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Critical pedagogies in the secondary school classroom: Space, engagement, and emotions

Place I feel most powerful

Image of place I feel most powerful, Milestone Academy

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Table of abbreviations & subject-specific terminology

Abbreviation	Full Title
TO	Theatre of the Oppressed
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education (England)
SEND	Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities
SENCO	Special Educational Needs Coordinator
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
ESO	Educación Secundaria Obligatoria – Compulsory secondary education
Subject-specific terminology	**Explanation**
League table	Statistical information measuring school performance data (exam grades)
Alternative provision	Alternative provision settings are places that provide education for children who can't go to a mainstream school (Department for Education, 2013)
Bachillerato	Spanish Baccalaureate, post-16 education leading to higher education
A-Levels	Advanced level qualifications, post-16 education leading to higher education
Academy School	State-funded school, independent from local authority and regulation, owned by a charitable trust
Comprehensive Community School	State-funded school, managed and regulated by local authority, without entry exam

Acknowledgements

Abstract

The neoliberal school is marked by an exam-focused, league table-driven curriculum, matched with an array of school policies on performance and conduct and a stifling of critical engagement. In this context, this qualitative research study explores the challenges and transformative potentials of implementing critical pedagogies in the contemporary European secondary school classroom. The study reflects on the inclusivity of learning spaces, thereby taking into account high exclusion rates and segregation of students from marginalised communities and/or who are diverse learners.

To research a multitude of classroom experiences of power, learning, and belonging, methodologically, alongside other qualitative methods, the research draws on image theatre, a method of the critical and participatory Theatre of the Oppressed. It proposes that image theatre, explored through a critical spatial lens, offers an active research method to explore pedagogical practices with and through the body. The research focuses on power dynamics in classrooms. Through the theatre, students, teachers and researcher together generate data by engaging and playing with the very power dynamics the research explores.

The study engages with the contributions as well as challenges that the application of critical pedagogies engendered on a structural, relational, and emotional level. Findings show that sustainable changes towards an inclusive learning environment rely on policy and institutional support, yet a focus on spatial and temporal practices in the classroom application of critical pedagogies can support the production of more inclusive learning spaces. The thesis argues that critical pedagogical interventions allow for shifts in the terms of engagement within the learning spaces, offering participants possibilities to relate to both the learning and the research spaces through changed subjectification.

This research contributes to important discussions on inclusive and critical pedagogical practices, while the theatre method opens spaces to collectively reimagine the classroom, whilst rehearsing for change.

1   Introduction

1.1   Situating the research

Recent celebrations marking Paulo Freire's 100th anniversary show there is still an active community of practitioners applying critical pedagogies worldwide, drawing on Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970) to bring social justice into education. In England, the faculty of education at Cambridge University organised a large international conference on the pedagogue's legacy, with contributions discussing the relevance of his work in research, language studies, teacher training, and climate justice pedagogy (CLAREC, 2021). However, few presentations at the conference discussed the practice applied in compulsory secondary education.

This thesis explores the application of critical pedagogies in secondary schools in a broader European context, with a focus on England and Catalonia, Spain. European schools are marked by neoliberal, market-oriented education policies (Ball, 2012a; Collet-Sabé, 2017). Privatisation of schools and migration politics lead to a segregation of schooling (Bonal and Bellei, 2019). In England, this research is set in the context of high exclusion rates of students from marginalised communities or with diverse learning needs (Cole et al., 2019). While exclusion rates are highly relevant in revealing an educational reality for some students as they show who is being expelled from school, with exclusion, I refer not just to getting banished from school, but to everything that prevents some students from achieving learning outcomes that are available to their peers (see Section 2.3.1). In Catalonia students from marginalised communities, precarious economic backgrounds, and with diverse learning needs make up a high proportion of early school leavers (Tarabini et al., 2018). In these contexts, this study looks at the application of critical pedagogies as an intervention and explores their possibilities to shape more inclusive learning spaces.

Because of their neoliberal focus on performativity, schools measure a good education by their test scores as well as by students' and staff's conduct and attitudes, not by the content or processes of learning and teaching. "Performativity is a technology that relates

effort, values, purposes, and self-understanding directly to measures and comparisons of output" (Ball, 2016, p. 1053). This leads to a culture of micromanagement of classroom processes geared towards performative outputs in line with the institutional discourse, often oriented towards corporate values (Ball, 2012b), in an assessment culture aiming for international standardisation (Collet-Sabé, 2017). In contrast, critical pedagogies see "the program content of education" as "the organized, systematized, and developed 're-presentation' to individuals of the things about which they want to know more" (Freire, 1970, p. 93, see also Section 2.2). Such an approach engages with students' realities and is led by their process of exploring power structures and institutional processes. The intent to carve out spaces for critical pedagogies in secondary schools, therefore, challenges the pedagogical aims of the neoliberal institution, however, it may run the risk of being implemented merely in a performative way and lose its pedagogical and political values (Alfandari and Tsoubaris, 2022).

In the Catalan context, the young post-Franco public school system has only recently begun to undergo the changes associated with neoliberalism. Recent policy changes at national as well as regional levels, have given school leaders, which in Catalonia are head teachers, new powers to take executive decisions for their schools, and have created a culture of voluntary school evaluation toward universal standards, introducing the idea of neoliberal performativity (Collet-Sabé, 2017). The past decade was marked by *innovation* in the school system (Baena et al., 2020). As part of that, project-based learning, which has its history in Catalan schools (Hernández and Robira, 1992), is being implemented across different secondary schools in recent years as a proposal for a more progressive education system (Grau Sánchez, 2018). At the same time, state policies amplifying school choice in the last decade resulted in widening school segregation of students from marginalised communities, in particular, migrant communities due to a lack of transparency and information on the school choice system (Bonal et al., 2021). Consequently, innovative and progressive changes do not necessarily reach all students, whilst research has found that across schools, "inclusion often competes and clashes with innovation" (Baena et al., 2020, p. 1), and the 'innovative' measures do not necessarily create more inclusive spaces for learning.

The site studies of this research took place between July 2018 and January 2020. The ongoing Covid 19 pandemic has since impacted classrooms throughout Europe, "exacerbating pre-existing education disparities" (United Nations, 2020, p. 2) and it has

shaken aspects of schooling which were taken for granted, such as classroom-based learning. The crisis caused by the pandemic urges for a rethinking of schooling (Tarabini, 2021). Across Europe, school students have been active in mobilising against social inequalities, like the *Fridays for Future* movement organising school strikes for climate justice globally. In England, student groups are organising against racism in and across schools, as in the *No more Exclusions* campaign. Students in Catalonia are prominent in the popular annual feminist march on International Women's Day. While critical pedagogies are not a new proposal for a progressive change of the education system, they offer relevant possibilities in this context of increasing education inequalities met by a cohort of critical students. The question is how can critical pedagogies be implemented in the neoliberal school, and who can they reach. This leads to the leading question of this dissertation: How can critical pedagogies create more inclusive spaces for learning?

1.2   Situating the researcher

Discussing pedagogical research, Nind et al. (2016) explain they are interested in "ways of knowing" (p. 69) and argue that the "relationship between our understanding of the world and our simultaneous experiences and practices is foregrounded in a study of pedagogy" (p. 51). As the researcher, the exploration of classroom-based relationships and learning spaces in this research is shaped by my way of knowing. In Chapter 3 I will outline the methodological framework which explains the ontological, epistemological, and ethical frame I adhered to for this research. Here I explore the experiences and practices that I believe shape my approach to knowing, and which inform the motivation of this study.

My ways of knowing in this research are shaped by my practice as a secondary school English and drama teacher in London, with experience in alternative provisions (schools for students excluded from mainstream education). I, therefore, have experienced mainstream secondary school classrooms as well as their limitations. I share the sentiment one of the teachers in this research explained as "pushing square pegs into round holes" (see Section 5.3.4.1), which to me means intending to create inclusive learning spaces while upholding institutional demands, with the two generally opposing each other. At the same time, I worked with students who had been excluded from mainstream education and applied elements of critical, place-based pedagogies in teaching English language

and literature at GCSE level. From my practice-based reflections, I saw the changes in students' engagement with the learning in the changed pedagogical spaces, which laid the foundations of my research questions.

At the same time, I came to teaching through my long-standing practice facilitating participatory theatre workshops in various education spaces in the tradition of *Theatre of the Oppressed* (TO) (Boal, 1985). Sharing the same geographical and temporal origin of the 1960s dictatorship in Brazil, TO draws pedagogically on Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (Freire, 1970), using theatre to dialogically explore experiences of injustice in communities and how to change these. Practicing critical pedagogies through TO and the possibilities I encountered or *felt* in different drama spaces with often marginalised young people across Europe frame my understanding of pedagogy. Part of my intention of drawing on TO as research method comes from these interactive and participatory spaces. Rich exchanges and participants' feedback over the years confirmed what I felt, which however I had not theorised or systematically engaged with before. I chose to do a Professional Doctorate in Education, and engage with practitioner and arts-based research throughout, because of this intention to bring together theory and practice (see Section 3.2).

I grew up in a mixed language household and moved between different European countries, languages, and education systems. I come from a Jewish family with different migration trajectories, which shaped my own school experience in Germany where I grew up and made me engage from an early age with social justice and inclusion issues. These experiences influenced how I perceived the classrooms I was part of throughout the research and supported my interest in widening the focus on including different European education contexts. Having grown up in a household, where various languages were spoken which I did not know as a child, made me engage with body-based expression and understanding. As an adult, I consider myself trans-lingual (Horner et al., 2011; Otheguy et al., 2015; etc.), which to me means I think and feel in various languages at the same time. I tend to mix them or feel in-between languages. I often find myself knowing what I would like to say, but without any consistent vocabulary at my disposal to express myself verbally. Drawing on body-based expression enriches my communication, and I am tuned in to reading expression beyond words. This informs my theatre-based research practice and intention to be sensitive and open to diverse forms of expression and understanding, which shaped this research. I agree with hooks (1994), who argues that "we know things

with our lives and live that knowledge, beyond what any theory has yet theorized" (p. 75), which is the kind of knowing this thesis intends to engage with.

1.3   Aims, objectives and research questions

Among various strategies to foster inclusion in educational contexts outlined above, some apply elements of critical pedagogies to (re-)engage learners. This research investigates some of the ways in which a critical approach to shaping learning environments affects the production of inclusive learning spaces and facilitates young people's (re-)engagements with learning. Thereby, I seek to identify pedagogical practices that could facilitate more inclusive classrooms in the context of contemporary European secondary education. This research's principal aims are:

- to explore critical pedagogies as inclusive pedagogies; and
- to explore Theatre of the Oppressed as a research method for social justice-based research.

Its objectives are:

- to reflect on critical pedagogies as practices for engaging and including learners;
- to map the production of the social space of learning in the classrooms researched;
- to explore participants' understanding of inclusion set up in the schools researched; and
- to evaluate elements of Theatre of the Oppressed as a research method.

My central question is, accordingly, 'How can critical pedagogies create inclusive spaces for learning in secondary school classrooms?' Working through this question, I identified 5 research questions that this thesis explores, the last of which is a methodological question:

1 In what ways can critical pedagogies engage and include students, in particular disengaged students?
2 How do participants' interactions and relationships within the classroom shape their spaces for learning?
3 How do pedagogical frameworks shape participants' interactions and relationships?
4 How do participants understand inclusion and how are the practices researched inclusive?
5 How can elements of Theatre of the Oppressed be used as a research method in

classroom-based research?

1.4   Contribution to knowledge

This work contributes to a field of ongoing evaluation and development of critical pedagogies and to a wealth of research on what might constitute inclusive classrooms. Drawing on TO as a research method, situates this research within a diverse field of drama in education research, where some of the core ideas of this research speak from. Theatre adds a performative as well as a spatial lens to this research, which it combines with a perception of spaces as socially produced, borrowing from critical spatial research in education. Within this, the original contribution of this thesis will be 1) exploring critical pedagogies as practices supporting inclusion for students disengaged from the education system; 2) contributing to a critical spatial analysis of education, adding to it a wealth of spatial thinking taken from the field of theatre; and 3) evaluating Theatre of the Oppressed as a methodology for exploring classroom pedagogies.

With a qualitative research frame (see Chapter 3), this study explores critical pedagogies in mainstream secondary school classrooms as practices for shaping more inclusive spaces for learning. Specifically, the research is looking at whether and how critical pedagogies can include disengaged learners in diverse, inner-city classrooms.

In three classrooms in England and Spain (see Chapter 4), it applies and critically reflects on critical pedagogies as interventions in contemporary secondary school classrooms, through participant observations, interviews and theatre-based research. As set out in the sample section (Section 3.3), the way critical pedagogies were practiced in the three sites differed, each giving an insight into different types of 'learning/teaching' that can fall under the remit of critical pedagogy (Section 2.2). From a critical science class at Milestone Academy, in which students conducted research on controversial topics from the curriculum, to an intervention class at Inspire Arts Comprehensive, where students on the verge of being excluded hosted an event to engage teachers in conversations about their relationships, to Camino Institute, a school implementing project-based learning anchored in the local community across its curriculum. These examples engage with different aspects of teaching and learning, like student-led research, project-based learning, or

constructivist teaching. In alignment with Freire (1970, see Chapter 2.2) the work is critical as it engages with the students' situatedness and supports students to critically engage with the world around them and intervene in unjust power dynamics.

This research also engages with critiques of and changes to Freire's (1970) critical pedagogy (Ellsworth, 1989; hooks, 1994; Kitching, 2011; Walsh, 2015; etc.), to learn from them and contribute to a critical engagement with practice. It therefore draws on the plural form of the term, critical pedagog*ies* (see Section 2.2). In the research, a feminist perspective on critical pedagogies (see Section 2.2) allows for an engagement with the shifting power dynamics amongst the student body in each class (Ellsworth, 1989), whereas a decolonial perspective points out the need to listen to students perceptions and needs beyond the critical pedagogical framework (Walsh, 2015), as in the example of the event at Inspire Arts Comprehensive supporting students from the intervention class to improve their relationships with their teachers.

In its theoretical frame, the study applies a critical spatial lens to explore the relationship between pedagogical practices and the learning spaces they produce. In this way, it contributes to research engaging with the critical spatial turn in education (Bright et al., 2013; Gulson and Symes, 2007; Thomson, 2007; Youdell and Armstrong, F., 2011).

Methodologically, I evaluate Theatre of the Oppressed (TO), a participatory theatre method, as a research method. To reflect with students and teachers on their critical classrooms, I facilitated TO exercises with them, specifically drawing on image theatre, a method within TO (see Section 2.5). I was interested in the creative spaces TO proposes and the way it mobilises the process of coming to know, looking at it as a creative, spatial practice of critical pedagogies. This contributes to research looking at TO from a spatial perspective (Popen, 2006; Pratt and Johnston, 2007), as well as to research drawing on participatory theatre as a method in classroom-based research (Gallagher, 2007). This thesis furthermore proposes participatory, theatre-based research as a way of exploring the "hard-to-know" in pedagogical research (Nind et al., 2016, p. 3). Working in a participatory way with students and teachers, exploring their multiple perceptions of an inclusive classroom will add to research conducted on perceptions of what constitutes inclusive spaces for learning in secondary schools (Nind and Lewthwaite, 2018; Tarabini et al., 2018).

1.5   Organisation of the thesis

What is special about this research is its intention to engage with the same pedagogies researched also in its research design (see Section 3.2). Hence, one of my research questions addresses TO as a methodological practice. The methodological focus also shapes the organisation of the thesis. Having situated the research in its context and academic field, situated the researcher, and presented the guiding questions, aims and objectives in this first chapter, the next chapter will give an outline of the key literature this thesis is embedded in and I am thinking with. I will explore the fields of critical pedagogies and inclusion and place the research questions within these, as well as discuss a critical spatial lens in education and its relevance for research. Lastly, Chapter 2 will give a brief overview of TO, and how it brings the different aspects of this research together. Chapter 3 will then situate the thesis methodologically, outline the methodological design and explain theatre-based research and ethics surrounding this approach. Chapter 4 will briefly present the research sites and their contexts, as a basis for the subsequent analysis and reflection chapters. The analysis part of the thesis is split between the findings that respond to the four substantive research questions (Chapter 5) and the evaluation of TO as a methodology (Chapter 6). This makes for a longer Chapter 5, which is divided along the three main themes identified throughout this research: *Carving out spaces for critical pedagogies, Changing the terms of engagement*, and *The place for emotions in school*. Evaluating TO as a research method and reflecting on analysing the data it generates, Chapter 6 adds the special methodological focus of this research. Finally, Chapter 7 concludes this thesis with a reflection on the research and its contribution to knowledge and practice, and situates the research in a changed world, reimagining classrooms in a post-pandemic world.

2　Literature review

2.1　Introduction and chapter overview

Within the field of education for social justice, Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970) is a key framework. Freire outlines a critical pedagogy that considers education as an emancipatory tool. More than 50 years after it was first published, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* remains relevant in current education debates. Revisiting it in 2016, Giroux sees it as a tool to confront "a pedagogy of repression that attempts to camouflage the role that education plays in distorting history, silencing the voices of marginalized groups, and undercutting the relationship between learning and social change" (Giroux, 2016, p.58). He describes critical pedagogy as a powerful tool for countering social injustices perpetuated by a traditional, hegemonic education system.

Pedagogy of the Oppressed originates from within the specific socio-political-historical context of the dictatorship in Brazil in the 1960s. Within this, its theoretical frame sees power as binary and structural. Taken out of this context, key concepts such as emancipation as well as the classification of oppressor and oppressed merit critical revisitation. For example, feminist critiques of critical pedagogy (Ellsworth, 1989; Lather, 1998) suggest that the categorisation between oppressors and oppressed which Freire offers is not nuanced enough to explore entangled power dynamics in a contemporary classroom.

In the context of high permanent and fixed-term exclusion rates in England (Timpson et al., 2019) and a trend towards segregated schooling in Catalonia (Bonal, 2012; Fernández-Mellizo and Martínez-García, 2017), I evaluate critical pedagogies' ability to shape more inclusive spaces for learning. Reading about the landscape of school exclusions and segregations, as well as literature on the terms 'marginalisation' and 'inclusion' in education, show that the stigmatisation (Tarabini et al., 2018) and subjectivation of certain student identities (Youdell, 2006) are, among others, key issues. Engaging with the

critiques of Freire's critical pedagogy, I am looking at the entangled power dynamics of a contemporary classroom through a critical spatial lens, "to make sense of the ways that school spaces and subjects are constituted" (Youdell and Armstrong, F., 2011, p. 144). Drawing on Lefebvre's (Lefebvre and Nicholson-Smith, 1991) concept of "lived space", as an opportunity for "counter-public spaces" (Thomson, 2007, citing Fraser 1993,1995) in the classroom context, I study critical pedagogies as interventions, and TO as an opportunity to engage with such interventions.

In this chapter, I situate my research within the existing literature. In Section 2.2, I review the potential of critical pedagogies in current classroom-based research, while engaging reflexively with critiques of this method. I then survey the education landscapes in England and Catalonia, Spain, the locations of the research sites, in Section 2.3. Specifically, I am looking at patterns of exclusion and marginalisation, and practices and definitions of inclusion within that. I will then give a brief overview of the critical spatial turn in education in Section 2.4 and look at research engaging with the complex power dynamics of exclusion and inclusion in schools through a critical spatial lens. Finally, in Section 2.5, I overview research findings that engage with TO as a possibility for intervening in the entangled power dynamics and identity production in contemporary classrooms. Section 2.6 concludes this chapter with a summary of the theoretical framework.

2.2   Critical pedagogies

Freire's pedagogy opposes the "banking model of education" (Freire, 1970), which sees students as empty vessels that teachers fill with their incontestable knowledge. Freire calls for a critical pedagogy, or problem-based education, which "strives for the emergence of consciousness and critical intervention in reality" (Freire, 1970, p. 81). Challenging traditional hierarchies within education contexts, critical pedagogy is an educational framework, designed to enable students to critically engage with the world around them to transform it. Their perceptions and experiences form the core of the curriculum.

A critique of the emancipatory approach of a critical pedagogy framework is that "it has developed along a highly abstract and utopian line which does not necessarily sustain the daily workings of the education its supporters' advocate" (Ellsworth 1989, p. 298). Feminist

and post-structuralist critiques (Ellsworth, 1989; hooks, 1994; Lather, 1998; Youdell, 2006) point to the necessity of critical interrogation of Freire's concepts. Yet, "critical interrogation is not the same as dismissal" (hooks, 1994, p. 49). I am interested in the potential of critical pedagogies in the contemporary classrooms of my research, taking such a critical interrogation as my point of departure. Various practices have developed from the ideas of the *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Therefore this thesis refers to them as critical pedagog*ies* to highlight the fact that they are different. Applying critical pedagogies in the research frame implies a critical engagement with their concepts and exploring how they make sense within the context of the research (see Chapter 3).

