (1994) belief that educators' personal experiences impact their perception, which dually affects their behaviour and daily decisions.

The ability to balance both the approaches of TGFU and meaning-making successfully in lessons saw a notable shift in the researcher's outlook and confidence. The researcher drew confidence from her ability to provide meaningful opportunities for pupils while using the TGFU model. *'It was meaningful during the focus group as I got an insight into what the pupils saw meaningful and what they liked most about tag rugby. Similar to 'School A', what they enjoyed most was being with friends and having fun'.* The researcher's ability to address her vulnerability in the critical friend reflections demonstrated her growth in confidence and development as a self-study researcher. The researcher no longer saw the admission of vulnerability as a weakness in her teaching. *'I felt vulnerable at times during the lesson trying to emphasise the importance of meaning over the skill'* The honesty in reflections demonstrated how the author was no longer worried about revealing gaps in her knowledge, instead focusing solely on ways of improving as a meaning-making facilitator. The researcher grew from being apprehensive about her approach to instead relishing and believing in her ability to provide a meaningful physical education environment for pupils.

<u>Belief as Facilitator</u>

An overarching theme which emerged in the data was the gradual building of the researcher confidence and the belief as a facilitator of meaningful education. The belief as facilitator emerged through reading of the critical friend reflections and was evident in an entry in the research journal, *'Today was a really great lesson in both School A and School B, I can see the progress the classes have made from our first lesson until now. Today I found things really clicked with the group and everyone was really participating and engaging well with the lesson'*. It appeared the researcher took confidence from the pupil's positive responses and participation in lessons. It was clear the researcher drew confidence from her approach as facilitator when pupils made and took personal meaning from their tag rugby experience;

'Another point I really enjoyed and came from a pupil, which showed how they put their own meaning to a skill. I was explaining how when your passing your hands should finish up pointing at your target as this is the direction the ball will follow. When I explained this a pupil said 'so it's just like superman' and all the class understood the arm positioning then by relating it to superman'.

It is interesting that the researcher drew meaning from student's personal meaning-making rather than her own experience of teaching the topic, again this demonstrates the researcher's student-centeredness rather than self-centeredness. Promotion of student's personal meaning-making by the researcher demonstrates her role as facilitator of meaningful education and shows her confidence in the position. This promotion of pupil's personal meaning also aligns with Dewey's (1938) belief that making meaning is the making of connections and relations by interweaving thoughts, words and actions.

The researcher layered her practice in terms of skill introduction, approaches to teaching tag rugby and there was a clear layering of social interaction along with the other four criteria within the study. *'Last week I introduced the concept of learning with the heart in head in order to highlight all the different skills the children practice during a tag lesson. I am hoping to build on the peer praise concept...'* This demonstrated a major maturation of practice from the researcher, there was a continuous flow and constant progression within her data collection. Rather than solely focusing on a single topic each week, the researcher interlinked the content to allow for participants transfer of knowledge. This layering of content evident in the critical friends comment '*I like how you are layering it here and not just moving from one thing to the next'*. The linking of pupil's experience of the tag unit in physical education into other areas of the curriculum such as English highlighted the researcher's developing confidence.

The shift from the 'common sense' approach, to planning meaningful opportunities for children before the lesson content proved the development of the researcher's confidence in her teaching approach but also her role as facilitator. *'I now automatically when planning a lesson plan the meaning making opportunities before the content of the lesson is set in*

stone'. This demonstrated the researcher's confidence in her teaching but also confirmed her belief as a meaning-making facilitator.

Conscious Effort to Adapt and Improve Practice

Prioritising the affective elements

A clear theme which emerged in the data is how researcher prioritised the affective element of meaning-making in her teaching as the lessons developed. In week one and two there was a major focus on the cognitive element of meaning-making, focusing more on pupils understanding of an activity and being concerned with pupils staying on task. *'Giving clear concise instructions and having the pupils repeat the rules to me before they begin. This will help the pupils stay on task'.* This statement in the critical friend reflection demonstrated the researchers concern for cognitive understanding, but the idea of 'staying on task' would reduce pupil's autonomy, an element which the researcher aimed to develop.