2.2.1   Key concepts in critical pedagogies

2.2.1.1   Knowledge and the "Banking model of education"

Critical pedagogies initial ideas are built on the critique of what Freire (1970) refers to as a "banking model of education" (Freire, 1970). With this metaphor he describes an education system in which the student is seen as "an empty vessel" (Freire, 1970, p. 79) and the teacher is seen as an agent responsible for filling this empty vessel with *the* knowledge, an unquestionable, universal knowledge, produced by experts. Asserting Freire's, to him still relevant, critique, critical pedagogies scholar Kincheloe (2008) describes how such "transfer of certified knowledge" (p. 4) aims "to train, well-regulated and passive students to accept what is" (p. 4). He criticises the universalist nature of national curricula geared towards high-stakes testing and their "colonial and power related dimensions" (Kincheloe, 2008, p. 6).

Which knowledge is being taught within a universalist curriculum and how, is discussed by a range of thinkers (Apple, 1993, Bernstein, 1990, Gruenewald, 2003 b, etc.). Questioning the criteria of the legitimacy within these choices and who takes them, Apple (1993) goes on to ask, "who is empowered to teach it [universal curriculum], what counts as an appropriated display of having learned it" (p. 222). Apple (1993) draws on Bourdieu's (1984) analysis of cultural capital, and describes curriculum making as a process of cultural form. To Apple, a universal curriculum and its forms of testing perpetuate power dynamics of domination and class: "The granting of sole legitimacy to such a system of culture through its incorporation within the official centralized curriculum, then, creates a

situation in which the markers of taste become the markers of people" (1993, p. 223). Whilst a national curriculum might have been created in the name of equality, its criteria are set according to the values of those in power, against which everyone else is measured.

In contrast, within critical pedagogies, knowledge is seen as "a site of contestation and conflict" (Kincheloe, 2008, p. 10), produced together with the students, "for the social good" (p. 10). Knowledge production within critical pedagogies is seen as "generative", from the "point where the personal lives of students intersect with the larger society and the globalized world" (Kincheloe, 2008, p. 11). It therefore sets out to engage with the diversity of classrooms and their locations. In this way, power dynamics between the classroom and whoever is in charge of setting a universal curriculum (education boards, states, corporations etc.) are challenged. However, power dynamics within the knowledge production within the classroom community itself, and according to whose understanding a "common good" is defined, still need to be explored, as the following points will demonstrate.

2.2.1.2   Learning as a tool for change

As a vision for learning and teaching, critical pedagogies argue for a learning culture of inquiry, where the aim of learning is to critically reflect on the world around oneself with the desire to transform these very surroundings. Core to learning is the students' own experiences and contexts, and a critical examination of their perceptions of their surroundings. Students are engaging with their learning through developing a sense of wanting to take part in shaping their surrounding world.

> Reading the word and learning how to write the word so one can later read it are preceded with learning how to write the world, that is, having the experience of changing the world and touching the world (Freire and Macedo, 2003, p. 356).

The concept of learning as a tool for change marks the potency of Freire's critical pedagogy, yet, reflecting on it critically and echoing Ellsworth's (1989) "why doesn't this feel empowering?", suggests delving into the criteria through which to "read the world" and what is meant by "change" within each given context, to situate the aimed-for change. Following Ellsworth's critique, teachers and researchers alike should consider the diversity

of experiences, cultures, and needs in the classrooms, as well as power relations and their complexity.

2.2.1.3   Conscientization

Learning as a tool for change is envisioned as a transformative, emancipatory act. By understanding the injustice around them and intervening in it, students emancipate themselves. Freire refers to this concept as "conscientizaçao", which he explains as "learning to perceive social, political and economic contradictions, and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality" (Freire, 1970, p. 35).

While the idea of emancipation through learning is what attracts many social justice educators to critical pedagogies (Duncan-Andrade and Morrell, 2008; Giroux, 2016; McLaren, 1988), "conscientizaçao" is also one of the most critiqued concepts of Freire's framework. It can be understood as advocating the assumption that students are not aware of the injustice around them in promoting education as what helps students realise their situation, which is the "central mission of Enlightenment" (Biesta, 1998, p. 500). This suggests a critical engagement with the ontological perception the practice is embedded in. Freire's critical pedagogy has been criticised for its linear and structural perception of reality. Working with indigenous pedagogies in Ecuador, Walsh (2015) compares these to Freire's pedagogical outline and describes their work as "much more than an actional response to and against oppression (…), but also and more importantly of offence, insurgence and (re)existence circumscribed in/by the continuous construction, creation and maintenance of the 'otherwise'" (p. 11). With "otherwise", she refers to a perception of the world and aligned practices which work outside a dialectical frame of *oppressor* and *oppressed*, and which challenges a Euro-centric, Western model of thought (Walsh, 2015). Speaking from a socio-ecological perspective, Bowers (2008) views Freire's critical pedagogy as incorporating "a deep seated ethnocentrism" (p. 325), and Ellsworth (1989) from a feminist, intersectional perspective asks, "What diversity do we silence in the name of 'liberatory' pedagogy?" (p. 299).

These critiques set out important questions for reflecting on the pedagogical aims of the teacher-researcher/practitioner. They point out the importance of remaining open to the possibility that the suggested pedagogical intervention might not be emancipatory for

some of the students, and of listening to the participants' perceptions and needs, beyond the suggested pedagogical framework.

2.2.1.4 Challenging traditional classroom hierarchies

Within critical pedagogies, the first place for critical inquiry and emancipation is the classroom itself. Critical pedagogies seek to challenge unequal power relations between students and teachers by relieving teachers of their status as the holders of unquestionable knowledge. Instead, teachers must continuously learn from their students; Freire, (1970) refers to them as 'teacher-students'. Facilitators have as much to learn from students about their worlds and experiences as students can learn from a curriculum that engages their interests and needs. Teacher-students are responsible for posing problems to generate dialogue. The dialogical framework forms an essential part of knowledge production within critical pedagogies.

> For the dialogical, problem-posing teacher-student, the program content of education is neither a gift nor an imposition—bits of information to be deposited in the students—but rather the organized, systematized, and developed 're-presentation' to individuals of the things about which they want to know more (Freire, 1970, p. 93).

While such an approach to learning and teaching does engage the teacher to listen to their students' needs, there is a danger in seeing all students as one united, oppressed group, making "the assumptions that all members have equal opportunity to speak" (Ellsworth, 1989, p. 314). A binary perception of power fails to see power dynamics within the student community, while it also does not engage with power dynamics between teachers. Ellsworth (1989) calls for reflection on the dialogical structure Freire suggests, saying "there are times when the inequalities must be named and addressed by constructing alternative ground rules for communication" (p. 317). It might make sense to intentionally create spaces for particular groups of people to speak in the classroom, groups who may not get the chance if everyone is on equal footing: students learning in second or third languages, students who are not cis men, students of colour, etc.

2.2.1.5 Diversifying knowledge

A classroom valuing students' perceptions and experiences challenges a traditional understanding of what knowledge is or can be. It is no longer a fixed, external set of facts which are not to be questioned, but it becomes something the students want to create as part of their learning process.

> Authentic education is not carried on by 'A' for 'B' or by 'A' about 'B', but rather by 'A' with "B," mediated by the world—a world which impresses and challenges both parties, giving rise to views or opinions about it (Freire, 1970, p. 93).

The key here is that the learning happens collaboratively between teacher and students, *with* each other, rather than *for* each other, rooted in their socio-historic context. Freire sees value in both the students' experiences and the teacher's. This approach also opens the possibility for the teacher to bring their own experience into the classroom and be transparent about their position. Taking the concept of diversifying knowledge further, hooks (1994) locates experiential knowledge in the body:

> It [passion of experience] is a way of knowing that is often expressed through the body, what it knows, what has been deeply inscribed on it through experience. This complexity of experience can rarely be voiced and named from a distance. It is a privileged location, even as it is not the only or even always the most important location from which one can know (hooks, 1994, p. 91).

By specifying the importance of lived experience, hooks makes room for different experiences students might have and ascribes value to the knowledge of an experience, which other students, as well as other sources of information, might not be able to voice. In that sense, she not only values students' experiential knowledge for their content but also their ways of expression. She might accordingly offer "alternative ground rules for communication" (Ellsworth, 1989, p. 317).

2.2.2 Critical pedagogies in classroom-based research

Having explored different key concepts and critiques of Freire's critical pedagogy, I will now outline different critical pedagogies engaging with the critiques and developing the

practice further. Then I will situate my study by reviewing the work of researchers who have studied critical pedagogies and applied them in classroom-based studies.

Encompassing the temporality of power, hooks (1994) speaks of an engaged pedagogy, which "invites us to always be in the present, to remember that the classroom is never the same" (p. 158). Gruenewald (2003b) outlines a *critical pedagogy of place* that assesses power relations in the localised context in which students and teachers play a concrete role while extending the focus to the non-human world as well. It aims to "pursue the kind of social action that improves the social and ecological life of places" (Gruenewald, 2003b, p. 7). A concreteness in place enables a consideration of the trajectories of power situated across and towards that particular place and thereby offers a more complex understanding of power. TO (Boal, 1985) sees theatre as a rehearsal for change and uses the creative spaces of theatre to explore the complexities of power. A reflection on emancipation is actively facilitated within the aesthetic spaces, bringing together the audience's diverse perceptions and the performers' intentions (see Section 2.5).

In their research on participatory and critical pedagogies-based theatre methods in drama classrooms, Gallagher and Riviere (2004) describe encountering limits to critical, participatory pedagogies: "Just how inclusive can 'inclusive pedagogy' be? Are there stringent internal peer codes that cannot be broken? Are some roles of 'outsider status' more powerful than others?" (p. 137). Although the teacher is giving the learning space over to the students, who share their own views and experiences, underlying complex power dynamics among the students make this space a difficult one for some students to participate in. As part of her methodology, Gallagher (2007) takes part "in fictional performances with students. This seemed, instinctually to me, to be the best place to begin a conversation with them about change" (p. 56). By moving the conversation into the fictional space of the theatre, different possibilities of engaging with each other emerge. As a researcher, she remains aware of the complexity of "giving voice", and instead emphasises the researcher's work as "listening to the plural voices of those normally Othered, and hearing them as constructors, agents, and disseminators of knowledge" (Gallagher, 2007, p. 8 with reference to Spivak, 1988). She considers participants' voices as sources of knowledge, as does Freire's critical pedagogy, yet she acknowledges the role of the researcher in this exchange as the listener, rather than the enabler.

Exploring the possibilities of engaging students in their science lessons through critical, place-based pedagogies, Schindel Dimick (2016) notes that through the focus on place, students explore their situatedness in their social as well as ecological environment and "develop intimate and interconnected relationships with nature and with the humans and non-humans who co-inhabit places" (p. 830). Science lessons can become an opportunity for an inclusive approach, which not only engages students but in which the curriculum engages with local issues. For such an approach to work in a diverse classroom of urban young people, it "requires that researchers question what it means for historically non-dominant youth to learn within place" (Schindel Dimick, 2016, p. 818). Researchers, as well as teachers, should learn from students about their realities. Nevertheless, learning still takes place within a Euro-centric, Western ontological understanding of place and its context which "expresses a duality that refers not only to place as a physical geographic space but also to the underlying conceptual principles, philosophies, and ontologies of that space" (Styres, 2019, p. 27). In her findings, Schindel Dimick notes a discrepancy between critical place-based pedagogies' aims of engaging not only with the present, but also with the historical-political context the place is situated in, and its practice within the school's view of the local neighbourhood: "In formal schooling practice, CPP's [critical pedagogy of place] goals of critical consciousness and decolonization appear to be in tension" (Schindel Dimick, 2016, p. 832). Cultural perceptions of place hugely differ based on people's historic political past. Even if critical pedagogies of place aim to engage with this past, the practice is embedded in a colonial discourse (Tuck and McKenzie, 2015) which practitioners might need to reflectively engage with.

Engaging with Freire's binary concept of *oppressor* and *oppressed*, Kitching (2011) explores Freire's problem-posing pedagogy by merging it with Butler's concept of "troubling" or deconstructing identities (Butler, 1990). With his approach he aims to "trouble" the fixed identities of the oppressor and the oppressed, suggesting making identification the focus:

> It is highly necessary that a critical pedagogy would provide a space for troubling and taking risks with subjectivity as curriculum, and to expect that 'professional' teachers and 'good' students might have to risk changing subjective location as part of this mutual, transformative process (Kitching, 2011, p. 116).

Kitching discusses the idea of troubling or deconstructing classroom identities collectively. He includes the role of the teacher as well as the role constituting a *good* student, for those whose identities are marginalised "to 'take risks' in order to challenge the material

and cultural conditions that constantly put them at 'risk'" (Kitching, 2011, p. 113). Kitching is attempting to draw on critical pedagogies' learning for change with a post-structuralist understanding of power. Designing a curriculum focused on the deconstruction of power relations and identities, he is aiming to support an emancipatory experience in the classroom. He shifts the focus to the deconstruction of the identities in power in the classroom, such as the teacher and the *good* student. Yet he acknowledges a teacher "might never entirely own or let go of an educator's identity, as 'being critical' means, to reiterate, seeing intersubjectivity as the grounds for our responsibility towards the circumstances of (student) Others (Butler, 2005)" (Kitching, 2011, p. 116). The role of the teacher, and by extension that of the researcher, as critical pedagogue is complex, as the student's desire to change the situation of injustice is integral to practising critical pedagogies. Yet often the teacher or researcher is experiencing this situation as an outsider to the student's community.

In discussing critical pedagogies situated in students' contexts, this research engages with the changes and critiques of Freire's (1970) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* outlined above. In studying school- and location-specific critical pedagogies, this study engages with the complexity of understanding place. For this purpose, it draws on a critical spatial lens, which is explored in Section 2.4. It explores TO in its potential to construct "alternative ground rules for communication" (Ellsworth, 1989, p. 317, see Section 3.2), and its potential to engage with different constructed identities (see Section 2.5). Primarily, it investigates critical pedagogies as practices for shaping more inclusive classrooms in the context of high exclusion rates, which the next section will outline.

2.3   Inclusion

The discussion of inclusion within the educational practice refers to a broad range of perspectives such as "inclusion as concerned with disability and special educational needs" to "inclusion as Education for All as per the international movement coordinated by UNESCO" (Nind, 2014, p. 527). As I am concerned with the wider processes of marginalisation within schooling, I see "inclusion as about all groups vulnerable to exclusion" (Nind, 2014, p. 527). This is in light of high exclusion rates in England (Timpson et al., 2019) and a segregating school system in Catalonia (Bonal et al., 2021). I consider

school segregation as part of the patterns of school exclusion, in the sense that both are marginalising certain students, and harming their education. I look at how critical pedagogical practices facilitate more inclusive classrooms in the context of current European secondary education.

Critical pedagogies intend to reach out to marginalised groups. Therefore, in this section, I begin by looking at the education structures or processes which define 'normative' behaviour and then look at exclusion in its narrow definition as the ultimate sanction. I will then overview understandings of inclusive practices that respond to these issues, to find a working framework for inclusive practice for this research.

2.3.1   Marginalised learner identities

To explore inclusive practices for "all groups vulnerable to exclusion" (Nind, 2014, p. 527), it is important to understand how daily practices marginalise certain students. The official sanction of exclusion from education is only one part of being excluded from accessing education. Ranging from school culture to classroom practice, a variety of practices can lead to a student feeling excluded from the learning. Referring to different studies on school exclusions, Tarabini et al. (2018) define educational exclusion as "the inability to fruitfully participate in the daily life of the classroom and to reach learning objectives that prevent the reproduction of inequalities in educational terms" (p. 3). With this in mind, I am exploring practices and cultures of exclusion and marginalisation, including, but going beyond the official sanctioned exclusion.

Researching practices of school exclusions, Thomson (2007) argues that students who are candidates for school exclusions as a sanction are "highly visible in the school in both their presence, and in their absence" (p. 115), for lack of attendance and failure to comply to strict behaviour norms. These students are referred to as "bad students" and "are often described as psychologically damaged and deficient, unable or unwilling because of their class/race/locality to conform to the requirements of the school" (Thomson, 2007, p. 117). These values echo policies such as the 2016 *UK White Paper*, which highlights the importance of character traits such as "being resilient and knowing how to persevere, how to bounce back if faced with failure" (Department for Education, 2016, p. 94). This assigns the blame for failure to the students' behaviour and capability to be part of the school and

its learning culture, in line with neoliberal values of individualism. Those who struggle in a competitive environment are forced to bear the burden of its inequity. The neoliberal school is set up to benefit business (or the school's ranking in the league table), not students (Ball, 2012b). So students have to fend for themselves to get the education they want or the education they need to end up gainfully employed in the service of capital, which they will need to meet their basic material needs (see Section 2.3.2). This means instead of looking for wider, systemic changes or solutions, it is down to the individual to learn to deal proactively with these burdens and "bounce back".

The Timpson Review of school exclusion (2019) concludes that: "Children with some types of SEN, boys, those who have been supported by social care or are disadvantaged are all consistently more likely to be excluded from school than those without these characteristics" (p. 9). It goes on to state that exclusion also varies in terms of ethnicity, with "Black Caribbean and Mixed White and Black Caribbean pupils" (p. 10) affected proportionally higher (see Section 2.3.3). "The identity of the excluded group is fundamental to their exclusion", which "suggests that these are social processes" (Youdell, 2006, p. 13). As a way of exploring the enduring situation of institutional racism in English schools and the "failings" of young black males, Youdell (2003) traces how a perception of different student identities within a dominant education discourse sees students of specific minority backgrounds as unteachable, as their identity becomes associated with being anti-school.

> Of particular significance are the ways in which discursively embedded relationships between biographical or sub-cultural identities and learner identities trap students within particular learner identities which seem almost impossible to escape. Specifically, African-Caribbean sub-cultural identities are deployed within organisational discourse as evidence of (to constitute) undesirable learners (Youdell, 2003, p. 32).

Any show of non-conformity can be read as proof of their unteachability, and at times the simple expression of their identity is already associated with that.

According to research in Barcelona consulting young people who have either left mainstream school early or are partially attending alternative provisions, students "consider official educational institutions to be based on specific patterns and norms very distant from their own cultural and social environments and frames of reference" (Tarabini et al., 2018, p. 10). In referring to Foucault's Discipline and Punishment (1979), Tarabini et

al. describe that students who are different from the norm established within school culture feel *Othered*.

> 'Normalisation' indeed is one of the most important techniques of power in contemporary societies (Foucault 1979). It imposes homogeneity among people through constant pressure to conform [to] the same model and, at the same time, it classifies individuals according to their distance to [sic] the 'normal model' (Tarabini et al., 2018, p. 4).

Within the normative discourse at school, anyone different from the established norm at school is expected to conform to fit in. Failure to do so is valued negatively within this discourse or seen as constituting a deficit. Similarly, students with a *non-normative* learning behaviour, often based on their neurodivergence or a specific learning need, are also viewed with a deficit discourse that labels them as difficult to teach. In contrast, a social model of disability (Oliver, 1997) would question the structure of the lesson and its content, rather than the students, for the lack of compatibility. Nind and Lewthwaite (2018, citing Comber and Kamler, 2004, p. 295), argue that "disrupting deficit discourses requires serious intellectual engagement by [school] teachers over an extended period of time in ways that foster teacher agency and respect without celebrating the status quo" (Nind and Lewthwaite, 2018, p. 79).

2.3.2   Policy

In England, policy discourse sets clear markers towards student attainment via "a standardisation of knowledge (…) and audit", making "the continuous production of data available for scrutiny" (Thomson et al., 2010, p. 644). At the same time, Thomson (2007) describes a tension between "performance, popularity, and official approval" and "catering [to] a diverse group of students" (p. 111). The Department for Education expects schools to provide *inclusive* lessons, yet schools face pressure to perform in terms of test results and pupil attendance. This coerces teachers to perform their inclusivity according to the demands of policy, rather than allowing space "to always be in the present, to remember that the classroom is never the same" (hooks 1994, p. 158). Research from school observations suggests key factors are: "accountability systems and curricular demands undermining inclusive practice" (Cole et al., 2019, p. 380).

Accountability is what Biesta (2004) refers to as a "slippery rhetorical term" (p. 234, citing Charlton, 1999). There are two meanings of accountability, "a technical-managerial meaning and a looser, more general meaning", whereby "the rhetoric of accountability operates precisely on the basis of a 'quick switch' between the two meanings" (Biesta, 2004, p. 234). Education policy is focussing on an approach to accountability which aims to measure learning taking place in the classroom, and how it is provided for all, versus a sense of accountability which engages with each situation as specific.

Policies such as the UNESCO *World Declaration on Education for All*, aim at ensuring equal opportunities for all students to progress. Yet, researchers argue that "there is a tension between discourses of providing for all and meeting individuals' needs" (Nind, 2005, p. 274). At the same time, the "targeting of particular groups in society for 'equal opportunities'" (Armstrong, F. et al., 2016, p. 7) often marginalises certain students against a perceived norm, by singling out their difference and fixing their identities to that perceived difference, rather than seeing all students as different and together in their difference.

Whilst many of the issues in Catalonia are representative of all of Spain, its special federal status implies autonomy in education policies (Collet-Sabé, 2017), and therefore this thesis will only focus on Catalonia. In Catalonia, researchers cite a lack of state intervention as a reason for segregation and exclusion (Bonal, 2012). By deciding not to intervene in parents' school choice, or not providing adequate information for newly arrived migrants about their rights to school choice, the state reinforces a status quo that puts those newly arrived at a disadvantage. Bonal (2012) argues, "The politics of non-decision-making would consist then of the capacity of excluding from the agenda those options not aligned with the dominant values" (p. 5). At the same time, the neoliberalisation of the education system in the last decade saw more autonomy given to head teachers to make changes in their schools, which before was a collaborative form of decision-making between staff and local authority. Collet-Sabé (2017) suggests that "autonomisation – responsibilisation, assessment, marketization, benchmarking and so forth in education are (...) key government technologies that allows them to govern at a distance (…) and to produce (…) new subject positions" (p. 3). He contextualises the new form of leadership as part of global school evaluation trends (Collet-Sabé, 2017), which measure schools' innovation on a standardised, universal scale. In the universal competition for innovation, inclusion is often disregarded and, in some cases, innovation is "entering into competition

with, and producing new barriers to, inclusion" (Baena et al., 2020, p. 9). School choice and the trend for innovation have contributed to segregating schools in Catalonia as 'innovative' schools become more sought after. Those who cannot navigate the school choice system are excluded from schools considered innovative at the same time as innovation tends to make these schools non-inclusive spaces.

2.3.3   Patterns of exclusion

In England, there has been an increase in school exclusions over the past years, with numbers of permanent exclusions going up by almost 40% between 2012 and 2017 (Department for Education, 2018). In secondary schools, the rate of exclusions for the school year 2018-19 was 0.2, which consists of 20 pupils per 10,000 (Department for Education, 2020a). According to the Timpson report, "78% of permanent exclusions issued were to pupils who either had SEN, were classified as in need or were eligible for free school meals" (Timpson et al., 2019, p. 10). Students, in particular boys from Roma and travellers' communities as well as black Caribbean boys, were excluded at higher rates (Department for Education, 2018).

One of the main reasons given for school exclusions is "persistent disruptive behaviour" (Department for Education, 2018, table 4). This might suggest that students from some minority backgrounds or with complex learning needs are disengaged in lessons, or at least show non-conforming behaviour. Students might be disengaged for various reasons spanning from classroom issues and structural issues to issues beyond the school. However, as the Timpson Review concludes, the English education system is progressively failing and marginalising a specific part of its student population (Timpson et al., 2019).

In Catalonia, research shows segregated education as a serious phenomenon (Bonal, 2012; Fernández-Mellizo and Martínez-García, 2017). There, a younger public school system competes against a vast private school system inherited from the Franco era, ranging from church schools to international schools. Those struggling in mainstream education attend alternative provisions or "second chance schools" (Tarabini et al., 2018). These can either be separate schools for students over 16 or designated classes within mainstream schools. Students attending these schools are largely from "dominated groups

in terms of gender, ethnic, and social status" (Tarabini et al., 2018, p. 3). Catalonia has seen a rise in arrivals of new migrants over the past two decades. They are often put into separate "welcome" classes for migrants for an unspecific period, which "means they are not formally attending school and thus delays their school socialisation (and their right to have a school place) in education institutions" (Bonal, 2012, p. 17). Through practices of defunding or "non-interventions" (Bonal, 2012) on the side of the government, newly arriving students are often put together in a separate school, or a separate class, and are in that way segregated from mainstream learning. Specifically looking at the Catalan case, Bonal (2012) argues that data show "the Department of Education has not only failed to develop an agenda to tackle school segregation but has explicitly disregarded the possibilities of improving the regulatory framework for combating this segregation" (p. 2). In Spain, around 20% of students do not receive their compulsory diplomas (Fernández-Mellizo and Martínez-García, 2017, p. 267), either because they fail or drop out; the proportion of students who leave school early is double the European average (Tarabini, 2015). Research looking at the cycle of school absenteeism to school failure to early school leaving "has stressed how these phenomena are institutionally and socially produced, thus going beyond mere individual responsibilities, capabilities or 'choices'" (Tarabini et al., 2018, referring to Perrenoud,1990).

In this context this research explores how interventions or different approaches make classrooms more inclusive spaces for learning, aiming to prevent school exclusions and segregation and reflects on what would be considered a more inclusive classroom. Keeping in mind that inclusion and exclusion "are not uniform categories" (Armstrong, F. et al., 2016, p. 1), but that they are embedded in their contexts, this research considers it valuable to explore different locations to gain a wider perspective on the issues.

2.3.4   Inclusive practice

The fundamental unresolved question remains: how to provide a learning environment open to and engaging for all different identities that might be part of it. Much literature on inclusive practice suggests that classroom practice is a crucial factor in creating more inclusive learning spaces (Nind, 2005; Tarabini et al., 2018) and stresses the importance of "how teachers make meaning of the concept of inclusion in their practice" (Florian and Black-Hawkins, 2011, p. 813).

There is a role for teachers in supporting all learners in a classroom, and in avoiding the perpetuation of the marginalisation of those from minority backgrounds or those with learning needs. Florian and Black Hawkins (2011) refer to this as "extending what is generally available to everybody, as opposed to providing for all by differentiating for some" (p. 813). Rather than thinking only of specific individuals, the general learning set-up sees *every* student as an individual and provides a format in which each of these individuals can work on their own terms. This "avoids the marginalisation that can occur with differentiation strategies that are designed only with individual needs in mind" (Florian and Beaton, 2018, p. 870). Florian and Black Hawkins (2011) describe an inclusive classroom as one offering "rich learning opportunities that are sufficiently made available for everyone so that all learners are able to participate in classroom life" (p. 826).

Teachers' knowledge of their students as well as of their practice becomes key in finding a common framework in which all students can participate in their way, while knowing how to intervene individually when students encounter barriers to learning, without marginalising some. Seeing the teacher as central in this approach to inclusion emphasizes pedagogy. Different writers (Nind and Lewthwaite, 2018; Florian and Black-Hawkins, 2011) refer to Alexander's definition of pedagogy as "the act of teaching together with its attendant discourse" (Alexander, 2009, p. 11). In that sense, pedagogy describes not just the teacher's practice but also, their way of viewing the world and the way that perception plays out in the context of the classroom.

> The transformation of education into inclusive education requires reflection and action on social justice, beliefs about the learning potential of everybody, theories of good teaching and learning and a reconceptualisation of the curriculum and learning support (Nind, 2005, p. 274).

This inclusive approach requires continuous effort. The practitioner must critically reflect and actively counter students' self-perceptions of deficits as well as their own perception of students as having deficits. They must challenge and reimagine the curriculum and the way it is delivered. This requires rethinking norms to "understand learners' intersectional identities, aspire to include every one of their learners, or to make their practice culturally responsive" (Nind and Lewthwaite, 2018, p. 76). Constructing "alternative ground rules for communication" (Ellsworth, 1989, p. 317) also means ensuring learning spaces open to a variety of experiences and perceptions. hooks (1994) describes this process as a strategic one, as a diversity of voices challenging dominant views of norms: "Coming to voice is not

just the act of telling one's experience. It is using that telling strategically – to come to voice so that you can also speak freely about other subjects" (p. 148).

All this suggests that changes to policy and school culture are needed to make education inclusive, yet the learning experience within the classroom is key. This leaves the teacher as a potent actor to make a difference towards a student's sense of marginalisation, despite having to struggle with structures that marginalise. Hence, and believing that change needs to start from within practice, this research looks at critical pedagogies as pedagogical interventions in the classroom with the intention to make a valuable contribution to discussing inclusive practices in secondary schools. "The language of exclusion is, by and large, spatial; who's in, who's out, at the heart, on the margins" (Gulson and Symes, 2007, p. 99). Hence, the next section intends to disentangle some of the complex power relations and explore possibilities for interventions by exploring the social production of classroom spaces through a critical spatial lens.

2.4   Space as a critical lens

Over the past decade or more, critical research and theorising on education has been engaging with spatial theories (Bright et al., 2013; Gulson and Symes, 2007; Kitchens, 2009; Youdell and Armstrong, F., 2011; etc.). Scholars have scrutinised the built environment of schools and the geometries of power these suggest (for example Gallagher and Fusco, 2006). They have also studied the space of knowledge production and valorisation constructed in schools, and the impact these may have on producing different learner identities (Armstrong, F., 2007; Thomson, 2007)

> [T]he critical literature could benefit a great deal from the application of a spatial analytic framework to examine the mental space of school knowledge, the social spaces school knowledge makes possible (and impossible) and the relationship of these spaces to the actual physical space of the school (see Bernstein, 1977) (Ferrare and Apple, 2010, p. 216).

This research explores how critical pedagogies as interventions in the mainstream classroom shape and shift the spaces for learning produced therein. Hence, it is looking specifically at the production of social spaces (Massey, 1994) and the possibility of

intervention through a critical spatial view (Lefebvre and Nicholson-Smith, 1991). The following will give a brief overview of critical spatial theories and explore how these have been applied in classroom-based research. It then situates this study in the literature by looking at research working with the concept of the critical spatial as a practice of change in schools.

2.4.1   Social production of space and place

Within the field of critical geography, space is viewed as produced through social interactions, not as a static, empty container (Lefebvre and Nicholson-Smith, 1991). Space is an active concept, which is continuously shaped through interactions between living beings, and between living beings and objects. At the heart of any interaction are power dynamics. Therefore, the critical spatial view explores those shifting power dynamics. Massey describes "space as constituted out of social relations, that the spatial is social relations, 'stretched out'" (Massey, 1994, p. 2). Space regarded is not regarded as a disconnected entity, but its fluidity is shaped by the different spatial connections and references its actors bring to it. Massey draws attention to the concept of space-time, whereby each space exists in relation to other spaces at the same time. "As such, spaces are dynamic, overlapping and changing, in a shifting geometry of power" (Massey, 1994, p. 16).

Alongside the perception of space as socially produced, the notion of place is equally seen as something socially and culturally constructed. To Massey (1994), place is "a particular articulation of … networks of social relations and understandings" (p. 2). Place is a location of special individual or human significance, sense of belonging or attachment (Tuan, 1977), it describes a specific location or rootedness (Tuck and McKenzie, 2015). Importantly however, places can be perceived in various ways. The concept *place* can be described as "a way of seeing, knowing and understanding the world" (Cresswell, 2004, p. 136), which relates to one's personal, but also socio-historic experiences of relating to a place, and through which constellation one engages with that place. "The identities of place are always unfixed, contested and multiple" (Massey, 1994, p. 5).

The specificity of place is produced through the ways a place is engaged with over time. Place can be understood as "both influencing social practices as well as being performed

and (re)shaped through practices and movements of individuals and collectives" (Tuck and McKenzie, 2015, p. 19). In that sense, practices shape or make places, while places influence possibilities of practices in return. Critically engaging with the idea of the sovereignty of a place, Tuck and McKenzie (2015) argue the defining of places is problematic, considering "the ways in which factors such as gender, racialization, nationality, or access to financial or technological resources affects people's access to, mobility across, and experiences of place" (p. 8). How places are shaped or made, influences the participation in these places. It impacts on how places are perceived, and what forms of participation by whom is possible, or in other words, who feels *in* or *out of place*. Discussing ways of inhabiting places, Ahmed (2012) argues "institutions can generate an idea of appropriate conduct … as a way of keeping certain bodies in place" (p. 38). Reflecting on challenging such norms of a place or its access, Ahmed mobilises the concept of "space invaders" (Puwar, 2004 in Ahmed, 2012) to discuss the politics of othering through a spatial metaphor.

Exploring classrooms as places, implies exploring the practices which shape them and how they, in turn shape the practices possible within them, who practices them and how, and "what it might mean to materialize pedagogical forces in and through places of learning … to implicate bodies in thought and learning" (Ellsworth, 2005, p. 17). Promoting the idea that understanding is created "not individually, but spatially", Nicholson (2011, p. 9) draws on Ellsworth's (2005) idea of learning through a "complex moving web of interrelationalities" (Ellsworth, 2005, p. 24, cited in Nicholson 2011, p. 9), emphasising the "centrality of place and embodiment" (Nicholson, 2011, p.9), and the social aspect of learning, and as the meaning of place, it implies that knowledge is not fixed. Looking at place from the perspective of the performative, Nicholson (2014) argues that "places have an affective power that is, itself, often pedagogical" (p. 60). At the same time, pedagogical practices can re-enforce or intervene in institutional practices that make or shape a learning place (Nind et al., 2016).

2.4.2 Disentangling different experiences of the classroom through a critical spatial lens

Contemporary European inner-city classrooms are complex social spaces. They are marked by trajectories of migration and economic and social disparities. Especially central

cities like London and Barcelona could be described as, what Kraftl et al. (2019) refer to as *hyper-diverse,* "as a way of scrutinising how cities are not only diverse in ethnic, demographic and socio-economic terms, but in terms of the attitudes, lifestyles, behaviours and materialities that cut across more traditional identity categories (p. 1191). Applied to a classroom, each individual brings their hyper-diversity to the room, in terms of perceptions and experiences, but also through trajectories to or from other spaces and places. Yet, as explored above, these different experiences and types of knowledge are valorised differently and are entangled in a mesh of different discourses within the classroom.

The identities members of classroom communities acquire within this complex geometry of power and valorisation shape the ways they navigate the school. The schools' value systems are manifested in their behaviour policy, curriculum choices, and merit culture as well as access arrangements, seating plan policies, the layout of tables and chairs, but also posters on the wall embodying the schools' policies. Those who behave differently or 'badly' are reprimanded or excluded. Those who are 'less able' to follow the dominant mode for learning and achieving are moved into different classes, through for instance tiered systems and specifically designated rooms such as separate 'inclusion units' or support centres. These students "are separated from their conforming peers so that they do not pollute learning time-space" (Thomson, 2007, p. 117). Spatial segregation is thus formed.

The school community further extends these practices, merging them with the students' own value systems and norms (Youdell, 2003). On the playground, students include and exclude each other according to different principles of valorisation. Different spaces are marked for different user groups, and often strongly policed by students.

Massey's concepts of space as a "sphere of a multiplicity of trajectories" (Massey, 2005, p. 119), and the spatial as "social relations, 'stretched out'" (Massey, 1994, p. 2), offer entry points to disentangle the various discourses that shape a classroom, which in themselves produce different identities among its community. Different members of a classroom community — students, staff, visitors, and the relations outside the classrooms they are embedded in — can be explored through the spatial lens to reflect on the spaces their interactions produce. Furthermore, material objects such as tables, whiteboards, and

chairs and their spatial arrangements, as well as posters on the walls and other items play important roles in producing spaces for learning.

Applying a critical spatial lens in research, Youdell and Armstrong, F. (2011), explore how discourses and subjectivities are constituted and challenged in different learning spaces within secondary schools. Following a school class moving through different spaces as part of their learning day, inside and outside the school walls as they go on a class trip, they observe how different identities or subjectivities are produced and "how these subjectivations are resisted, ruptured and exceeded" (p. 146).

> An exploration of space (...) illuminates the ways that subjects and their identifications are created and challenged, and individuals and groups are given particular kinds of recognition and status, through the organization of spaces and the creation of places for particular purposes (Youdell and Armstrong, F., 2011, p. 145).

By tracing the different interactions within the classroom community in the different spaces they pass through in their school day, the researchers can identify shifting power dynamics that become possible within the different spaces. The students inhabit different spaces differently, in particular during the school trip, as the change of the usual learning space enables for different configurations among the students, and between teacher and students. The spatial lens enables the researchers to reflect on these changes.

2.4.3   Critical spatial lens as a practice of change

Scholars exploring social justice in education from a critical spatial view draw on Lefebvre's (Lefebvre and Nicholson-Smith, 1991) conception of the trialectics of space/time (Thomson, 2007; Armstrong, F., 2007; Kitchens, 2009) where he sees three dimensions to spatial relations. This research focuses on what Lefebvre refers to as "representational" or "lived"' space, also referred to as "third space" (Soja and Chouinard, 1999): "space as directly lived through its associated images and symbols, and hence the space of 'inhabitants' and 'users'" (Lefebvre and Nicholson-Smith, 1991, p. 39). Within this concept, "representational space", or "anOther space" offers a possibility of "an alternative, differently constituted, social space, constructed out of ideas about being and becoming" (Robertson, 2009, p. 24), a shift of everyday practices, enabled by a change in imaginaries about that specific space. Whilst this usually exists in "fleeting and liminal forms"

(Thomson et al., 2010, p. 642) made material, this is then referred to as creating "counter public space" (Thomson, 2007, citing Fraser, 1993, 1995).

In her research, Thomson (2007) explores the practice of shaping "counter-public spaces" within schooling, "which begin to trouble the power-saturated and inequitable practices of schooling. Such options offer possibilities for young people to experience, through changed spatial relations, new opportunities for building identity and agency" (p. 126). She traces different practices within the school day-to-day, which support young people often identified by the school as failing to change their subjectivation by carving out a counter space in which they can engage differently. Thomson et al. (2010) observe moments for instance where, through conversations with their peers, such labelled students "could form meaningful relationships and talk about things that mattered to them" (p. 653). In a different study, Thomson (2007) observes how a group of students can change their interaction within the school by joining a new student group that works on environmental issues in their neighbourhood, which allowed these students to be "officially recognized" for their "significant contribution to the school" (p. 125). The environmental group becomes a counter public space for those students. Engaging with the school through the function of the group counters the narrative of the students.

Research with children and young people suggests that belonging, for them, is not necessarily bound to a geographical place, but is strongly linked to social relations (Morrow, 2011). This impacts on how conducive they perceive a place to be for them to feel a part of it. Exploring participatory theatre spaces with young people, Hunter (2008) discusses how to cultivate 'safe spaces', or spaces of transformative "ever-becoming and messy negotiations" (p. 16), which through their safety foster creativity and openness enable changed engagements and relationships with places (see Section 2.5). Applied to the example of the environmental club (Thomson, 2007) mentioned above, acting from within *their* space, a space students felt they belonged to/ belonged to them, a safe space (Hunter, 2008) in this sense, fostered the students' shift in their engagement with the school.

Discussing a critical pedagogy of place (Gruenewald, 2003b) values students' experiences and situatedness as the key nodes of knowledge production. This shifts the spatial interaction — the students' homes and communities become the learning focus — and the imaginary of the spatial: they are seen as something worth learning from. Thereby this

may offer an opportunity for the reconfiguration and valorisation of the students in their situated learning context. When exploring their homes and communities, the students themselves are the experts in how to navigate that space for learning, and it is their understanding that becomes the interest of the study. Gruenewald (2003a, referring to hooks, 1984), argues that looking at power relations spatially — the relation between centre and margin — describes the margin as a specific standpoint and hence shows a place of agency from within marginality: "The margin (...) is both a metaphorical and a material space from which relationships of oppression might be reimagined and reshaped" (Gruenewald, 2003a, p. 631). The students' perception and knowledge of their neighbourhood become a focus of the learning, which values their standpoint of knowledge. Thomson (2007) suggests "that concentrating on and deconstructing these everyday temporal-spatial relations can provide some options for modest change" (p. 126).

In researching the production of such "counter-public spaces" in the classroom, this research explores possible changes in the subjectivation of learner identities. The critical spatial lens intends to foster observations of "what sorts of subjects (...) are recognizable in these spaces, what can these subjects do and can these subjectivations be escaped?" (Youdell and Armstrong, F., 2011, p. 146).

The next section explores TO as a possible method to engage with spatial relations and provoke changes in them, in service of exploring critical pedagogies and inclusive practices in the classroom.

2.5   Theatre of the Oppressed

This section discusses key ideas of TO, a participatory and interactive theatre method applying critical pedagogies. As a critical pedagogy, TO uses theatre as a tool for change. The following outlines its key elements, focussing on how TO engages with power and how participants play with their subjectivations through the creative process. It explores what potentials for set learner identities can arise through TO in a classroom setting. Further, it looks at the notion of creative *space* within the method, bringing together the different elements of this research. Finally, this section reviews research working with TO

with a post-structural understanding of power and a critical spatial lens to make the case for its usefulness in this research.

2.5.1   Theatre as a critical inquiry

Boal, the founder of TO, speaks of theatre as a moment of conscious self-observation: "Theatre is born when the human being discovers that it can observe itself; when it discovers that, in this act of seeing, it can see *itself* – see itself *in situ*: see itself seeing" (Boal, 1995, p. 13).

Within the creative space of theatre, participants — in Boal's theatre, this includes both actors and spectators — explore themselves and at the same time reflect on that very act of self-exploration. To a large extent, this is true for all theatre, seen as a way of representing life. But this is particularly important in Boal's political theatre, which borrows from Freire's ideas of critical inquiry, transformation, and emancipation. Through the theatre, participants explore power and situations of injustice they have experienced, and through it, they rehearse ways to change these situations and challenge power. By enacting self-exploration, opportunities for change become possible. Madison and Hamera (2006) describe theatre, or performance, not only as a form of reflection on life but also as a means of making and affecting culture. They suggest that: "performance has evolved into ways of comprehending how human beings fundamentally make culture, affect power, and reinvent their ways of being in the world" (Madison and Hamera, 2006, p. xii). This approach can be understood as coming from a post-structural perspective, which sees reality as constructed through discourse and power as productive (Foucault, 1982). In Freire's approach, reality and oppressive elements within it are seen as fixed, structural given injustices. While the Boalian system itself views power structurally, put in practice, the notions of power usually blur. Within the practice of TO, identities are played with and interchanged. Power dynamics shift in turn (see next sections).