The researcher instead promoted pupil autonomy through the promotion of focusing on affective learning in preceding lessons. However there was a didactic shift within the lessons with the researcher no longer focusing solely on the cognitive element of teaching, instead focusing on pupils emotions and feelings, *'I am focussing more on the affective as appose to the cognitive in my approach to meaning making in this lesson. I want to focus more on feeling and what they find fun rather than seeing how they can transfer the skill knowledge from tag rugby to other sports'* . The researcher made a conscious effort to move beyond merely pupils understanding, instead focusing on how pupil's felt during activities. This demonstrated an informed decision by the researcher to adapt and improve her practice, even though it challenged her previous held perception of meaning, *'This challenged my perception of meaning but it turned out it was very successful...'* Throughout the remaining lessons there was a notable focus on the pupil's feelings and their experience of carrying out a particular activity, *'a discussion circle with the class, to talk about how they felt about and during the lesson'* The researchers focus on pupil's feelings aligns with Dowling's (2008) argument for critical engagement with our feelings as a potential means for enhancing educative practice. The researcher aimed to promote pupil's meaningful participation by encouraging pupil's to reflect on how they felt while participating in tag rugby activities.

The promotion of class participation in an activity rather than solely prioritising skill execution proved to be a major developmental step in the researches promotion of the affective element. The promotion of whole class participation and focusing on pupil's experience of an activity demonstrated the researcher's student-centred approach. The competitive sport and promotion of affective learning demonstrated the researchers focus on providing meaningful PE experiences for the participants.

Promotion of pupil autonomy

Another clear sub theme which emerged in the data was the researcher's conscious decision to foster a learning environment which promoted pupil autonomy. The researcher consciously decided to plan lessons and activities that required pupils to take ownership of their learning, promoting a feeling of pupil responsibility in lessons *'...will make the children feel and realise they have a very important role in the class, giving them a sense of ownership over their learning'.* The researcher endeavoured to provide pupil's with a sense of ownership and responsibly for lesson planning through the use of participant feedback. The researcher actively planned lessons that came from pupil's feedback and interests, this approach stemmed from Dewey's (1913) belief of how interest motivates the learner to participate in an activity. The conscious effort by the researcher to promote pupil autonomy in guiding lessons was clear in a comment to her critical friend *'Today I'm really focusing on the class directing the lesson and guiding their learning.'* This demonstrated the researchers concern for providing autonomy for participants but also demonstrated her acceptance of the role as facilitator within lessons. The promotion of pupil autonomy also demonstrated a didactic shift in the researchers teaching to a point where she was no longer concerned with 'maintaining order', instead promoting pupil's responsibility in guiding lessons.

 Pupil autonomy is vital for the development of participant's personal playgrounds, an atmosphere which the researcher consciously attempted to provide for in lessons *'I'm using Kretchmars idea for making personal playgrounds in that I'm using his idea of play being self directed, personally meaningful and reason transcending play'.* The decision by the researcher to provide activities that were self-directed by pupils demonstrated the promotion of pupil autonomy. The researcher's perception had shifted drastically from being concerned about pupil behaviour to instead purposely providing lessons that require participant's guidance and active involvement in the direction of activities. The researcher adopted an approach which no longer placed the teacher at the centre of lesson planning, instead planning in accordance to pupil feedback highlighting the development of the student-centred approach within lessons. The researcher had adopted Kretchmar (2000) belief of the teacher changing from instructor to 'activity broker'.

Appendix I
PARENT/GUARDIAN INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Study title: Pedagogical Approaches to Meaningful Participation in Primary Physical Education.

- I have read and understood the **parent/guardian information sheet**.

- I understand what the project is about, and what the results will be used for.

- I am fully aware of **all** of the procedures involving my child, and of any **risks and benefits** associated with the study.

- I know that my child's participation is voluntary and that he/she can withdraw from the project at any stage without giving any reason.

- I am aware that the results will be kept confidential.

- I consent to my child taking part in this research study.

Child's name (PRINTED)	Name of School	Child's Date of Birth

Parent/Guardian's Name (PRINTED)	Parent/ Guardian's signature	Date

Please return this page to school

Appendix j
Parent/Guardian Information Letter

Dear Parent/Guardian,

My name is Ciara Griffin and I am a recently qualified primary school teacher from Mary Immaculate College. I am conducting a research study on children's experiences in physical education as part of my masters' research and I would like to invite your child to participate in the research. I am interested in studying what activities and methods work best in creating personally meaningful experiences for pupils in primary physical education classes.