2.5.2   Performativity

From a post-structural perspective, all actions and interactions are performative. Scholars who understand power as enacted through discourse see our behaviour and interactions as performances through which we identify ourselves. We move, act, or engage in a

certain manner because within our social contexts a specific behaviour is expected and recognised for what it means to be a "girl", "boy", "student", "teacher", etc. Butler (1996) calls this "citationality", an established understanding of which habits signify a specific named identity: "it is in this sense that the bodily *habitus* constitutes a tacit form of performativity, a citational chain lived and believed at the level of the body" (Butler, 1996, p. 155). To be recognised, we have internalised a specific performance of our identity. On this basis, culture is understood as performative, and as such produced to be recognised.

At the same time, identities are recognised in different ways within different discourses. Youdell's (2003) research describing the production of unteachable learner identities draws on precisely this argument put forward by Butler (1996). In her research, Youdell observes the performance associated with African-Caribbean identities is valued differently within different discourses. Unlike the institutions, within young people's subculture elements of African-Caribbean culture represents highly valued identity markers. Certain ways of inhabiting the body, ways of speaking or moving, are associated with an identity read as an African-Caribbean subculture. Perhaps this performance's popularity within the youth subculture is perceived as a threat to teachers' dominance, and hence identity markers of an African-Caribbean subculture are rendered as an identity of an impossible learner. "While this does not mean they must be anti-school, the historicity embedded in the discourses through which these identities are constituted forecloses the viability of the simultaneity of Black subcultural status and pro-school" (Youdell, 2003, p. 17). Again, being marked with negative learner identities marginalises certain students within learning contexts. Lessons are aimed at those seen as *good* students, whereas *bad* students struggle to fit into set norms (see Section 2.3).

Within a neoliberal education system, performativity is seen as an audit technology (see Section 1.1, Ball, 2016), which for example, requires teachers to make "ourselves accountable, reporting on what we do rather than doing it" (Ball, 2012c, p. 19). Here a certain performance of the teacher is required by the school as an institution, and part of their practice is to demonstrate and report their performance. In research with a group of teachers, Ball and Olmedo (2013) describe this mechanism as "the practices of performativity that impact upon the ways in which they [teachers] (…) are *able to be* [original emphasis] in their classrooms and their schools (p. 88). To be recognised by their school as (good) teachers, staff have to practice certain performativity. "The rationality of

performativity is presented as the new common sense, as something logical and desirable" (Ball and Olmedo, 2013, p. 89).

The desire to be recognised within a certain discourse shapes the way we perform our identity, and we become recognised by what we do. Ball and Olmedo (2013) draw on Foucault's (1982) notion of the subject as "subjection 'to someone else by control or dependence'" and "the self-configuration of an identity" (p. 87). Through this, they explain "subjectivity as processes of becoming that focus on what we do rather than on what we are" (Ball and Olmedo, 2013, p. 87). By changing what we do, then, we can change how we are recognised.

2.5.3   Theatre for change

Seeing culture and identity production as performative opens a range of possibilities to engage with. If people produce their cultures or identities through performance, it might be possible to shift their meanings by changing the performance. It may be possible to challenge a way of behaving that is assigned to a certain identity by changing the ways we act as such.

> This emphasis on performativity as repetition or citationality is useful in understanding how identity categories are not inherent or biologically determined, but how they are socially determined by cultural norms of demarcation. This is an important insight because it opens the possibility for alternative performativities and alternative ways of being (Madison and Hamera, 2006, p. xviii).

Theatre, as a conscious reflection and observation of ourselves, can offer a moment to become aware of the habits we may have internalised and it makes space to propose alternative performances of identities. Madison and Hamera (2006) make a distinction between day-to-day performance, or performativity, and theatre, or staged performance, which they refer to as "cultural performance". In this they see the possibility to engage consciously with the possibilities of questioning or changing discourse: "They are re-presented, re-located and re-materialized for the possibility of a substantial re-consideration and re-examination" (Madison and Hamera, 2006, p. xix).

Following Freire's idea of learning as taking action to change the world, Boal (1995) uses theatre as a *rehearsal for change*. In TO, specific situations of injustice are performed to

an audience of people who can identify with that injustice. They are then re-performed together with the audience's input, exploring alternative ways of engaging, interacting, and acting. Actors and spectators, who are referred to as *spectactors*, replay the performance and try out different interventions, aiming to solve the issue or change the power dynamics within the story. The issue or injustice performed is collectively explored in search of transformative action, and ultimately a liberatory shift within the *oppressed*, or disadvantaged identity.

Researching drama classrooms in North American secondary school classrooms, Gallagher (2001) speaks of the possibilities for students who are marginalised in other classes to shift power dynamics and play with the way their identity is perceived:

> What I have observed (...) is that new roles/identities beyond the drama worlds - within the actual classroom - often become possible for those students marked most "at risk" for failure. Further, that these new roles or identities help to uncover ways of being for students that encourage participation at their fullest potential. In short, drama has both intrinsic and extrinsic value for the most alienated learners in classroom settings (Gallagher, 2001, p. 2).

Gallagher's research shows students labelled "at risk" can experience a change in power dynamics with their peers during the drama by taking on different roles. This provides opportunities to explore different ways of participation, which can reach beyond the drama.

2.5.4   The aesthetic space

Boal (1995) emphasises the importance of imagination in the process of conscious self-reflection through theatre. Creative spaces of the performance are shaped by imagination; imagined spaces are created through the performance. Within these imagined spaces, alternative possibilities can be explored: "The human being … is able to view itself by means of imagination alone. The *aesthetic space* … offers this imaginary mirror… it allows him [sic] to imagine variations of his action, to study alternatives" (Boal, 1995, p. 13). The aesthetic space is the imagined space projected onto the physical space within which the (stage) performance is taking place. It is the projection of the imagined world of the performance onto the physical space of the stage, town square, classroom, or wherever the performance takes place.

> An overlaying of spaces: a space is created subjectively by the gaze of the spectators – witnesses present or imagined – inside a space which already existed physically, in three dimensions. The latter is contemporaneous with the spectator, the former travels in time (Boal, 1995, pp. 18-19)

This projection, which is a collective projection by spectators, carries the imagination and affection provoked by the performance. Denzin (2007) speaks of it as "creating a field of shared emotional experience" (p. 134). The performance affects the observer: "she [sic] feels, is moved, thinks, remembers, imagines" (Boal, 1995, p. 22). The performance engages with memories of everyday experiences on the level of desire and dream. The performance explores alternatives that the *spectactor* experiences within the projected space of the theatre; "everything merges and mixes together, anything is possible" (Boal, 1995, p. 22).

Theorising TO by looking at critical spatial theory, Popen (2006) explains: "These aesthetic spaces make possible imaginative geographies, in which opportunities for transitive knowing are freed up, rather than over-determined by highly structured contexts and places" (p. 125). The Freirean concept of learning as a tool for change is materialised within the creative space of the theatre. Working in the realm of imagination allows for a new imaginary to develop, one that confronts power dynamics at play in the everyday. Popen (2006) refers to Lefebvre's idea of "third space, the space of possibility, the space of multiplicity and practical actions. It is the dialogic space of both/and—not the dialectic space of either/or" (p. 127). The aesthetic space becomes a space for dialogue through creativity. This enables a different engagement in the dialogue for participants, as they can explore different roles, and different rules apply.

In their research on TO as a tool for community consultation in Vancouver (BC), Pratt and Johnston (2007) describe the potential of working with theatre to explore avenues for change on a metropolitan level. Although their findings show the difficulty of translating the theatre work back into policy recommendations, they praise the accomplishment of putting "the idea of practising democracy differently into the minds of those who participated in it" (Pratt and Johnston, 2007, p. 210). As part of the project, they observe citizens as actors creating liberating theatre scenes in key political spaces in City Hall, in the presence of politicians: "the actors had slipped into the space of rational administration" (Pratt and Johnston, 2007, p. 103). After the performance, City Hall tried to prevent photos from the event from being published, without specifying a reason. This shows the impact of the performance beyond the act. By placing the theatre work in the spaces of power, the fictive

work engages with the reality of the day-to-day power dynamics. They note "the city as a concrete site of embodied, creative spatial disruptions; and theatre as a pedagogical public sphere" (Pratt and Johnston, 2007, p. 92). Citing Boal, the researchers argue that the potential of TO "resides in its ability to create space where it is possible for citizens to 'transgress, to break conventions (…)'" (Pratt and Johnston, 2007, p. 93, citing Boal, 1998, p. 142). They suggest it allowed for engagement with wider political conflicts in the city within the creative space. "It is the playfulness and safety of theatrical space that allowed the intensity of this real-life conflict to be played out" (Pratt and Johnston, 2007, p. 107). The aesthetic space enables actions which otherwise might not be possible.

This research draws on TO in the classroom and engages dialogically with participants in the creative space under changed rules (see Chapter 3). As Gallagher (2007) notes, "these non-linear and narrative modes of drama education might, indeed, productively interrupt our traditional qualitative accounts of classrooms and theatre studios, and of the actors/people who enliven them" (p. 58). Through a critical spatial lens, this research reflects on the momentary changes or shifts produced within the classroom as an aesthetic space and explores the subjectivities that form within it.

2.6   Summary of theoretical framework

This study's intersections are its main contributions. While some aspects have been discussed extensively, what is novel here is combining these components and applying them in urban secondary classrooms in England and Catalonia. Much has been written on both critical pedagogies and inclusive practices in education, yet few researchers have studied if and how critical pedagogies can produce inclusive spaces for learning. This research addresses this paucity of studies. Exploring the relationship between critical pedagogies and the social production of classroom spaces, furthermore, could enrich knowledge in the field of educational research produced from a critical spatial perspective. While some research has brought TO to schools, only a little has been written on TO from a spatial perspective (Popen, 2006; Pratt and Johnston, 2007, Kitchens, 2009). Studying TO through a spatial lens as a pedagogical intervention in a classroom context is both a

methodological contribution as well as a contribution from a practitioner's point of view. Central to this project is the complementarity between the research topic and the methodology, which this study hopes to contribute to research conducted in the field of education. Overall, it intends to inform further research conducted on exploring more inclusive practices in contemporary classrooms.

3 Methodological frame-work

3.1 Introduction and chapter overview

This chapter outlines the methodological framework used for this study. It situates the framework ontologically and epistemologically and sets out the guiding principles for the research process. After outlining the different methodological approaches employed, the chapter introduces the sample and then explains the methods used and the process of applying them. It illustrates the specific focus of this thesis to use TO as a research method and explores how to analyse the data generated through its application. The chapter concludes by outlining the ethical framework.

3.2 Situating the methodology

Having explored my situatedness as a researcher in Section 1.2, what follows is a discussion of my theoretical perspective and the epistemological framework I use in this inquiry. Lincoln and Denzin (2017) argue, "The gendered, multiculturally situated researcher approaches the world with a set of ideas, a framework (theory, ontology) that specifies a set of questions (epistemology), which are then examined (methodology, analysis) in specific ways" (p.52). The following outlines the framework through which I come to question and explore in this research.

Ontology:

This research is set within a critical theoretical perspective, drawing on both a constructivist ontological framework as well as elements of a structural and post-structural

perspective. The practices researched are based on the idea of intervening in structurally unjust education systems (Freire, 1970; Boal, 1985). I take a critical feminist perspective that "the real world makes a material difference in terms of race, class, and gender" (Lincoln & Denzin, 2017, p. 57), and I share the intention of conducting feminist research to "co-construct meaning with participants and define the kind of actions that might bring about desirable social change" (Gallagher, 2008, p. 5). However, at the same time, I am interested in deconstructing what constitutes "the real", a perspective which is aligned with a "relativist ontology (there are multiple realities)" (Lincoln & Denzin, 2017, p. 57). The contradictions between a structural and a post-structural perspective have been guiding and productive elements in my aim to explore the social production of inclusive, critical learning spaces. Ball (2006) argues: "[it is not that] any and all theories can or might be used, thrown together unsystematically and unreflexively, concepts can be 'used and troubled' (...) Epistemologies and ontologies may clash and grate, but the resultant friction can be purposeful and effective" (p. 2). In the same sense, to me the contradictions, or "grating", of the different ontological perspectives I engaged with throughout this study were productive.

Power:

In line with the ontological perspective explained above, the understanding of power throughout this study engages with different perspectives. The practices researched as well as applied engage with power from a Marxist (Boal, 1985; Freire, 1970), binary theoretical perspective of "oppressor and oppressed" (see Section 2.2), yet I build my research framework using a post-structural theoretical understanding that power is dispersed and productive (Foucault, 1982, etc.), always in relation. I understand power as constantly shifting within an apparatus of institutional power dynamics. In the research settings, I see the different types of power affecting knowledge production and participation in the classroom, which the research frame intents to engage with in its design. I recognise the messiness of drawing on different understandings of power, but I feel this was particularly productive for the analysis process, where multiple perspectives of power allowed me to think through situations from different angles (see Chapter 6).

Epistemology:

Epistemologically I consider knowledge as situated, and influenced by one's standpoint and background (Haraway, 1988). In that sense, to me, the situated perspective expresses 'reality' based on experience, which I aim to engage with in this research. Specifically, my interest in engaging with experiential knowledge, which is often "expressed through the body" (hooks, 1994, p. 91), has influenced my choice of methods. Knowledge and validation are produced by both the researcher and research participants within the above-explored context of power dynamics. My role as a researcher is to learn with and from participants and their experiences. While I understand experience as situated and specific and therefore do not believe in generalising findings to any broader population, by analysing my learning and contextualising the study, I aim to generalise the reflections of this research as important contributions to relevant education theoretical debates.

Qualitative study

Methodologically, I was keen to engage with the multiple perspectives of the learning spaces explored. Hence, this is a qualitative study (Mason, 2002, etc.) as I am interested in exploring the different experiences of the classroom and its inclusivity, and how learning from these different experiences together can be helpful for broader questions around education.

Reflexivity:

As the researcher, I am implicated in the power dynamics I am researching. My research is shaped by my standpoint and experience. I agree with Mason (2002) on the need for *active reflexivity*: "researchers should constantly take stock of their actions and their role in the research process" (p. 7) and be "scrutinizing your own changing perspectives and assumption" (p. 22). My reflexive process has guided me in my exploration of the different situated perspectives the research is engaging with, as well as my own.

Ethics:

My research is framed by my strong commitment to social justice (see Section 1.2), which informs my underlying values and shapes my approach and what I perceive as ethical. Again, I agree with Mason (2002) that, "Qualitative research should be conducted as a moral practice, and with regard to its political context" (p. 8). The difficult questions

(Mason, 2002) I am asking myself as part of my reflexive practice include both an acknowledgement of and a commitment to my ethical stance. In Section 3.6, I will lay out the ethical framework to which this research adheres, and in Chapter 6 I will reflect on the ethics of working with TO in this research.

Validity:

In exploring a feminist and post-structuralist perspective on research, St. Pierre and Pillows (2000) ask, "Can research be so situated (hasn't it always been?) and, if so, how will we know it's valid?" (p. 10). Considering the discussion above, of the situatedness of perspectives, including my own, this question is crucial to engage with. Rigorous self-reflection, drawing on multiple types of data, checking my findings with participants through interviews etc. (see below this chapter), are put in place for validity, underlined by my adherence to ethics in practice and research. Therefore, this research should be judged against ethics, reflexivity, and rigour.

Pedagogical approach

Pedagogies shape learning relations. Nind et al. (2016) explain, "Pedagogy concerns how people are enabled, supported or constrained in how they participate in practices and activities, and how their histories mediate and are brought to bear by the teacher and the setting" (p. 10). This is a pedagogical study, exploring how critical pedagogies inclusively shape learning spaces. Yet, this study is also concerned with how they shape spaces for participation in the classroom, and how the (hi)stories and experiences of participants are brought to bear within the research setting. To do that, I apply elements of TO (see Section 2.5) as a critical pedagogical method and engage with its pedagogical framework as part of my methods. This implies that the research is practised partly as a pedagogical act, and I, as the researcher, at times act as a pedagogue. The use of the pedagogical method and its implications are evaluated in Chapter 6.

Engaging with this pedagogical framework, as well as the other elements which make up the framework described above, the study draws on participatory and ethnographic research approaches as well as the transformative elements of TO.

3.2.1   Participatory research approach

In my concern for social justice, I am also "concerned with socially just ways of knowing, … to make the research more collaborative and relevant" (Nind, 2014, p. 525). Critical pedagogies describe the learning process as dialogical; they emphasise a rigorous reflexive process; challenge hierarchical power dynamics between teachers and learners, and see learning as a transformative tool. Applying these ideas to my research framework, I intended to establish a dialogical, reflexive relationship with research participants in addition to my rigorous self-reflexive process explained above. Within the confines of the study, I was only able to set up regular, reflective dialogues with the participating teachers, not with students. Nevertheless, I made sure to create spaces for dialogical exchanges with the students as part of the research design. Cornwall and Jewkes (1995) describe participatory research as emphasising "a 'bottom-up' approach with a focus on locally defined priorities and local perspectives" (p. 1667). Yet, as is frequently the case in graduate research, the remit of conducting this research as part of my doctoral degree did not allow for an extended engagement with research participants in the framing and set up of the research, nor did they participate in the choice of research questions. However, I intended to create participatory spaces within the research phase as part of my dialogical reflective approach. For these I drew on the transformative method, TO, which aims to create what Cornwall and Jewkes (1995) call active spaces of knowledge production, or "knowledge for action" (p. 1667). In this sense, I was drawing on participatory and transformative approaches in the research framework, within the limitations of its set-up.

3.2.2   Ethnographic approach

My research was partially ethnographic, and the following points show in which way. To qualitatively engage with situated knowledge and classroom experiences, I drew on an ethnographic approach through classroom visits. One of the criteria for describing something as 'ethnography' is exploring "the nature of particular social phenomena, rather than setting out to test the hypothesis about them" (Aktinson and Hammersley, 1998 p. 248), which I drew on for this research. Understanding knowledge as situated, it was crucial to me to conduct my research on site. Gallagher (interviewed by Thomson and Sefton-Green, 2010) suggests that ethnography is "being in a space with a group of people who are inside it in a different way from you, although you are inside it too, and

together you are bringing your understanding of (...) that space into a conversation" (p. 76). My stay in the classrooms took the form of participant observations to immerse myself in the spaces I was researching while remaining aware of the tensions of being an outsider to those spaces and noticing any contradictions as well as resonances in my thoughts and observations with participants as well as with myself. Participating in the classrooms as an assistant to the teachers yet being aware that my focus as a researcher made me an outsider to the classroom activities helped me to maintain a balance of observing the classroom communities both as an outsider to them while still taking note of my perceptions as a participant. The notion of continuously putting my reflections into conversation with the different classroom actors (Gallagher, interviewed by Thomson and Sefton-Green, 2010) helped "to trouble confidence" (Britzman, 2000, p. 38), or prevent jumping to fast conclusions. Semi-structured interviews with different classroom actors, spontaneous classroom exchanges with students, regular teacher conversations, and spaces for shared reflections with teachers and students all helped me to gain insights into different classroom participants' experiences of the lessons' inclusivity. These conversations complemented my reflections and participant observations.

3.2.3 Theatre-based research approach

Towards the end of the research stays in the classrooms, I facilitated creative workshops with students and teachers using elements of TO and perception mapping (see Section 3.4.3), thus extending the dialogical structure. In this, I was drawing on my practice as a participatory theatre facilitator (see Section 1.2). TO is part of a form of theatre called participatory theatre, or process-based theatre. This kind of theatre can be described as "a way of coming to know in the process" (Henry, 2000, p. 52), as "it helps us to re-look at content [participants' experiences] to draw insights and make new meanings" (Norris, 2000, p. 44). Drawing on TO as a research method supports the creation of participatory spaces within the research. In the process of generating data, participants engage with their reality and open it up to each other for a discussion.

Methodologically, this situates the study between a long tradition of practitioner-based research in theatre — "combining creative doing with reflexive being" (Kershaw et al., 2011, p. 64) — and the more recent performative turn in arts-based research, which conducts critical inquiry as performance, anticipating "positive social change through

inclusive and emotional understandings created among communities of learner/participant/researcher" (Finley, 2011, p. 436). With this research I draw on my practice as a theatre practitioner to engage with a pedagogical inquiry, however, I am not conducting an inquiry into my practice. In the tradition of critical arts-based inquiry, I want to convey meaning and understanding through performance, yet the outcome of this research is not a performance. Rather, performance is used with research participants as a research method.

Discussing creative, arts-based research, Gallagher (2008) suggests that working through the arts allows "openings for shifts in power and the reframing of the terms of engagement" (p. 69). TO does that by working with physical expressions of embodied knowledge. "The ability of the body to know in ways that are as valid as any other forms of knowing is what uniquely positions theatre as a form of research" (O'Connor and Anderson, 2015, p. 27). In this way, the method was supportive of my intent to create dialogical and participatory spaces for reflection in this research, which engaged with power dynamics and constructed "alternative ground rules for communication" (Ellsworth, 1989, p. 317) to diversify who is coming to voice and how (hooks, 1994).

Specifically, I am using image theatre within this research, a method within TO which primarily engages with body-based expression (see Section 3.4.2). The creative work through the body made different engagements possible for research participants, as they were able to explore different roles through the theatre exercises (see Section 2.5). The theatre space has its own rules, which are different from those of the classroom. It invites an interaction within the realm of imagination (Boal, 1995), through which new social and cultural imaginaries can develop, and it makes it possible for participants to confront usual power dynamics. As an aesthetic space, the theatre space allows for actions which otherwise might not be possible (see Section 2.5.4, Popen, 2006). Gallagher explains the theatre "space puts you in a different relationship both to one another as people and to the ideas that you're investigating and communicating" (Gallagher, interviewed by Thomson and Sefton-Green, 2010, p. 76). Using theatre allowed me to open a space within the classrooms in which participants actively engaged with my research questions (see Chapter 6). The workshops served as spaces to collectively explore participants' views on and experiences of their spaces for learning.

By working with theatre-based methods, I aimed to engage with experience-based, embodied knowledge, which at times is easier to convey in action. To support students with a range of communication tools, I decided to complement the theatre work with perception maps (see Section 3.4.3). This helped students visually explore their perspectives on and feelings in their classrooms. By reflecting on their learning spaces spatially and physically, I intended to mobilise and engage with different types of knowledge and modes of expression, while also reflecting on embodied interactions (Nind and Lewthwaite, 2018), which make up a large part of teaching and learning happening in the classroom.

The following sections first introduce the sample worked with and then explore the different methods in detail.

3.3   Sample

I worked with secondary school settings in different contexts not to compare them but to learn from the breadth their differences offer. In line with the methodological approach explained above, each of the three research sites was established through developing relationships with the participating teachers, as their interest in taking part in the research was key. Each of the teachers was invested in exploring critical pedagogies in their setting and they believed that participating in this research would help them reflect on their work and allow others to learn from it. I was keen to engage with a wider range of students throughout this research, however, as a person external to the schools, I relied on the teachers in the selection process of which class to work with, building on their existing relationship with the students, and their understanding of their students' needs. The teachers informed the students before my arrival about the research, and I embarked on a consent process (see Section 3.6) when I first met the students.

In the English context, I worked with an academy and a comprehensive community secondary school, which are currently the two most common school models (see Chapter 4 for a detailed description of the schools). The study's focus was on inner-city schools, where one could examine the inclusivity of classrooms in which diverse cultural backgrounds share learning spaces, taking into account trajectories of migration and other

circumstances (see Chapter 2). London's inner-city schools are representative of the cultural mix of the city's inhabitants. Through a forum for educators exploring education for social justice, I established a relationship with Alex, who was applying critical pedagogies at Milestone Academy in Middletown (all the names, school names and the name of this town, which is smaller than London or Barcelona, are pseudonyms to ensure participants' anonymity), a town outside London that has cultural diversity similar to that of different London boroughs. I worked with Alex's year 9 science class (13-14-year-olds), of the 23 students, 21 participated in the research through perception mapping and participating in the theatre workshop. 5 students volunteered to be interviewed. Furthermore, the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) and the inclusion lead at the school also volunteered to be interviewed.

Rosa, an arts educator taking part in the education for social justice forum, introduced me to Amber at Inspire Arts Comprehensive in London, who was exploring with critical pedagogies in an intervention class that supported students with a high risk of exclusion. The intervention class was made up of 6 students across Key-stage 3 (12-14-year-olds), all boys, of whom 4 attended the lessons I was part of and participated in the research through group interviews and participatory mapping.

To widen the range of participating schools and the education systems they inhabit, I was keen to include a European context too. Exploring critical pedagogies as an intervention to reimagine a more socially just education system took me to Barcelona, a city with a history of progressive pedagogies, such as Francisco Ferrer and the Modern School movement (Suissa, 2010), the Escuela Viva (Feliu Carrasco, 2015), and the Escola Nova (Codina, 2002). More recently, since 2015, the local municipal government has become a fertile ground for rethinking and democratizing various aspects of public structures (Kioupkiolis, 2021). Building on the experience of project-based learning in secondary schools (Hernández and Robira, 1992), different schools are currently experimenting with changes in their organising of curricula (Grau Sánchez, 2018; Miño-Puigcercós, 2015). At the same time, Barcelona, like London, is a metropolis and financial centre dealing with issues of gentrification and precarity, with diverse inhabitants, and a strong influx of migration juxtaposed with a new sense of local nationalism. This context has provoked debates around inclusion in education (Bonal et al., 2021; Collet-Sabé, 2017; Motos, 2017; etc.).

Innovative pedagogies must engage with neoliberal education reforms rolling out introduced throughout Catalonia (Baena et al., 2020; Collet-Sabé and Ball, 2020). This conjunction made Barcelona an ideal third research site to expand the study. The headteacher of Camino Institute decided to apply critical pedagogies across the school and all the subjects except the core subjects. I worked with Carla, the English teacher, who was trying to combine the critical pedagogies of the school with the exam demands English as a core subject posed. I participated with her year 9 class (13-14-year-olds), where 21 out of 22 students participated in the research through perception mapping and participating in the theatre workshop. 7 students volunteered to be interviewed.

While Chapter 4 will give more details about the three research sites, the following is an outline of the sample and data generated:

SAMPLE	Site 1: Milestone Academy	Site 2: Inspire Arts Comprehensive	Site 3: Camino Institut
Brief summary	• Science classroom • Critical pedagogy based, student led research project	• Wellbeing space • Summer project to re/include vulnerable students	• English classroom • In school based on critical pedagogies
Context	• Academy, Middletown • 21 year 9 students (13-14 yr) • Mixed gender, mixed background and mixed learning needs.	• Comprehensive arts specialist school, London • 6 students year 7-9 (12-14 yr) • All boys with learning and behavioural needs, mixed backgrounds	• State school, Barcelona, • 21 year 9 students (13-14 yr) • Mixed gender, mixed background and mixed learning needs.
Data	• Observation & reflection notes of 6 lessons • 3 interviews with teacher • 1 Interview with inclusion lead • 1 Interview with SENCO • 2 student interviews with 5 students in small groups • 19 students perception maps • Photos & recording of theatre workshop	• Observations & reflection notes of 5 lessons • 1 Interview with artist in residence • 2 interviews with teacher • 1 group interview with 4 students and teacher • 1 whole group perception map	• Observation & reflection notes of 6 weeks (2 lessons per week)· • 2 interviews with teacher • 2 sets of interviews with 7 students in pairs or small groups • 6 Student group perception maps • Photos of theatre workshop

Table 3-1 Sample

3.4 Methods

Below, I describe the methods used within the methodological frame outlined above.

3.4.1 Research objectives, questions and methods

The data generated through each method supported my exploration of all five research questions. The data from interviews, lesson observations, participatory mapping, and theatre workshops all supported the thematic analysis (Chapter 5).

Throughout my stay in the three different school settings, I used participant observations to generate data which I accompanied with observation notes throughout the lessons and reflective writing afterwards. As outlined above, it was important to me to put my reflections into conversation with research participants' views, which I did through semi-structured interviews and theatre workshop interventions. For instance, I shared my observation-based reflections on critical pedagogies as practices for engaging and including learners in interviews with students and teachers and explored these with all participants together during the theatre intervention. To map the production of the social spaces of learning in the classrooms, in my classroom observations I traced the movements and dynamics of teachers and students. Based on my reflections and observations, I tailored the participatory mapping and theatre workshop in each school to engage with the particular set-ups of the different classes. Additionally, to explore participants' understanding of inclusion, I asked students, teachers, and, when available, inclusion staff at the schools about their views. The students' perception mapping aimed to gain additional insight into these questions.

I evaluated TO through reflective observations of the workshops, including a self-reflexive evaluation of my role within it as a researcher/facilitator. I did this by making notes after sessions in the form of a diary as well as audio recording the sessions and transcribing and analysing these recordings. Additionally, I conducted participants' interviews on their experiences of it. The range of methods supported the methodological approach outlined above, providing ways to engage with participants dialogically and create spaces for participation.

The different methods supported me in being able to be flexible to the needs arising in the classrooms and engage with a range of perspectives, at the same time making sure I was able to document the sessions. This kind of flexibility Gallagher (2007) calls a "*porous*

methodology (...) driven (...) by the explicit and immediate needs in the field" (p. 55). The following sections outline the four different methods in detail.

3.4.2   Theatre of the Oppressed: Image theatre

One of the key methods within TO is image theatre, which I used in this research. In image theatre, participants critically explore their experiences through collectively created body images to "creatively, nonverbally, and dialogically express and develop their perceptions of their world, power structures, and oppressions" (Bogad, 2006, p. 49). In the following, I will reflect on the creative space image theatre proposes, its effectiveness as a research intervention within this study and its impact on research relations and specific ways of generating knowledge and data.

Towards the end of each participatory research stay, I facilitated a creative workshop, which consisted of a participatory mapping exercise (see Section 3.4.3) and a series of image theatre exercises. To gain insight into participants' perceptions of their learning spaces, I structured the workshop around three ideas: power, learning and belonging. I was hereby thinking with hooks (1994), who argues for challenging dominant discourses in the classroom to valorise a diversity of voices. I wanted to create a setting in which learners could participate in their own way as envisaged by Florian and Black Hawkins (2011). To me, this translates to a classroom that belongs to everyone, one of which everyone feels a part. So I asked participants to imagine a classroom or a lesson that belonged to everyone, to start a shared process of reimagining school.
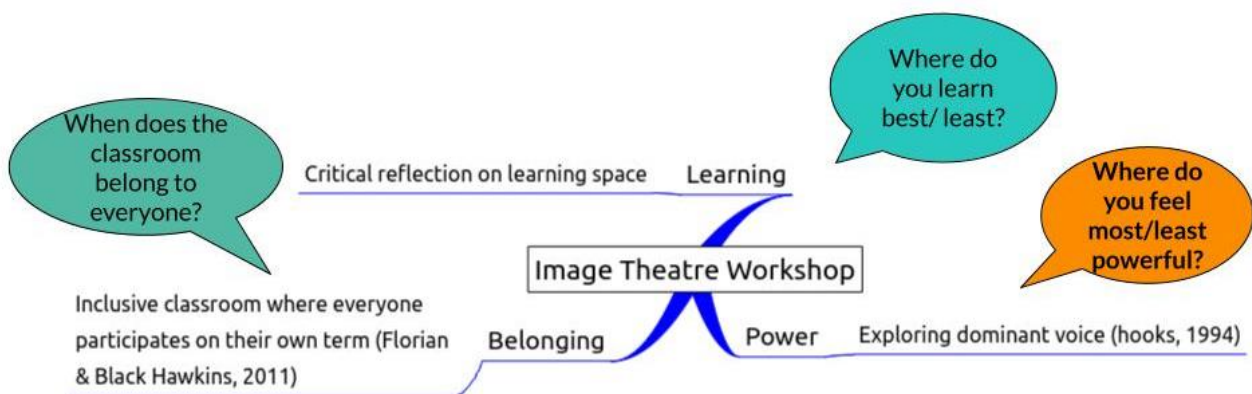
Figure 3-1 Image theatre workshop structure

In image theatre, participants express their ideas through their bodies by striking a statue-like pose representing their idea To explore participants' ideas around power, learning, and belonging, I asked them to create statues on the themes outlined below, and to place these statues in a location within the classroom they associated with the idea they presented. All participants created their poses simultaneously, so all poses together created a collective body image, representing everyone's idea within the classroom (see Chapter 6). Specifically, I asked them to create images in/of:

1. the place they feel they learn best
2. the place they feel they learn least;
3. the place they feel most powerful
4. the place they feel least powerful;
5. their favourite place; and
6. an image of a classroom which belongs to everyone (in small groups).

The order of the questions is important. It starts with a representation of daily activity and proceeds to a critical reflection of power and then moves towards re-imagining the classroom. This mirrors critical pedagogies' analysis process of first narrating one's perspectives of one's environment and then critically exploring these environments (Freire, 1970). The sequences of questions also align with the method of TO of exploring utopian imaginations, to practice how to move from injustice to an emancipated, changed alternative (Boal, 1995), represented by image 5 of their favourite place. Image 6 of a classroom which belongs to everyone, students made in small groups and performed to each other. This allowed them to decide the content of the image together.

I decided to ask the participants to answer these questions spatially, as each image is rooted in a specific location or space within the classroom, and each place is loaded with experiences. The classroom itself is an actor in the reflection. It is engaged with in each image. By changing their image in the physical space of the classroom as an aesthetic space, participants are making changes to the social space of the classroom. "[I]ndividuals and groups are given particular kinds of recognition and status, through the organisation of spaces and the creation of places for particular purposes" (Youdell and Armstrong, F., 2011, p. 145, see Section 2.4.2). Hence, reorganising these very spaces and places in the classroom engages with the status they are given. By moving through the (class)room to create the images, participants express their ideas physically by striking their poses in their chosen locations, while demonstrating them with their bodies and making them a reality, if only for a moment. All participants can feel the impact of their thoughts, which is what

Denzin (2007) refers to with his idea of "creating a field of shared emotional experience" (p. 134, see Section 2.5.4). This framework was intended to allow me, as the researcher, to engage with the multitude of experiences present in the classrooms, showing some of the complex and at times contradictory perspectives on the production of inclusive spaces for learning.

Within the research, the theatre exercises gave participants the chance to play with their usual physical and social positions and expressions in the classroom as part of their reflection. As such, the bodily conversation actively engaged in the very classroom dynamics I was looking at (see Chapter 6).

For the first 5 images on learning, power, and favourite places, participants all worked at the same time, creating one classroom image together, in which everyone individually chose where to place themselves and how to position themselves, except in image 6, where participants worked in small groups and decided the composition of their image within their group and then showed it to each other (see above). Where possible, all images were photographed and the workshops were audio recorded. At Inspire Arts Comprehensive, Amber, the teacher, decided against working with theatre (see below). Therefore this method was only used at Milestone Academy and Camino Institute. The participatory mapping exercise served as a visual extension of the image theatre or, in the case of Inspire Arts Comprehensive, as the main part of the workshop, which the next section will explain.

3.4.3   Perception maps

In addition to the theatre exercises, I decided to use perception maps, as to me they were a useful visual and spatial expression of the questions I explored with participants, and supported the spatial approach of this thesis. Perception maps are used as methods to explore different stakeholders' lived experiences of places, and are common in work in critical urban studies with youth or child geographies (for example Travlou et al, 2008; Burke et al, 2014). In education research with young people, perception maps are used as an "empowering tool" (for example: Literat, 2013) as maps tend "to represent the worldview and particular interests of dominant powers" (Literat, 2013, p. 198). Hence, drawing on them as a tool for young people to express their perceptions and situate them

on such official tool, values their experiences as important. Within indigenous and community research practices, mapping has been used to counter homogenic perception of places (for example: Chambers, 2006; Lydon, 2003). However, ethical implications have been highlighted in using perception maps. For instance, the maps can be seen as "extracting information" and "exposing people to danger" (Chambers, 2006, p. 7) by revealing insights into personal practices and indications of locations, which demand careful reflection of research contexts and implications (see also Section 6.2).

In this research, perception maps specifically aimed to give students an extra possibility for reflection, and were only used with them, not with teachers. The maps were intended to make visible the spatial exploration and allow students to explore how they felt in their different learning spaces, to consolidate the physical exercise. Kara (2015) suggests mapping "is useful for revealing complex relationships between thought, emotion, places, objects and concepts" (p. 90). I was interested in reflecting on the spatial aspects, as a pedagogical framework can be manifested physically, such as through seating and table arrangements. At the same time, the connotations of the different spaces within the classroom can differ within a classroom community. For instance, the space near the board and the teacher's desk often has a different connotation for the students at the back of the classroom, and the desks where friends are sitting have specific meanings for different students.

Learning spaces varied across research sites in the time I participated in them. At Inspire Arts Comprehensive and Camino Institute, relevant learning spaces extended outside the classroom to the corridors, the playground, the PE hall, and so on. Engaging with a porous methodology (Gallagher, 2007), I varied the mapping exercise to correspond to these differences and engage with the needs of the settings. In the process of creating their maps, participants were creating a visual expression of their ways of experiencing the spaces.

At Milestone Academy, students created these maps after the theatre exercises. As all lessons took place in their classroom, the mapping focussed only on that room. Still, it explored the different pedagogical moments which took place throughout the research. In their maps, students showed the ways their classroom differed during their critical pedagogies-based lessons from how it is in their usual lessons, as well as how their configuration would look like in their ideal classroom.

Each student explored their own movement, the movements of their friends, and the movement of the teacher in their usual science lessons, the critical science project and in their ideal configuration. Additionally, they could make specific comments, in speech bubbles, on things that were either thought or said throughout the lessons. Students each worked on their own map. They were encouraged to chat with their neighbour but work by themselves.

Figure 3-2 Perception map instructions, Milestone Academy

Figure 3-3 Example of a perception map, Milestone Academy

At Inspire Arts Comprehensive, I adapted the mapping exercises to support the diverse learning needs of the students in the interventions class, as well as to engage with their specific learning context. As their activities took place throughout the whole school, we worked with a whole school map. The mapping exercise was carried out by the whole group of students, together with their teacher. I asked participants to stick different types of smileys on the map to indicate how they felt about the different spaces, and to explain what the smiley meant to them. The students discussed the meaning of the stickers while sticking them onto the sheets. The smileys represented feelings of happiness or anger/fear etc. (see Chapter 5), and the stars implied they very much liked a class. The session was recorded and transcribed.

Figure 3-4 Example of a perception map, Inspire Arts Comprehensive

At Camino Institute, the map showed the different learning spaces engaged with throughout my stay. Outside the building itself, the school had a strong focus on working with the local neighbourhood and engaging with wider world scenarios, which the map reflected. Based on my learning from the previous two mapping workshops at Milestone Academy and Inspire Arts Comprehensive, I used the mapping to support the theatre workshop and asked the students to engage with the same questions as in the theatre workshop (see above). The legend of the meaning of the stickers was printed onto the maps (with a slight change, their favourite place was represented by a big red heart, and their least favourite place by a small red heart). As it was part of their learning culture, students worked in small groups.
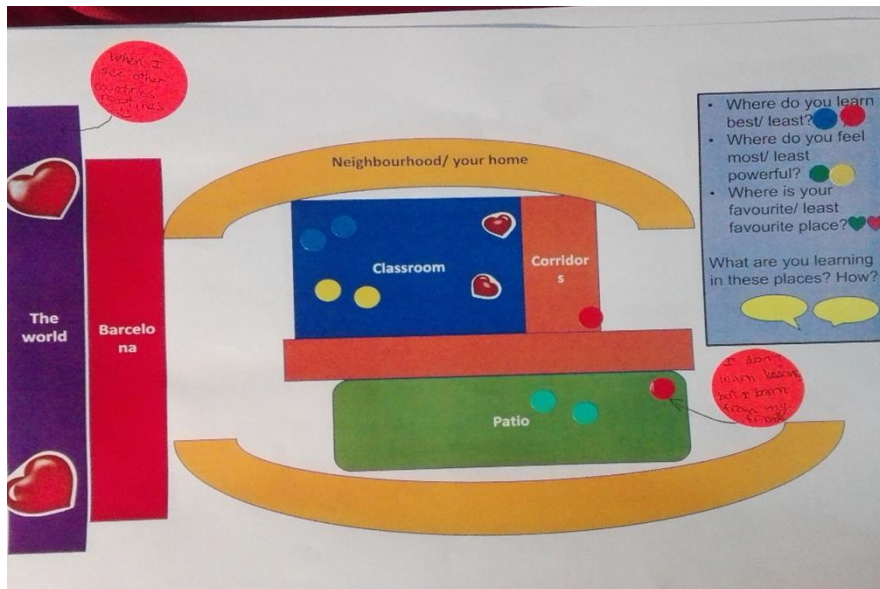
Figure 3-5 Example of a perception map, Camino Institute

The porous approach implied that the number of perception maps produced in each school varied (see table below). However, as a process to reflect on their learning spaces, the exercise generated useful debates. Due to the different setups, I was able to join and observe these debates in some schools more than in others. In Milestone Academy, students mainly discussed with the students sitting next to them while producing the maps. At Camino Institute, students reflected on their perception mapping in the groups they worked with. I moved from table to table and joined some of these discussions. In Inspire Arts Academy, we worked as one group, the three students present, the teacher and I, and the conversation was recorded (facilitated by the small number of participants) and subsequently transcribed.

Data generated through perception mapping	Milestone Academy	Inspire Arts Comprehensive	Camino Institute
Perception maps	21 individual maps of the classroom	1 collective map of the whole school in 3 sheets	6 group maps of relevant learning spaces
Observation notes of the discussions the mapping generated	no	yes	yes

Sound recording of these discussions (transcribed)	yes	yes	no

Table 3-2 Data generated through perception mapping

3.4.4　Interviews

To support the dialogic intentions of the research, I chose to conduct interviews throughout my research stays. These interviews were semi-structured (see appendix 5). The structure supported the reflective process in these conversations, yet the interviews also ensured spaces for the "knowledge-producing potentials of dialogues" (Brinkman, 2017, p. 1002) for both the participants and me, in line with my perception of knowledge being generated together between participants and myself (see Section 3.2). These interviews took place in the context of my stays in the classrooms and the relationships I was building.