I propose to teach PE, once a week over a 9 week period for approximately 45 minutes per lesson to your child's class. The lesson activities will be based on fundamental movement skills of running, throwing and catching. I will teach these skills through the game of tag-rugby. In order to collect the relevant information to help with my research I propose to interview some pupils at the end of various lessons. These interviews will be audio recorded using a voice recorder. Individual interviews will take no longer that fifteen minutes and the questions will be based on the child's experience of the PE lesson. Focus group interviews will consist of three to four pupils together and will take no longer than forty minutes. The children will be asked questions related to their experiences of the PE lesson. Along with interviewing pupils I will also collect samples of children's work at the end of each lesson, such as pictures that illustrate what they did in class and PE diary entries, where pupils will reflect on the activity they took part in. Another member of the research team, Mr. X, will observe my teaching on two occasions during the project. Mr. X is also a qualified Primary Teacher with full Garda Vetting and he is also carrying out a Masters in Physical Education in Mary Immaculate College. Mr. X will not be identifying individual children but instead will be looking for children's general reactions to the lesson activities and will note these reactions. Your child has the option of not taking part in the research process or withdrawing from the process at any time.

The material gathered will be used solely for information purposes and for collecting data for my research. Data collected will not be shared with any outside source and will be kept in a secure and safe location.This research will be used for academic and professional purposes only and all information regarding the participants will remain confidential.

Please sign the attached parental\guardian consent form if you would like your son\daughter to participate in the study. If you have any questions or concerns about the study, or if you would like to withdraw your son/daughter from the study, do not hesitate in contacting me, the school principal or class teacher.

Yours Sincerely,

_____

Ciara Griffin

Appendix K
INFORMED CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS

Study title: Pedagogical Approaches to Meaningful Participation in Primary Physical Education

My name is _____. I know that I am going to participate in PE lessons about Meaning-making and see what activities make meaning. I know that during the research I will be

1. Taking part in PE lessons playing tag rugby.

2. Answering questions about what I thought of the PE lessons in an interview with the researcher.

3. Writing a short personal reflection at the end of each PE lesson.

My parents/guardian have talked to me about being part of the research study and I know that I don't have to do the activity if I don't want to. I know that whenever I feel like stopping that's okay, I won't get in trouble and I don't have to say why I feel like stopping. I know this isn't a test or an exam and by doing the activity I am just helping out the people from Mary Immaculate College.

SIGNED: _____   DATE: _____

Please return this page to school.

Appendix L
CHILD INFORMATION SHEET

Dear Pupil,

I am doing a project looking at what activities make meaningful experiences for pupils in primary PE. I would like you to take part. If you agree I would like you to

1. Take part in PE lessons that focus on playing tag rugby.

2. Answer questions in an interview about what you thought of the lesson, either on your own or in a group. The researcher will record this activity using a small voice recorder like this:

3. Write a short reflection, only a few sentences, about what you taught of the PE lesson at the end of each class.

If, when you are taking part, you want to stop that's okay. If you don't want to take part you won't get in trouble. I will share my findings with other people who are interested in what activities pupils find meaningful in PE but I won't use your name so people won't know who you are. If you have any worries about taking part you can come talk to me or to your teacher or parents.

You may ask me questions if you do not understand something on this page.

Kind regards,

Ciara Griffin

If you have any concerns about this study and wish to contact someone independent, you may contact:

MIREC Administrator, Mary Immaculate College

South Circular Road, Limerick

061-204515.

mirec@mic.ul.ie

Appendix M

Teacher Informed Consent Form

TITLE: Pedagogical Approaches to Meaningful Participation in Primary Physical Education

I _____, Class Teacher consent to the

participation of my class in the Research Study entitled 'Pedagogical Approaches to

meaning-making in Primary Physical education'.

Appendix N

Teacher Information Letter

Dear Teacher,

Thank you for allowing me to carry out my research with your class. My name is Ciara Griffin and I am a qualified primary teacher recently graduated from the Bachelor of Education programme, Mary Immaculate College. I am completing a Masters in Primary Physical Education. The aim of my research is to develop and identify teaching pedagogies and strategies that provide meaningful experiences and opportunities for pupils in physical education lessons.