With the teachers, the interviews accompanied our general spontaneous classroom exchange. They were dedicated moments for thinking together. Throughout the research stays, I conducted several interviews and I had various brief reflective conversations with the participating teachers which I recorded in my observation notes. These interviews served as a reflection on the pedagogical process, initial intentions, and evaluations of lessons. Furthermore, the interviews offered spaces for dialogue and shared reflection between me and the teachers on the pedagogical practices we were utilizing. Where possible, I also interviewed school inclusion staff to gain a wider insight into how inclusion is understood in the institutions. To engage with power dynamics between me as the researcher and the participants (Mason, 2002), I made room for participants to ask me questions, which occurred on various occasions. On these occasions, as the researcher, I made myself "known and vulnerable, so that engaging with lived experience is reciprocal" (Nind et al., 2016, p. 38).

In light of the complex power dynamics between me as an adult researcher external to the classroom and the adolescent students, I paid specific attention to defusing that power dynamic when setting up interviews with students. I made the interviews voluntary and gave students the option to be interviewed in pairs or small groups, to make them more comfortable in conversation with me. I had to consider, though, that group interviews run

the risk of being dominated by one person (Fontana and Prokos, 2016, p. 34). The interviews were intended to offer another format of shared dialogical reflection, beyond the workshops and mapping, for students to choose to engage with. By offering several options, I hoped students would choose their most comfortable medium. Most students chose to be interviewed with a close friend or two; some preferred to be interviewed alone. In the interviews, I asked students a series of questions relating to my research questions as well as connecting to observations throughout my classroom period (see appendix 5). Subsequently, we discussed the creative workshops and where possible we looked at photos of the images and maps they created. At Inspire Arts Comprehensive and at Camino Institute I was able to conduct student interviews at the beginning of my research stay, and at the end, whereas at Milestone Academy, due to logistical reasons, I was only able to interview students at the end of my research stay.

Site:	Milestone Academy	Inspire Arts Comprehensive	Camino Institute
Interviews:	3 interviews with teacher 1 interview with head of inclusion 1 interview with SENCO 2 group student interviews: group 1: 2 girls, group 2: 3 boys	2 interviews with teacher 1 interview with artist in residence 2 whole group interviews with students and 1 teacher	2 interviews with teacher 7 student interviews in small groups or alone: group 1: 2 girls x 2 group 2: 2 boys x 2 group 3: 1 girl x 2 group 4: 2 boys x 1

Table 3-3 Interviews

3.4.5 Participant observations

As outlined above, the participant observations were designed to allow me to engage with classroom experiences *in situ.* My perspective was that of an implicated observer, participating in the classroom communities as an outsider in terms of experience and role. Pink (2009) explains learning through participant observations as "embodied, emplaced, sensorial and empathetic" (p. 63). The participating researcher is involved, yet at the same time reflexive on this involvement. Charmaz (2014) suggests that "ethnographers seek detailed knowledge of the multiple dimensions of life within the studied milieu and aim to

understand members' taken-for-granted assumptions and rules" (p. 35), which was one of the ethnographic aspects I was applying in my participant observations. While I was engaging with the different aspects of classroom events and participating in them, my notetaking was structured to support an exploration of the shifting and complex power dynamics at play, which I was also a part of, "to provide a critical space to push thought against itself" (Britzman, 2000, p. 38). To observe "the relationships of power (re)produced in spaces, as marked by differently positioned subjectivities" (Gallagher, 2008, p.56), I was interested in observing the different actors present in the classrooms and their power dynamics, their actions, and movements, and how these impacted the social production of the spaces for learning (see Section 2.4).

I structured my observation notes to guide me (see below), yet I was also open to observe anything that came up.

- Who is in the classroom?
- Their actions and changes I perceived throughout
- Changes to learning spaces I perceived
- Participant reactions to my presence
- Activities undertaken:
  - More or less teacher centred
  - Content more/less from students
  - Formation of classroom more/less teacher-directed
  - Activities more/less differentiated
  - Perceived student participation
  - Discourse more/less dominant

To engage with my own experience of the situation, and learn about how my perception was shaped — in other words, to identify my "own textual strategies and political commitments and pointing out the differences among the stories" (Britzman, 2000, p. 38-39) — I decided to structure my reflective notes along my embodied experience:

- Body of a researcher
- Affects (my feelings)
  - Resonance (my agreements)
  - Dissonance (my disagreements)
- Ideas (what I would do)
- Critical reflections
  - Why? What does this imply?
  - Wider implications or connections
- Methods
  - My methods
  - Teacher's methods

- Researcher/Group Dynamics
  ◦ How they engaged with me
  ◦ How they engaged with each other
  ◦ How they engaged with learning/ task
- Who participated in the classroom community and how?
- Who decided content and how?
- Who content related to
- Substantive issues and themes

These questions were meant to support my reflection, including a reflexive process regarding my positionality within the classrooms, and document my implication as a participating researcher within the classroom communities I was doing research with. Exploring the contours of the research questions with which I was engaging was another outcome of responding to these questions.

3.4.6   Research process

The following table lays out the research process which I followed at each of the three sites.

When	Activity	Purpose	Special remarks
Before the research	Obtaining consent from school and teacher to conduct research	To ensure ethical and legal validity of the research	See Section 3.6 on ethics below
Upon meeting the class	Consent workshop	To explain the research and work through the consent form to ensure student participants understood its meaning	At Camino Institute, this workshop was extended and took place in small group work, to support possible language barriers
Throughout classroom stay	Participant observation	To gain active insight into classroom activity and dynamics, from an implicated perspective	
Alongside classroom stay	Reflective observation diary	To keep a record of events within the classroom and to document reflections after each class	Notes were taken throughout lessons, or immediately after, depending on the activities and my role in participating in them
Throughout research visit	Teacher interviews	To maintain dialogical structure and have ongoing	These were supplemented by informal conversations with teachers

		shared reflection on pedagogical practice	throughout, which I recorded in my observation notes
When available	Inclusion staff interviews	To gain insight into a wider understanding of inclusion in the schools	This was only possible at Milestone Academy. The teacher at Inspire Arts Comprehensive was inclusion staff herself. At Camino Institute, the participating teacher was part of the school's management, and I was interviewing her regarding inclusion policies.
When available	Student interviews	To gain insight into students' perceptions	This was voluntary. At Inspire Arts Comprehensive and Camino Institute, I conducted some group and or individual interviews throughout my stay, before and after the creative workshops. At Milestone Academy I conducted group interviews after the creative workshops.
As part of creative workshop at the end of research stay	Perception mapping	To visualise students' perception of their learning spaces	At Milestone Academy this took place after the theatre workshop, to consolidate the work, and was done on an individual basis. At Inspire Arts Comprehensive, this became the main activity and was done with the whole group, to support the group's vulnerability. At Camino Institute, this took place before the theatre exercise upon reflection to introduce spatial reflections. Students worked in their groups as this was their established way of working.
Creative workshop at the end of research stays	Theatre workshop: - Situated images of power, learning, and favourite place - Group images of when a classroom belongs to everyone	To introduce image work To explore classroom spatially and actively To reimagine learning	At Inspire Arts Comprehensive, the teacher initially decided against using theatre, to support the group's vulnerability (see below).
Debrief	Interviews	To evaluate creative workshops and overall research stay.	I interviewed the teachers and voluntary students at the end of my research stay, ensuring they could share any comments or questions they had for me.

Table 3-4 Research process

Following the concept of porous methodology (Gallagher, 2007), I fine-tuned the methods to better suit the research questions and the specific necessities of each context. I modified my research plans to accommodate the hectic school life to fit into the sudden

changes and lack of time teachers were confronted with in particular in the two English schools, whose timetables changed frequently. I also tried to engage with necessities students experienced, like acting as a teaching assistant to a student with learning needs in the English lessons in the Barcelona school. In setting up the theatre and mapping exercises, I responded to the specificities of each learning setting, as outlined above. Moreover, while facilitating the exercises, I was open to spontaneous changes that would allow all students to participate fully. In this way, the responsibilities of the pedagogue and the interest of the researcher at times conflicted. Section 6.5 explores this issue in detail.

As explained above, I changed the order of the mapping and theatre exercises from Milestone Academy to Camino Institute. At Inspire Arts Comprehensive, Amber, the teacher of the intervention class, was initially hesitant to use drama at all because of students' emotional vulnerability. So, we focused instead on participatory mapping as a creative tool. However, seeing students engaged with the mapping activity, Amber spontaneously decided to draw on drama exercises herself and ran a role-playing exercise with the students, where they could practice speaking with teachers they had difficulties with (see Section 6.4). While this activity was beyond the designed research workshop, I found her use of drama relevant to my research, and thus included it as data. In my work with Amber, she often acted as a co-researcher. Participating in the research and responding to my questions excited her. Concerned about the vulnerability of the group, I followed her "instincts and interests" (Gallagher, 2008, p. 56), bearing in mind the power dynamic between Amber and her students. Letting her lead nevertheless felt like the most ethical and inclusive way to work with that group (see Chapter 6.5).

3.5   Methods of analysis

The following explores my approach to and the process of data analysis. A particular focus is given to the analysis of creative data, which on the one hand supports the generation of ideas and exchanges, but on the other creates dilemmas for how this can be translated into meaningful and rigorous academic findings.

3.5.1   Approach to data analysis

Analysis is a continuous process. I was performing analysis throughout the research visits, from participant observation in the field and reflective diary writing through to reflective interviews and classroom conversations. Analysis continues beyond the completion of the thesis (St Pierre, 2011). In that sense, it moves between shared analysis with research participants, engagement with literature, the process of reviewing recordings, transcripts, or creative data, and general moments of reflection on the research throughout and beyond.

From a poststructural perspective, the researcher's perspective is situated. Chadderton (2011) reflects that as "an unreliable narrator, the researcher presents no single 'truth', only located and partial truths" (p. 83). Hence, a rigorous approach to analysis is crucial. In this research, rigour includes both painstaking inspection of the data as well as "critical self-scrutiny by the researcher, or active reflexivity" (Mason, 2002, p. 7) on that work and one's standpoint as the researcher.

The researcher's situated understanding shapes the theoretical framework of the research. Braun and Clarke (2006) explain that a "theoretical framework carries with it a number of assumptions about the nature of the data, what they represent in terms of 'the world', 'reality', and so forth" (p.81). In line with my theoretical framework outlined above, in engaging with the data, I was aware of my situated perspective and keen to bring my perspective into dialogue with the participants' perspectives. Hence, I drew on a combination of different analytical approaches that remain close to the data, yet I was also conscious of the theoretical framing shaping my view of the data. Within participatory theatre, "knowledge is produced through interactions with others" (Nicholson, 2014, p. 44), which in the case of image theatre takes place through body-based practice. To engage ethically with this collective, embodied form of knowledge, I drew on some of TO's methods of analysing image theatre. To bring together the different elements of this research, I chose to conduct a thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006). The following will explore these different approaches.

3.5.2   Transcription

Mondana (2007) argues, "a transcript is an evolving flexible object; it changes as the transcriber engages in listening and looking again at the tape, endlessly checking, revising, reformatting it" (p. 810). Similarly, my transcripts developed throughout the process of analysing and repeatedly relistening to the audio recordings of interviews. When it came to transcribing the interviews, it was important to me to produce a transcript that would reflect the tone and not just the content of the interviews. I noted down who was speaking and wrote the words in their way of speaking them, including slang or abbreviations. I included pauses and fillers such as "um" to present the tone and rhythm of the interview. However, I did not note down all the time stamps of the recording, unless there was a part that I could not understand.

Of the 21 interviews, 17 were held in English, including in the Barcelona-based school, as these were English students and Carla, the teacher was fluent in English. The general language of instruction and participation in the class was English, only when a student struggled they were speaking in either Spanish or Catalan, depending on their preference. In the same line, I encouraged some of the students who were less fluent in English to speak to me in Spanish in the interviews to make them more comfortable. Of the 7 student interviews, 2 were held entirely in English, 3 in Spanish, and the two interviews with the group of two girls were held mainly in English, with one of the two girls drawing on Spanish sometimes. The Spanish transcripts I translated myself.

After my research stays and upon completion of the transcripts, I sent the teachers the transcripts of their perspective interviews, for them to comment on and have a record of. For logistical reasons, it was not possible to do the same with the student interview transcripts.

3.5.3   Coding approach

As the school visits were time-intensive, I transcribed most interviews after my research stays. Once all interview data were transcribed, I uploaded both interview transcripts and field notes to NVivo and conducted the initial, close coding (see appendix 6). In the coding, it was important to me to stay close to participants' expressions and minimise abstracting

from their words, hence I drew on elements from a constructivist grounded theory approach (Charmaz, 2014), while also having my research questions, literature, and experience in mind. Constructivist grounded theory offers a chance to reflexively re-connect with the text and re-engage with the observations and conversations the text is documenting.

> As you conduct grounded theory coding, you enter an interactive space that pulls you deeper into the data and keeps you involved with them far more than a casual reading fosters. In grounded theory coding you *act* on your data and these actions sustain your involvement with them (Charmaz, 2014, p. 115).

Engaging with the text in a close reading for the first round of coding helped me to remain connected to the actual experiences and not jump to fast conclusions. This created spaces for engaged reflections. Following Terry et al. (2017), I see coding as "an organic and flexible process, where good coding requires a detailed engagement with the data" (p. 20). To produce the codes, I perused the texts line by line, identifying the keywords they brought up. I hereby tried to remain close to wordings used within the texts most of the time, but at times I also drew on terminology from the literature, when there were to me apparent parallels. While coding, I brought together the transcriptions of interviews with my observations, which allowed for tensions and contradictions between my observations and those that participants expressed to emerge more clearly.

As the three site visits built upon each other, I coded them in order. I used codes initiated from Milestone Academy to code Inspire Arts Comprehensive and Camino Institute, adding or adapting codes whenever they felt relevant to me, following an instinct I developed throughout. NVivo served as a useful database in this process, especially with its search and cluster functions based on the different codes.

3.5.4 Engaging with collaborative, creative data

The process of moving from the creative data to the writing was challenging. In analysing the data generated in the creative workshops, it was important to me to work with the collaborative creative context the images were created in. Both audio and visual data were generated at the workshops; I took photos of students' body images and recorded sound in the room. The same process was used for perception mapping. Teachers, students, and I

reflected on these workshops in interviews and, in my case, in observation and reflection notes.

Thus, for data, I had the photos of the theatre images and maps, the transcripts of the workshops and interviews, plus my observation and reflection notes. While NVivo has a function for uploading and annotating images, it was important to me to interpret the images in a way that considered the collaborative process of their creation.

I drew on the method of image analysis from TO (Boal, 2002) to generate the annotations. Within TO, image theatre is a tool for communicating beyond words. It is not about understanding precise meanings, "but to *feel* those images, to let our memories and imaginations wander" (Boal, 2002, p. 175). Communication happens affectively as part of the group process. Nevertheless, within my — and any — doctoral research the process of analysing the images from the workshop is an individual process of interpretation and reflection. Britzman (2002) sees participant observations as "a site of doubt, rather than a confirmation of what exists before representation" (p. 32). My analytical reflections are those of only one participating member in the exercises, in dialogue with observation notes, interview transcripts, and my reflections from the experience.

Within image theatre, participants analyse images together by first observing the "objective, that which is indisputable, since seen by all" (Boal, 1995, p. 89), which means naming shapes, lines, colours, objects, and marked identifiers such as gender, age, size, and so on. This is to gain a shared sense of "objectivity". After that process, participants engage with the "subjective – remarks that are or could be prefaced by, 'it seems to me'" (Boal, 1995, p. 89). The subjective refers to associations and interpretations, expressed through short remarks. This method is applied collectively during the workshop, to create a shared reading. Boal refers to it as the "*multiple mirror of the gaze of others* – a number of people looking at the same image, and offering their feelings, what is evoked for them, what their imaginations throw up around that image" (Boal, 2002, p. 175).

The idea behind this technique is to find a shared understanding of the different ways participants might perceive and express their ideas. The "objective" reading intends to generate agreement about how an image is to be read. While participants might have varying perceptions of objectivity, for instance in interpreting concepts such as gender, the objective reading can serve to pool those diverse understandings of objectivity and create

a basis for sharing. While the theoretical, Marxist basis of TO (Boal, 1995) likely has a more binary view of the terms "objective" and "subjective", the participatory aspect of this practice allows for a more porous engagement. This also means, however, that the analysis is based on a shared, but personal and situated reading. While this constructivist analysis aligns with the epistemological and ontological foundations of my research (see Section 3.2), it does mean that ultimately the analysis of the creative data produced ideas and perceptions rooted in my experience of the research and participants' contributions (see Section 6.7).

In some instances this shared reading took place with the whole class while creating the images, in other instances, the shared interpretation took place in the group interviews following the workshops, in which students who volunteered to be interviewed looked at photographs of the images. While analysing the theatre-based data, I listened to the recordings of these shared readings (the transcripts of which I also coded) to situate my reflexive analysis within that of the group, and followed the same Boalian system of objective and subjective readings, adding my reading to the pool of ideas generated in the interaction with the participants. I then annotated the photographs in NVivo with that reading, generating text-based data ready for coding, drawing on the codes generated so far, and adapting them when necessary (see appendix 6).

The students' perceptions maps gave general ideas of their preferences within their spaces for learning. I first analysed each set of maps through content analysis (Stemler, 2000), exploring the maps for certain trends or tendencies. This meant I produced tables for each set of maps from the three schools, where I noted down the number of maps representing similar markers asked for, for example, the number of maps from Camino Institute showing their favourite place for learning was the classroom, etc. I then compared these trends or tendencies with my observation notes and the interview transcriptions in search of possible resonances or contradictions. This was followed by an annotation process, where I annotated the maps and the tables I produced with the pool of codes generated from the text-based data. These processes allowed me to code all data, including the creative data, with a common set of codes.

3.5.5 Thematic analysis

To explore all data together, a thematic approach seemed the best fit, as it allowed me to engage with themes and ideas prevalent across the multiple data set. I wanted to put the different types and sources of data into conversation. Braun and Clarke (2006) explain, "The development of the themes themselves involves interpretative work, and the analysis that is produced is not just description but is already theorized" (p. 84). While going through all the data generated in the research to identify themes, I was, by necessity, thinking from my situated perspective. To counterbalance my viewpoint, I engaged closely with participants' words from interviews and observations and also connected my interpretations to the literature that underlies this research. The themes that were to emerge would be "some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set" (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p. 82).

After coding all the data, including memos and notes generated throughout the initial analysis work, I revised the codes, merged some and renamed others from the perspective of having worked closely through all data. I called these, refined codes. Then I clustered all refined codes into different groups under generic headings to summarise different key ideas I identified through the coding process. Subsequently, I explored those key ideas through different pieces of writing, going back to specific literature, the research questions, and memos, to then return to the data, and revise the different groups of codes. What I refer to as key ideas were an initial thematic coding of sub-themes (the codes), however through the writing some key ideas merged into different sub-themes, while some remained as sub-themes. After this process, I re-explored the coded data, listened back to interviews, and revisited the creative data and its coding to check that the more abstracted themes remained close to the original data. Throughout the process, I identified or confirmed sub-themes. I then re-clustered the sub-themes to fit them under the three main themes, which form the structure of this thesis.

To identify the main themes, I delved back into all coded data under a set of clustered sub-themes and explored them through writing. I probed these themes for potential overlaps or ambiguities until finally the three key themes and their sub-themes were established, and the thesis was structured accordingly (see appendix 7). Themes and sub-themes are presented in the thesis as titles of the different sections and sub-sections of Chapter 5.

3.6 Ethical considerations

Rigorous ethical processes form a crucial foundation of this study. These ethical processes are embedded both within the outline of the research framework explored above, as well as through my practice in my multiple capacities as a researcher, practitioner, and teacher. Key ethical guidelines for education research, as laid out by BERA (2011, 2018), were at the heart of the research design. They outline a rigorous, inclusive, informed consent procedure, as well as provide a clear framework of codes of confidentiality, which I followed. Furthermore, the participatory approaches and methods worked with, are rooted in an ethical reflexive framework. As a theatre practitioner, I was working with Rifkin's (2010) "Ethical framework for participatory theatre", which suggests guidelines on how to confirm participants' full consent within the practice and prompt reflective questions to secure safe(r) spaces throughout the creative work.

Overall, my ethical practice consisted of constant active listening to participants' needs, ensuring consent throughout (see below), check-in with teachers about the work I was doing with the students, and actively reflecting on my competence (see Section 6.6) within the practice of facilitating work with the students. This included reflecting on the timeframe and relationship I had with students concerning the tasks I asked them to participate in, or information I asked them to share. It was important to me to support young people in not sharing sensitive information, the set-up was not able to hold. I framed the theatre workshops with a set of ground rules, to which participants could contribute, designed to respect ourselves, each other and our work.

Consent was sought before the research phase with the participating adults through an explanatory letter outlining the objectives and practical implications of the research (see appendix 1), and a consent form in accordance with LSBU, to note overall consent and specificities regarding photos, ensuring participants' anonymity and stressing their right to withdraw their consent at any time (see appendix 3). I was given ethical approval by LSBU to conduct this study (see appendix 4).

I was careful to make certain that the young people participating in the research also fully understood the explanatory letter and consent form and knew they could choose whether to give their consent. I wanted to both acknowledge and work against the power dynamics

that result from my status as an adult, from an external institution. It was crucial to give students the real option not to participate because the main negotiation about the research took place between their teachers and me before my arrival. To support the students' understanding, I translated the explanatory letter into accessible language and added images (see appendix 2). At Camino Institute, the forms were translated into Spanish and we read them together in small groups to give students the chance to ask questions to inform their decision to take part or not. From the signing of the consent forms throughout the entire research, I made sure to actively seek consent from students, checking in at each stage and demonstrating an active openness to their choice not to take part. All students received the same consent form, regardless of their level of involvement, as this was optional, and they could change their minds throughout about how much they wanted to be involved in the research. I furthermore anonymised the participants and schools, and I also anonymised one city, 'Middletown' as it was smaller than London and Barcelona, to ensure participants' identities were protected.

Among the three schools, several students did not consent to take part in the study. Through careful conversation with me and their teachers, they assured us that they were happy for me to be in the classroom and that they were happy to participate in the activities, even though they did not want their words or images to be part of the research. Throughout my stay in their classroom, I developed relationships with students, and towards the end of my research stay, some of the students who initially did not want to participate in the study changed their minds and asked me to see their work or to interview them. Tuck and Yang (2014) suggest that "[refusal] can comprise a resistance to making someone or something the subject of research" (p. 812). As all these students were learners from either marginalised communities or with diverse learning needs, this observation seems applicable. Tuck and Yang (2014) encourage researchers to see such refusal as generative, as "a starting place for other qualitative analyses and interpretations of data" (p. 812). The authors make the case for using refusal as an invitation to focus on structural elements that objectify participants as research subjects rather than embracing their personal, often complex stories (Tuck and Yang, 2014). In the case of the present research, this meant a focus on the excluding or disabling structures of the school. This approach reflects my ethical intentions in this research, and the students' refusal became valuable learning for me in conducting the study.

I refer to ethics throughout this thesis, and in Chapter 6 I reflect on the ethics of drawing on TO as a research method, and my double role as researcher and facilitator.

3.7 Chapter summary

The detailed explanation of the methodological framework in this chapter gives context to the choices made throughout this research and introduces the framework through which I engaged with the study. The next chapter will introduce the three classroom sites and their contexts in more detail, to subsequently share reflections and findings of this research.

4 Situating the research sites

4.1 Introduction and chapter overview

This chapter introduces the three research sites and their contexts and then lays out the kind of lessons I participated in. I selected and confirmed the participation of the three research sites by first forming relationships with the participating teachers, based on their explicit or implicit interest in critical pedagogies and pedagogical interventions toward more inclusive learning spaces. Compulsory state secondary education fills students' formative years on their way to full participation as adults in society. This makes these schools particularly apt sites to conduct pedagogical research for change. Yet, educational structures are more rigid in secondary education compared to primary education, and there is thus less space for exploratory interventions. The three sites in this research all presented special opportunities to apply critical pedagogies with secondary school students.

All three are in urban, mixed-ethnicity neighbourhoods. This chapter introduces the three sites in chronological order of their participation in the research: Milestone Academy in Middletown, then Inspire Arts Comprehensive in London and lastly Camino Institute in Barcelona.

4.2 Milestone Academy, Middletown

When I arrived, Milestone Academy had recently been turned into an Academy and made part of a regional Academy Trust. Middletown is an urban university town near London, with linguistic and cultural diversity. To ensure anonymity for the school in this smaller

town, I have anonymised the name of the town. The school was in a central, residential neighbourhood of Middletown with a large Southeast Asian community, which was reflected in the school's demographics. The school was newly built, catering to 11–16-year-olds. Alex, the science teacher participating in the research, reflected that to him, the school was well integrated and connected to the local neighbourhood. As a relatively new science teacher at the school, he initiated the critical science project I observed for this research after having run a critical science after-school club the previous year, informed by his background in environmental education. He tried to get his colleagues and department on board with the idea of developing a critical science education unit based on a method called Stepwise (Bencze, 2017). While his department was supportive of his idea, they did not see it fitting into the fast-paced, exam-driven curriculum. For his colleagues, the extra workload seemed like too much. The department offered Alex the opportunity to try out his idea as part of the last week of the term summer timetable. So over 6 lessons, he implemented the Stepwise method in the form of a critical science project.

Alex applied this method in one year 8 and two year 9 classes, one of which he invited me to participate in. The year 9 class was made up of 21 13 and 14-year-old students. More than half of the class spoke English as an additional language, and some students were on the government's Pupil Premium program, indicating their precarious family economic situation. There were 14 boys in the class and 7 girls. Some students had special education needs and some were part of the school's low achievement program, while others were part of the school's high achievement program.

The critical science project took place over two weeks. It was titled, "Controversial Issues in Science", and it aimed to get the students engaged with socio-scientific issues. Based on the Stepwise program, the project was organised in several phases, which reflected scientific and technological topics students were familiar with in their everyday lives and the school's curriculum. Students formed groups of two to four, mostly with their friends, and then chose the topic they were interested in researching. There were groups on the following topics (named this way by the students): energy efficiency; medicine, environment and health (looking at the production and effects of smart phones); teenage smoking and vaping; nuclear weapons; and one group titled their project "general smoking" but looked at the effects of cannabis. Over the sessions I participated in, students first studied secondary (scientific) literature on their topics, from which they formulated their research questions and then conducted primary research. All groups

decided to conduct interviews with peers or family members for their primary research; most interviewed their classmates. Students were asked to choose a final output that would allow them to share their findings with others. The class decided to produce posters and set up a poster conference inviting staff and peers as the culmination of the project.

4.3   Inspire Arts Comprehensive, London

Inspire Arts Comprehensive is a comprehensive community school in an inner London neighbourhood that specialises in visual and performing arts. The school had received funding to build an arts building, which was well equipped, however, recent cuts had meant that most of the creative subjects were eliminated or underfunded. I was invited to participate in a project set up by an arts educator through a collaboration between the school and an arts organisation. At the last moment, that project could not go ahead due to miscommunication between the artist and the school.

The art educator, however, introduced me to Amber, the school's arts and media specialist and well-being officer, who was running an intervention class with students identified as at risk of exclusion. Amber, a senior teacher, had a certain freedom in her role to work outside the curriculum and organise schoolwide events and interventions. The intervention class ran daily, for one hour after lunch, throughout the last half-term before the summer holidays. All six students participating were boys between 11 and 14 years old. The school had identified all of them as having special educational needs. I participated in the last two weeks of the intervention class. During my time with them, one boy had already left the school due to illness in his family, so only 5 students remained in the program, of which I only met 4. Three of these boys were of African-Caribbean origin and one was white English. The intervention class was held in the disused arts building, where Amber had set up a breakfast club throughout the year and set up sofas and other furniture in the room to make it more comfortable. The classroom was adjacent to the school's referral unit, where students were placed who were internally excluded, meaning for a set time they were based in this unit and not allowed to participate in any other lessons. They also had their break time at different times than the rest of the school, to be kept separate. The vicinity to

the referral unit was an important factor to the students in the intervention class, which they commented on regularly, likely due to their familiarity with it.

The students in the intervention class did various activities during the 6 weeks of their program. They had, for instance, baked cakes for a tea party at a charity event in a local park, or turned the school's backyard into an accessible garden by cleaning it up and planting some flowers. Amber aimed to support the students in their relationships with some of the teachers and to support them to gain more confidence in their identities as learners. Throughout my research stay, students participated in a certified bike maintenance workshop and worked on organising a garden-café party to inaugurate the new garden, to which they were allowed to invite teachers of their choice and their families. They prepared by writing invitation cards, baking cakes, and setting up the garden. The students put on the event on the final day of the intervention class.

4.4   Camino Institute, Barcelona

Camino Institute is a state secondary school in a central neighbourhood in Barcelona, catering to students from year 7 to year 12, while also providing the Spanish equivalent of Britain's A-levels, Bachillerato. The current head teacher had taken over the school some five years before and made use of the new expanded autonomy and powers afforded to head teachers (Collet-Sabé, 2017) to set up a project-based learning structure. Social and natural sciences, as well as the arts, were taught holistically through applied projects in local organisations or on local issues. The main subjects — Spanish, Catalan, English, and maths — were typically taught in the mornings, and in the afternoon students signed up for projects run by different subject teachers. Up until year 10, students participated in a range of projects to learn a variety of subjects. For their A-level equivalent, Bachillerato, students pursued their interests and developed a portfolio of projects in which they applied their learning with a local organisation. The head teacher cited critical pedagogies and deep learning as his influence. He explained the school's three key ideas:

> Personalising the learning process where, through motivation and the acquisition of necessary abilities, every student finds their own pathway. The second, is deep learning, in contrast to memorising and expendable learning, so students can build a foundation which allows them to continue learning in later life. And the third is that

students do not learn by repeating knowledge but by creating it and placing it in context (interview with the head teacher in a local newspaper, my translation; a full citation has not been given, maintaining anonymity) (Headteacher – Camino Institute).

The school was located in a recently gentrified, previously industrial neighbourhood. The demographics of the student population reflected those of the neighbourhood. Some students' families, many of whom were poorer, had been living in the neighbourhood for generations, while others' families had recently moved into the neighbourhood and were attracted by the school's progressive turn and the recently amplified school choice programs (Bonal et al., 2021). While I do not have exact data, to me the student population appeared largely Catalan, with a minority of students from economically diverse migrant families. The research project took place in a year 9 English class of 21 students, all of whom were 13 or 14 years old. Their backgrounds reflected the general makeup of the school. While, unlike at the English schools, I did not see a data sheet of the students' identified attainment or learning needs, at least one student had been identified with a special educational need and was receiving support in some subjects but not in English.

Carla, the English teacher, was a senior teacher, and part of the senior leadership team. She explained from the outset that she found it difficult to adopt the school's critical pedagogical format in her English lessons while still ensuring the students would learn the curriculum. The English department had made changes that year to implement more of the pedagogical structures present in the project-based lessons. I participated in her class weekly throughout the autumn term. Most of the classes were teacher-centric, however, at the end of each unit, Carla assigned small projects like presentations or role-plays in which students could apply their learning. Throughout my stay, I also took part in schoolwide project days marking specific events.

4.5   Chapter summary

The three research sites differed in context and setting, yet all three teachers had a keen interest in participating in the research. They all wanted to try out critical pedagogies in hopes of making secondary school more inclusive. So the three sites' differences enriched

the research by offering multiple angles from which to study the application of critical pedagogies.

5 Thematic analysis

5.1 Introduction of themes

This thesis explores the application of critical pedagogical practices in three classrooms and the inclusivity of the learning spaces produced in the process. Throughout the fieldwork and thematic analysis (see Section 3.5), I identified three core themes that this chapter will discuss. *Carving out spaces for critical pedagogies* analyses the challenges teachers faced in trying to apply critical pedagogies within the institutional structures of their schools. It explores the opportunities as well as the incompatibilities critical pedagogies generated in the school structures, specifically with pedagogical and structural practices of assessment, time, and participation. *Changing the terms of engagement* explores the constitution of subjectivities in the schools visited and how the implementation of critical pedagogies allowed for subtle shifts in these subjectivities. It analyses how these changes shifted the students' relationships with learning, with staff and peers, and with the institution. *The place for emotions in school* reflects on accounts of emotions that emerged throughout the research. It looks at how and where participants engaged with emotions as part of their critical pedagogical practices, and the impact this had on students' inclusion in learning spaces. It analyses emotions as a barrier to learning, the feeling of control or its lack, and the role of enjoying learning within the pedagogical practices.

All themes are explored in relation to critical pedagogies, inclusive practice, spatiality, performativity, and my research questions which I will return to in more depth in Chapter 7. Theoretically the analysis uses the framework outlined in the literature review chapter (Chapter 2). Particular reference is made to the spatial lens (see Section 2.4) as a way of understanding the classrooms. In the analysis the first theme specifically draws on literature around critical pedagogies and its critiques (see Section 2.2), and notions of power and control in the knowledge production (Apple 1993; Kincheloe 2008). It draws on amongst others, Ahmed (2012) and Tuck and McKenzie (2015) to analyse the spaces for learning shaped. The second theme explores the negotiation of power dynamics in the spaces observed, and for this additionally makes reference to theory from a theatrical spatial lens (see Section2.5; Hunter; 2008 Ellsworth, 2005) whilst the third chapter focuses

more on the places for learning shaped through an engagement with emotions, drawing hereby on Ahmed (2014) and hooks (1994) and theories of inclusion (see Section 2.3).

The chapter is organised into three sections along the three main themes. Each section starts with an introduction to the theme and then discusses three sub-themes which were identified in the analysis process. The sections each conclude with a summary discussing the findings.

5.2   Carving out spaces for critical pedagogies

5.2.1   Introduction to the theme

This theme explores the spaces critical pedagogies were able to shape within the school structures. It surveys the synergies and conflicts critical pedagogies engendered as well as the implication for learning spaces thus generated. The metaphor of carving out spaces emerged from the sense of difficulty I perceived in the teachers' implicit and explicit negotiations in applying critical pedagogies within their institutions and the set learning cultures they were part of

Each participating teacher occupied a different professional position in their institution, and the way critical pedagogies were applied differed at each school. These variables shaped the possibilities and limitations teachers encountered in their work. *Assessment and valorisation in critical pedagogies* is about how participants assigned values within their critical pedagogies-based projects and their compatibility (or not) with institutional assessment systems in place. *Temporal practices in critical pedagogies* refers to the way participants (students and staff) engaged with time throughout the research and the time-spaces critical pedagogies shaped compared to those shaped by the neoliberal school structures observed. *Participation in critical pedagogies* explores how pedagogical choices facilitated or discouraged participation in relation to institutional structures in place, and the ways teachers and students understood participation pedagogically.

5.2.2 Assessment and valorisation within critical pedagogies

Assessment is a key theme in education. *The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education* (UNESCO, 1994) outlines assessment as follows: "Formative evaluation should be incorporated into the regular educational process in order to keep pupils and teachers informed of the learning mastery attained as well as to identify difficulties and assist pupils to overcome them" (p. 22). Assessment here is envisioned as supportive to teachers and learners and directly linked to processes of teaching and learning. In contrast, Collet-Sabé and Ball (2020) suggest assessments in the neoliberal school "are deployed for accountability purposes to monitor school performances in relation to centrally defined and measurable learning standards" (p. 125). To them, assessment is a technique linked to the ranking and standardising of schools. It is distanced in its purpose and perspective from teaching and learning practices in the classroom. Critical pedagogies connect valorisation to the learner's ability to apply what they learn towards making a change in the world around them (Freire, 1970). This section describes the three classrooms' systems of valorisation in their applications of critical pedagogies, and how these practices engaged with the assessment structures and cultures in the schools.

Assessments played a different role in each of the three classrooms studied based on the contexts of their schools and the spaces critical pedagogies occupied within school structures. At Milestone Academy and Inspire Arts Comprehensive, the critical pedagogies projects were not part of the formal assessment structures of the schools, as they were seen as end-of-year projects or interventions, supplementary to the curriculum. At Camino Institute, where critical pedagogies informed the overall structuring of the school, formal and informal assessment was embedded throughout the lessons I participated in.

5.2.2.1 Building a portfolio of experience

At Camino Institute, most subjects were taught through projects in collaboration with local organisations. Learning was situated and applied in context. The exceptions were the core subjects Spanish, Catalan, maths, and English, which were taught and assessed more traditionally. For the rest of the subjects, students developed a portfolio of projects

throughout their time at school. When they moved on from their compulsory secondary education to Bachillerato, which the school also provided, students were encouraged to specialise in fields they were interested in and had to develop a project with a partner organisation as part of their final grade. One of the aims of this, as explained by the head teacher, was that "all students can find their own path" (interview in local newspaper, source not given to protect anonymity). Leaving school, they could show a portfolio in their field of interest to potential employers or higher education institutions, as Carla, the English teacher and member of senior leadership, explained. The students would still sit some form of national exams, yet to Carla, these were "just informative":

> Carla: It [grades from national exam] tells you, the student and the school, where your students are according to certain standards (...) the mark of this test does not depend on the final grade, but it is a way to know if your students are accomplishing or getting the standards".

Carla continued to explain that to her, national exams "give you a category, outside, but they don't have the pressure of an external exam that is going to tell them [students] if they have their certificate or not".

While the educational transition from the obligatory secondary system (until age 16) is decisive for students and schools alike (Tarabini and Jacovkis, 2021), in Catalonia there is no standardised national exam at the end of obligatory secondary education, which in Catalonia is at the end of the 4th grade of the *ESO* ('Educación Secundaria Obligatoria' - compulsory secondary education). All grading in secondary school, including the final grade at the end of the ESO, is set by the class teacher. Compulsory secondary education is structured alongside basic competencies, which are in line with European standards (Sarramona i López, 2014; Triaeducativa, 2022) and students take a national test on these when they are 16. However, the result of these tests is, as Carla explained, a mere indication for schools and students. After the ESO, students can go on to study for their Bachillerato (A-level equivalent), or choose a post-16-vocational path, based on their choice or their teacher's or school's recommendation. The Bachillerato is also assessed internally within the school, however, to enter university, students have to sit a university entry exam (the *Selectividad*), which many schools take as a reference in their assessment practice and is decisive for students' access to higher education. Camino Institute taught and assessed the basic competencies throughout the ESO through applied project learning. For Bachillerato, students specified in an area and created a portfolio of their work, demonstrating their learning and its application.

Although as a core subject, English was not taught through project-based learning, to Carla as an English teacher students needed to apply their learning: "With all this [learning throughout a unit], can you bring it to the outside world and do something? Something that is yours, something that depends on you, you design it, you create it, you … introduce your own knowledge, you make it better". At the end of a unit, students had to apply their learning to a topic of their choice and give a short, assessed presentation on it. Applying learning in a situated context beyond the exam was an important form of evaluating the learning at Camino Institute, reflecting the core values of critical pedagogies (Freire, 1970). Project-based learning is hailed as progressive in Catalonia (Miño-Puigcercós and Sancho-Gil, 2019), however as only a few schools offer this, it makes these schools less accessible, as they become popular and thus harder to get into (Baena et al., 2020).

In interviews at Camino Institute, most of the 13-14-year-old students I worked with explained they liked the projects, but that to them these were additional, almost like supplementary afternoon classes, while they considered only their morning core classes "school".

5.2.2.2 Applying learning by sharing it with others

Learning within critical pedagogies is ideally embedded in a community, and often learning projects are designed around a moment of sharing within the community. In contrast to Camino Institute, at Milestone Academy, Alex, the science teacher, had to prove to his department that he had already taught all the assessed material before being authorised to start the critical science project. The year 9 class I participated in was studying the GCSE curriculum, which usually would be taught starting in year 10, to assure good grades in their exams three years later. GCSEs, the final exams of secondary education in England, put enormous pressure on students (Brown and Woods, 2022), whose further education or training depended on their grades, and also on the school, which was ranked according to the students' GCSE results. The school management did not consider the critical science relevant for the exam. Nor was it counted for assessment. While this implied less pressure for students taking part in the project, and more leeway for the teacher implementing it, it also meant that students' work and its quality and relevance were disregarded in the aspects that matter to the school, namely the exams. In line with critical pedagogies, Alex set up a final poster conference as a possibility for students to apply their learning by presenting their campaigns to others. He invited the management of the school to the

event, to demonstrate the value he saw in the work. Upon seeing the work students produced, Alex's managers were impressed and encouraged him to repeat the project the following year. However, they did not discuss including the work in the formal assessment structure.

At Inspire Arts Comprehensive, the intervention class was seen as a support class for 'failing' students to improve their attitudes and participation in the formal lesson structure. Like at Milestone Academy, Amber, the teacher and well-being officer, invited colleagues to the final event of the project. This let students share their learning and showed the value of the work. In both schools, students were working towards those sharing events, which shaped the processes throughout the projects.

5.2.2.3   Feeling valued

Assessment does not just provide feedback and ranking; it valorises students' learning. While the critical science project at Milestone Academy was not graded (as students did not receive formal credit or grades), valorisation was built into the project. At the beginning of the student-led research project, exploring the differences between primary and secondary research, Omari, a student in the class, said: "Secondary research is done by those who know what they are doing, primary research is just done by students who don't know what they are doing". He did not seem to value his work as a student; instead, he saw secondary literature as reliable information. As another student confirmed: "Secondary research by known people is more reliable". At the final poster presentation, Omari and his group presented their research on vaping, conducted through peer interviews. A visiting researcher of science education had a lengthy conversation with Omari about his research. Later this researcher commented to Alex how impressed he was by Omari and his group, and how they could "hold their own". He said he played "devil's advocate" and challenged them, yet they were able to argue their points. Omari later told Alex that "this guy really challenged" him and that he enjoyed that. This episode shows a form of validation, and possibly also assessment of Omari's skills. By the end of the project, he could "hold his own" in a debate with a subject-specific researcher. The assistant head teacher at the school also engaged with the poster of this group and praised it, suggesting Omari could present it at a whole-school assembly. In my notes, I wrote that Omari "visibly shuddered" in response. The assistant head teacher's praise represented the school's valorisation system.