I propose to teach PE to your class over 9 weeks for 45 minutes each lesson. The children will take part in a range of familiar PE activities that will draw on the fundamental movement skills of throwing, catching, running and jumping, I will teach these skills through the game of Tag Rugby. The range of activities planned will be within the usual range of activities in Irish Primary Schools, ensuring children have a sense of familiarity with their environment. To collect the relevant information to help with my research I will interview and audio record interviews with some children at the end of chosen lessons. I would also like to interview some of the children individually and in groups during the 9 period. Along with interviewing pupils I will also collect pupils work samples at the end of each lesson, such as pictures that illustrate what they did in class and how they felt and PE diary entries, where pupils will reflect on the activity they took part in. Another member of the research team, Mr X, will observe my teaching on two occasions during the project. Mr X is a qualified Primary Teacher with full Garda Vetting and he is also carrying out a Masters in Physical Education in Mary Immaculate College. Mr X will not be identifying individual children but instead will be looking for children's general reactions to the lesson activities and will take note of these reactions. Children have the option of not taking part in the research process or withdraw from the process at any time. The material gathered will be used solely for information purposes and for collecting data for my research. Data collected will not be shared with any outside source and will be kept in a secure and safe location.This research will be used for academic and professional purposes only and all information regarding the participants will remain confidential.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you again . If you have any further questions regarding the research process and your school's invovlement please do not hesitate to contact me. You can contact me by phone on 086 8946188, by email at ciara.griffin@mic.ul.ie or I can meet you in person at anytime you are available.

Yours Sincerely,

_____

Ciara Griffin

Appendix O

School Consent Form

TITLE: Pedagogical Approaches to Meaningful Participation in Primary Physical Education

I _____, Pricipal/ Authorisation person   consent

to the participation of _____ School in the Research

Study entitled 'Pedagogical Approaches to meaning-making in primary physical

education'.

PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN THIS AUTHORISATION FORM TO THE

RESEARCHER

Appendix P

School Information Letter

Dear Principal,

     My name is Ciara Griffin and I am a qualified primary teacher recently graduated from the Bachelor of Education programme, Mary Immaculate College. I am completing a Masters in Primary Physical Education. The aim of my research is to develop and identify teaching pedagogies and strategies that provide meaningful experiences and opportunities for pupils in physical education lessons. I am writing to enquire if you would be willing to allow me carry out part of my research in your school?

     I propose to teach PE to 4th class over 9 weeks for 45 minutes each lesson. The children will take part in a range of familiar PE activities that will draw on the fundamental movement skills of throwing, catching, running and jumping, I will teach these skills through the game of Tag Rugby. The range of activities planned will be within the usual range of activities in Irish Primary Schools, ensuring children have a sense of familiarity with their environment. To collect the relevant information to help with my research I will interview and audio record interviews with some children at the end of chosen lessons. I would also like to interview some of the children individually and in groups during the 9 week period. Along with interviewing pupils I will also collect pupils work samples at the end of each lesson, such as pictures that illustrate what they did in class and how they felt and PE diary entries, where pupils will reflect on the activity they took part in. Another member of the research team, Mr X, will observe my teaching on two occasions during the project. Mr X is a qualified Primary Teacher with full Garda Vetting and he is also carrying out a Masters in Physical Education in Mary Immaculate College. Mr X will not be identifying individual children but instead will be looking for children's general reactions to the lesson activities and will take note of these reactions. Children have the option of not taking part in the research process or withdraw from the process at any time. The material gathered will be used solely for information purposes and for collecting data for my research. Data collected will not be shared with any outside source and will be kept in a secure and safe location.This research will be used for academic and professional purposes only and all information regarding the participants will remain confidential.

     I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your time and consideration. If you have any further questions regarding the research process and your school's invovlement please do not hesitate to contact me. You can contact me by phone on 086 8946188, by email at ciara.griffin@mic.ul.ie or I can meet you in person at anytime you are available.
Yours Sincerely,

_____

Ciara Griffin

Appendix Q
Pupil Interview Guide Questions

1. What was your favorite part of today's lesson?
2. What made this the most enjoyable part?
3. How did you feel when you were doing this?
4. Would you do this activity again, if so why?
5. What did you think about activity X?
6. Can you explain to me what we did in activity X?
7. Was it enjoyable, if so why\ why not?
8. What parts of the activity did you find most enjoyable?
9. Would you change any part of the activity?
10. How would you achieve this?
11. Would it be better if the activity was made harder or easier? How could this be done?
12. How could we change this activity to make it different if we wanted to do it in class again?
13. What was the most fun part of today's lesson?
14. What do you look forward to most about PE?
15. Over the course of the 9 weeks of tag rugby, do you think your tag skills have improved?
16. What was the most enjoyable part of the tag rugby unit?
17. What does PE mean to you?
18. What do you look forward to most in a Tag lesson?
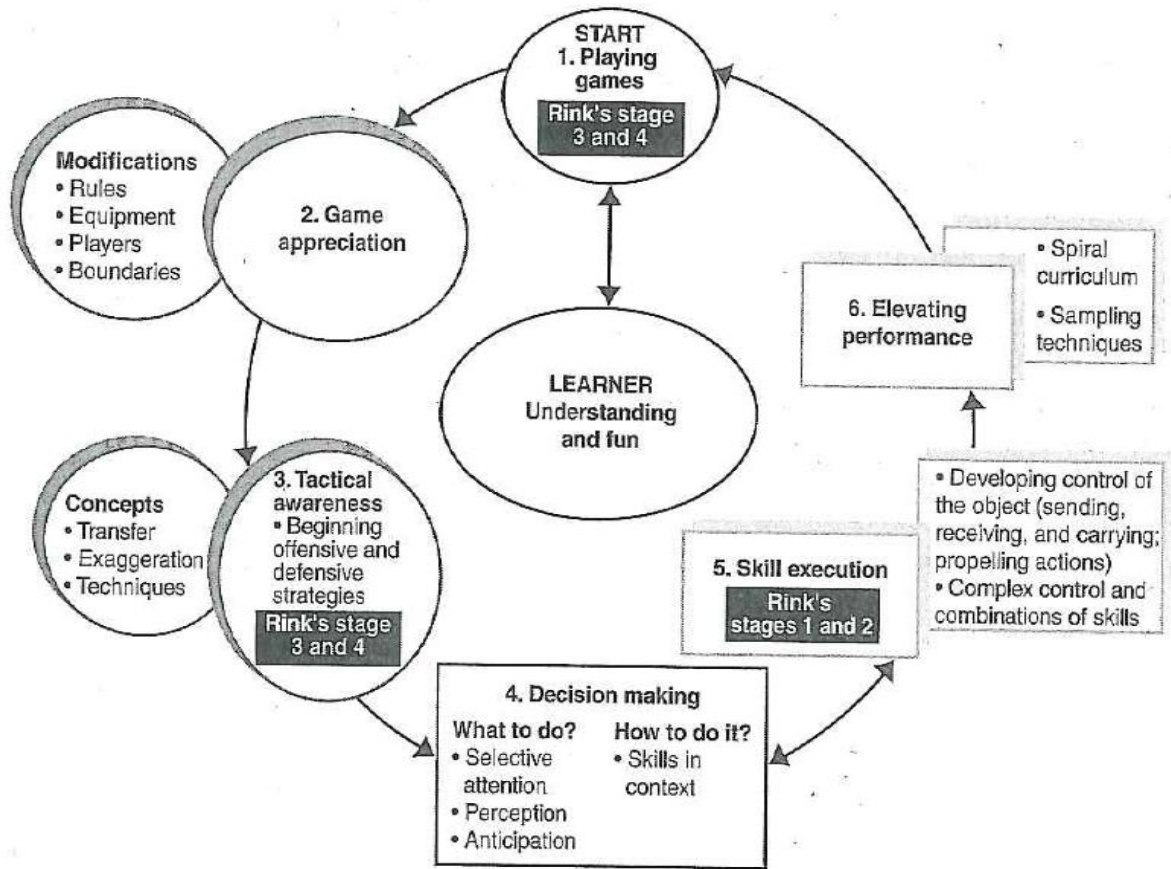19. How did you feel doing activity X?

Figure 3.2 Model for games teaching.

Adapted, by permission, from D. Bunker and R. Thorpe, 1982, "A model for the teaching of games in the secondary school," *Bulletin of Physical Education* 10:9-16.