The episode shows various aspects of assessment, which have to do with feeling valued, being able to apply one's knowledge and being challenged, feeling belonging or acceptance in an established system of praise, and a shift in the student's perception of the value of his work. Conducting his research on a topic of interest and presenting it back to his school community enhanced Omari's confidence and he applied his learning in a discussion. Additionally, his efforts were acknowledged by the school system, representing a form of reward. In the image theatre workshop, showing the place he felt most powerful, Omari positioned himself at the board, presenting or explaining the learning to a class. In an image indicating where he felt least powerful, Omari stood outside the classroom, in the role of being sent out or excluded. Being a (leading) part of the lesson structure was essential to him.

Figure 5-1 Images Omari, Milestone Academy

Being in a position of presenting to the class shows the student's contribution is valued, not excluded. From this, it appears that to Omari, valorisation extended the valuing of the learning task to the valuing of the whole student as part of the learning community. This gives insights into the importance of assessment to students' emotional well-being. Valorisation for Omari seems linked to a sense of belonging to the school community, as well as the school's system of valorisation. It visibly presents him as a knowledgeable person in front of the rest of the learning community (also see Section 5.4). Critical pedagogies being critical to the school system do not necessarily engage with the students' desires to be recognised in their learning by the school system.

5.2.2.4   Fear of failure

In a similar vein, for students I spoke to at Camino Institute, achievement in their classes was crucial. As Miquel, a student, explained, "When you have great marks, you are happy, because you have a great mark, and if you're bored at class (…) you get bad marks because if you're bored, you don't make the exercise". Miquel outlines the sense of achievement and belonging grading can give, and equally how feeling disengaged in a class leads to bad marks and disconnection. Structurally, in her role as a teacher at Camino Institute, Carla got to design her course assessment. Apart from a base assessment structure that she and her colleagues had settled on together at the beginning of the year, I noticed she decided at a moment's notice that certain additional tasks would be assessed. She would do this for tasks or homework that students were not completing: "I told them OK if you don't do the homework, (…) so if you don't do it you don't have the mark, you don't have the grade". She was using the grading as an effective levy to engage students in doing their homework. Here assessment is used as a measure to control students' work (see Section 5.4.3), knowing that if their grades depended on it they would do homework which they otherwise might not do. While assessing the task will also help the teacher to check students' learning, etc., she chooses to implement grades at this stage to enforce students' participation.

At Inspire Arts, the students of the intervention class rated a teacher on whether or not they helped them pass their GCSEs. JP, one of the students, discussed a member of staff he deemed a good teacher: "Like, for GCSE, he will make sure that you will pass. That's what my brother told me." Knowing whether a teacher would support final grades appeared to be a grapevine among students and the basis of their valorisation of teachers. It also informed their readiness to engage in their subject.

Failure was an important issue for the students in the intervention class. To Amber, it was one of the main reasons they disengaged. "They don't like to be shown up." She continued, "We don't do enough of students teaching each other. The teacher always stands in front trying to get through the material. Like students are buckets to be filled." Although Amber did not mention Freire, her description is similar to Freire's (1970) discussion of the banking model of education (see Section 2.2).

5.2.2.5   Diversifying assessable skills

As part of their intervention class, the students at Inspire Arts Comprehensive took part in a bike repair workshop for which they received certificates upon successful completion. These were given out as part of a whole-school end-of-year assembly. In the run-up to it, students repeatedly asked Amber whether they would be getting the bike certificates at that event. For the intervention group students, this was the first time they were invited to the assembly. They were, for once, included in the school's valorisation system as knowledgeable learners (see also Section 5.3). It was part of Amber's pedagogical approach to support the students to learn skills they were interested in and receive, while external to the curriculum, officially recognised assessment for that learning.

At Camino Institute, by contrast, Marta, a student with special educational needs in the English class, worked on a separate English book at a significantly lower level than the rest of the class. At the end of the unit assessment, she would present her work to Carla and be assessed for her efforts. Carla explained, "I think that if a student does the minimum required (...) I think that this student deserves an *assoliment suficient* [Catalan for sufficient achievement, 'pass' equivalent]." Carla had the autonomy to give students a pass even if they were working at a significantly lower skill level. The grading reflected the teacher's perception of the student's effort. While this arrangement provides an opportunity to assess progress without the limitations of nationally set criteria as exists in England, it also gives teachers more grading work and leaves space for teacher bias. Being able to set her assessments allowed Carla to engage with students' efforts, but at the same time, it also gave her as the teacher the power to set assessments as a form of behaviour management. However, by being able to assess the process as opposed to the level of ability, students with diverse abilities could pass a course, according to the teacher's discretion. Both examples show how diversifying what is assessed or how provided an opportunity for students who were struggling, or generally disengaged from the learning, to participate and achieve.

5.2.2.6   Discussion of assessment and valorisation within critical pedagogies

The critical pedagogies implemented in the three classes provided students opportunities to apply their knowledge and feel its value or impact. Valorisation within critical pedagogies

is situated; that is, it is realised through its application in context (Gruenewald, 2003b; see Section 2.2.2). Pedagogically, this contrasts with a universal and standardised national exam. This makes it difficult to carve out spaces for critical pedagogies in compulsory secondary education, which, in both England and Catalonia is geared toward a final exam or standardised assessment. Camino Institute having the structural possibility to set an equivalent alternative to the national exam helped to valorise the applied learning formally.

Carving out spaces for critical pedagogies in school-wide assessment structures supported a restructuring of the curriculum towards supporting students to explore their paths and to gain experience in applying their learning in local projects and organisations, in line with critical pedagogies' understanding of generative knowledge for the "social good" (Kincheloe, 2008). Having wider institutional freedom to fit assessment towards learners' needs offered the opportunity to formally assess their process rather than 'only' results, although this throws up important questions on teachers' bias when grading.

Nevertheless, even in schools without that structural flexibility to formally assess the work produced through the critical pedagogies projects, their application still offered opportunities to emphasise aspects of assessment. The frameworks uncovered some possibilities for creating change within assessment structures while also highlighting issues for reflection on the other. Not being included in formal assessment structures, also offered teachers the opportunity for pedagogical explorations and implied less pressure for students, as it placed their work outside of the performance metric of ranking. Discussing subjects not considered relevant enough to be examined subjects, Shaw (2022) argues: "Sitting outside the performativity agenda in this sense may strengthen their potential as educative spaces in which to develop more human-centred, transformational approaches" (p. 3). Applying critical pedagogies at the classroom level engaged and supported students in gaining confidence in their abilities through working independently on inquiries of their choice and applying their learning by presenting it back to their (school) community, as such, situating the learning (Grunewald, 2003b).

This dynamic calls into question the purpose of learning and who assesses it, and "what counts as an appropriated display of having learned it" (Apple, 1993, p. 222; Section 2.2.1.1). Is learning for passing an externally set exam, or for manifesting engagement with the (learning) community? These exercises in critical pedagogies show that alternative assessments are possible. Students can be graded on their ability to use their

learning in context instead of comparing students' ability to answer questions correctly against a national standard.

Beyond institutional structures, it was also challenging to carve out spaces for critical pedagogies within the cultures institutionalised within the school communities, including the teachers working with critical pedagogies themselves (see also Section 2.3.1: Nind and Lewthwaite, 2018). For the students in this study, an assessment was closely connected to their emotional well-being. How their work was valued within the schools' grading systems determined whether they felt like part of the school or lesson. This sense of belonging — or not — affected their readiness to learn. Established assessment structures determined, to a great extent, whether students felt acknowledged and powerful at school (see Sections 2.3.1 and 5.4).

Critical pedagogies are designed to engage critically with institutional structures (Freire, 1970), and in this aim do not necessarily account for the fact that students may want to be recognised by the institutions. Here critical pedagogies would need to critically reflect on the "material and cultural conditions" (Kitching, 2011, p. 113; see also Section 2.2.2) they operate in. The pressure of assessment shapes student-teacher relationships. Even a school with an assessment model based on critical pedagogies is still operating within the meritocratic culture of grades, and students, as well as teachers, draw on the incentive of positive grades and the fear of failure.

Finally, critical pedagogies questioned what learning schools deem assessable and the power behind who decides what knowledge is included in the curriculum (Apple, 1993; Section 2.2.1.1). Focusing the curriculum on skills students wanted to learn and making them formally assessable enhanced students' engagement and their sense of achievement (see Section 5.3). While critical pedagogies see learning as part of changing the world (Freire, 1970), students also wanted to feel like *part of* the world around them, their school, even if the school's structures excluded them. Moreover, grades determine students' professional possibilities and often their future life chances hinge on their ability to get good grades (see Tarabini and Jacovkis, 2021). Grades come with pressure, and students wanted to do well. Since teachers used their judgement in assigning grades, they had power over their students. The power dynamic was inherent in teachers' ability to award grades. This power imbalance would need to be addressed, or at least considered when engaging with the hierarchy between teachers and students.

5.2.3   Temporal practices in critical pedagogies

Time was a recurring theme in this research. This section is an analysis of how participants talked about time and how it structured the learning spaces observed. Throughout the study, I focused on the temporal aspects of pedagogies and school structures. This sub-theme outlines the temporal practices I identified.

5.2.3.1   Controlling time versus time for sustained care

At Milestone Academy and Inspire Arts Comprehensive, the teachers I worked with were exploring applying critical pedagogies within school structures not explicitly sympathetic to their pedagogical approach. They both fitted their work into the time they had, complying with the school's demands. They felt it was difficult to make time for the care they felt their students needed.

Amber, the teacher at Inspire Arts Comprehensive, told me, "Time, we don't have time! In a one-hour lesson … the teacher needs to set up the lesson, date, learning objective, etc., in the first 10 minutes, otherwise (...) they never get any learning done". The teachers often felt like they were running out of time, that there was not enough time to comply with the formal demands of a lesson and to still have enough time to teach the way they considered necessary for students' learning. This is common: "(T)he contemporary teacher is being squeezed through the seemingly infinite extension of time(s) available to prepare for and achieve effective class-time" (Thompson and Cook, 2017, p. 35), which lead to a constant sense of being behind time, or "out of sync" with time (Thompson and Cook, 2017). Amber felt she did not have enough time to work in-depth with the students and support them in their needs. "Because we get desperate, we want quick results". Her school's time pressure and results-driven culture made it hard for her to find time for sustained care.

At Camino Institute, the school's inclusion policy ensured staff had sufficient time to engage with all students. Carla, who also formed part of the school's management, explained, "The school (...) takes measures to include everybody. One of these is to have less students in a group, so this means (…) the possibility to help students is higher (...) we have regular meetings (…) so we can (...) comment on difficulties students have". These practices made for a notably different culture around time at Camino Institute. While

Amber felt controlled by time and had to carve out spaces like the intervention class project to engage in depth with her students, Carla's school structurally created those opportunities for teachers and students to connect. Carla's perception might be biased, being a member of the senior leadership team taking structural decisions, however, in my observation notes, I noticed several times that I felt less time pressure at Camino Institute than at the other two schools.

5.2.3.2   Symbolic time

The students at Inspire Arts Comprehensive felt there was not enough time to delve into the topics that interested or represented them. Jonas, a student in the intervention class, explained that, as a Black student, he would like to include black history in the curriculum:

> Jonas: I would like to learn about black history (...)
>
> Zeke: We already do that.
>
> JP: We do this brov!
>
> Jonas: No! 6 months a year like, 6 months, 6 months.
>
> Zeke: We only do it once a year!

School management labelled these students disengaged. This conversation shows the students' interest in working in more depth on topics relevant to them. Both in England and Spain, schools often dedicate a few weeks, such as during Black History month, to specific topics engaging with social justice issues. Critics argue that the time frame set aside only allows for a symbolic engagement with structural issues, as opposed to sustained work (Doharty, 2019; King and Brown, 2014; etc.). Reflecting on the intervention class he was part of, Stephen, another student, explained, "I feel like, all the stuff that happened [intervention class program], it only goes to like a month and then it will just stop". He wanted a longer-term change. At Camino Institute, by contrast, student-led committees worked on social issues like gender-based violence or climate justice and organised events throughout the school year. Carla explained, "If you decide something is important, you make time for it". Despite the year-round attention on social issues, some of the students at Camino Institute still felt their topics were not taken seriously. Alba complained that she was fed up that all activities were focused on humans: "But I think, 'And what

about the animals?'" When choosing areas of focus for a school, or even a classroom, with diverse interests, it is inevitable that issues some students find important will be missed.

5.2.3.3   Performative time versus process-based time

For Alex at Milestone Academy, time was a central issue, as he had to carefully plan the entire school year to make time in the end for the critical science project. His department saw the project as an add-on. Alex had wanted to weave the critical science project throughout the term's curriculum, but in the end, he was forced to fit it into the last two weeks as a summer project.

Nevertheless, the final student-led poster conference proved to be a great success and subsequently, the management agreed to let him repeat the project the following year and make it part of the curriculum. In hindsight, Alex reflected, "I think that in terms of time it [the project] was very rewarding. If, I mean, if I explain this to (...) a head teacher of any school and told him that in 9 lessons you would have an event like that [student poster conference], I think they would like the idea". Alex had identified the 'marketable' aspect of the project. A timeframe that initially seemed too short to him for meaningful work to be done turned out quite useful for selling this critical science project to a head teacher. Alex was aware of this contradiction: "Of course, that's (...), it's like selling a product to someone who wants to sell this to other people".

In contrast, the students I interviewed at Milestone thought the timeframe was too short. They felt unable to do in-depth research:

> Aaminah: I think what was challenging to do, was to do it in the time-space (…)
>
> Nelly: If you had more time, what would you have done?
>
> Aaminah: I think we would have looked into what we had more, … because of the research we had more questions which like came up, so like yeah, look into those questions.
>
> Dunyah: But we had to not do that anymore, because we didn't have enough time.

Aaminah uses the term "time-space", a keyword of this research, which could indicate that she was perceiving the time within the project spatially. In my observations, I describe the

spatial feel of classes during the critical science project as "a warm, positive hum. Everyone is focused, working with each other, preparing, and finalising their work. The teacher is a bit stressed and keeps announcing the time." In contrast to the students, the teacher, aware of the scarce time frame he had to operate in, was stressed. The students seemed absorbed by the learning process.

For a teacher, achieving an outcome in a short time frame, despite the stress it might cause, was a selling point. Yet for the students, who wanted to dive deep into their topics, the project was too short. The students' focus here is on the learning process; while the teacher also cares about the process, he is coerced into caring for the marketable outcome of the event, because of the pressure from the school's management. This contradiction highlights the growing conflict between the marketisation and neoliberalisation of schooling, where much pressure is put on the performativity of education, yet not much time is left for the process: "Within the rigours and disciplines of performativity we are required to spend increasing amounts of our time in making ourselves accountable, reporting on what we do, rather than doing it" (Ball, 2016, p. 1053). The countable outcome of the student poster conference, achieved in a short time frame, is seen as having more merit than a longer period of student-led exploration of a topic. By this logic, Black history month events are worth more than integrating racial justice and history lessons into entire course curricula.

More so, there is an affective element to the different types of time-space. Trying to fit an exploratory time-space, which is defined by its process, into a short, outcome-oriented timeframe can produce stress — as it did for teachers and some students— because the different attributes of the time-spaces are conflicting with each other.

5.2.3.4   Control over time

Who had control over time was another issue that came up for students. In a student perception map at Milestone Academy, a student wrote, "What the time is" in a message bubble indicating *typical conversations or thoughts taking place in the classroom*. Students frequently inquired about the time in all three classrooms. While sometimes it seemed students asked this question to interrupt their teacher and demonstrate their boredom with the lesson, they also wanted to understand how much time was to be spent on which activity. This implies their need for transparency of the time structure of the lesson.

Students did not miss opportunities to remind their teachers that the time was up, which manifests their desire to have a sense of control around the end of a lesson (see Section 5.4.3).

Alex and Carla used the expression "your time" to indicate a period within the lessons that students could manage themselves. In the critical science project, Alex designated chunks of lesson time to the students as "their time". When moving from teacher-managed-time to student-managed-time, the atmosphere in the classroom became more relaxed and the background noise level rose a bit, yet the students worked with focus without their teacher forcing them to. At Camino Institute, Carla would try to persuade the students to pay attention to her instructions by stating, "The rest of the time is yours!". She thus attaches a sense of ownership over time, and herself as the one who gets to control a certain part of that time in a lesson. The institution gets to set how much time students and teachers have with each other, and when.

Amber at Inspire Arts, on the other hand, did not offer the intervention class students "their time". She felt it was important to help the students structure their time. She let them know how much time each chunk of the lesson would be taking and how long they should be working on the next task. "They need bite-sized chunks of doing and reflecting and doing and reflecting rather than one large chunk of doing, and then straight to another lesson". To her, a transparent structuring of time would support students' participation in the lesson. Equally, some of the students in Alex's class at Milestone Academy seemed to struggle to find work for themselves in the part of the lesson entirely given over to the students to structure for themselves, and Alex would go over to support them in finding how to contribute.

The teachers' practices show that transparently structuring time is part of giving students support, as opposed to leaving them to their own devices without any structures or processes in place for them to learn how to engage with that time. Students spoke up for themselves in this regard by demanding transparency around how much time was left in a given lesson or activity.

5.2.3.5   Discussion of temporal practices in critical pedagogies

Time posed a central issue for participants in this study. Holland et al. (2007) suggest: "Conceptualisation of time is socially constructed, and in schools it appears as a variable to be managed and controlled" (p. 229). The different examples in the schools researched showed that the teachers' ability to control the structuring of time was crucial for the implementation of the critical pedagogical work, which they had to carve out with varying degrees of difficulty. Implementing critical pedagogies challenged the institution's control of time, a subversion of power dynamics at school that aligns with Freire's (1970) framework. Critical pedagogies' focus on facilitating students' critical engagement with their environments and histories also means the process of this work shapes schools' temporal organising. Structuring learning according to critical pedagogies requires sustained engagement with students' learning processes. This can clash with the neoliberal classroom (Ball, 2016), where the teacher is continually in a hurry trying to meet the institution's demands (Thompson and Cook, 2017).

In this study, the two teachers in England felt controlled by time, over which they often had little agency. While all three schools valued events that showed diversity and student participation, the performative value of these events was often more important for school management than the processes of producing them. Time for in-depth engagement with students' needs or interests was rare unless the school specifically made time for it.

For these teachers, trying to carve out time-space for critical pedagogies in the neoliberal school entailed negotiation between sustained, process-based time and meeting symbolic, performative demands, all within brief windows of available time. Through the spaces shaped by critical pedagogies, students critically engaged with their learning spaces, and even students who were deemed 'disengaged' shared their desires for sustained learning on topics that mattered to them, highlighting one of Freire's (1970) key intentions of engaging with topics that matter to the students (see Section 2.2.1.3). While students generally awaited the end of a lesson, they asked for more time for their critical pedagogies-based learning, which suggests a shift in their perception of time.

Regardless of the pedagogical practice, there were tensions between teachers and students over who controlled the time in the classroom (see Section 5.4.3). Both often used time to exert power over the other. At the same time, teachers' structuring of time

supported some students' engagement. Some understood inclusive temporal practice as making time for sustained care for each student, which is in line with what Nind (2005) calls a "reconceptualisation of (…) learning support". (p. 274; see Section 2.3.4). Some teachers and students alike desired a transparent and democratic organisation of time and timetabling.

5.2.4 Participation in critical pedagogies

All three teachers, and the schools they taught at, were concerned about students' participation in lessons. While teachers noted students were more engaged throughout project-based lessons (end-of-unit projects, creative projects, etc.), students disengaging from lessons was a general worry. Structurally, participation can be understood and practised in various ways; Cornwall (2008) calls it an "infinitely malleable concept" (p. 269). Developing a framework for participation, aiming toward an inclusive classroom, Black-Hawkins (2010), with reference to Booth (2002), argues, "Participation in education (...) involves active engagement with what is learnt and taught and having a say in how education is experienced. But participation also involves being recognised for oneself and being accepted for oneself" (p. 396). This framework highlights three main indicators for participation in education, which I will draw on throughout the next section, exploring the different forms of participation observed in this study:

- active participation in the learning;
- input on how the learning space is shaped; and
- the possibility of being able to participate as "oneself".

I identified seven forms of participation, facilitated through pedagogical or structural practices observed, which this section will explore.

5.2.4.1 Diverse forms of participation in learning

The student-led poster conference at Milestone Academy was highly participatory. At this event, students shared findings from their critical science projects with visiting groups of peers and staff. They had small, spontaneous group discussions while congregating around their poster displays. The whole class had taken part in preparing for the event.

They conducted the research, designed the posters, and prepared the classroom layout for the presentation. Upon reflection, two students said:

> Aaminah: I think Sir made the project, um, very creative, so doesn't matter who you are you could, whatever project you wanted to do.

> Dunyah: Yeah, look into whatever you wanted to do.

In their eyes, the critical science project offered a way for every student to participate in the lessons and engage with work they were interested in. In the student poster conference students were able to participate in the learning, shaping the learning space, and, according to the students quoted above, participate in the project regardless of their needs or interests. Each student had the opportunity to work on an aspect of their choice.

Nevertheless, in my observations of the poster conference, I did note certain power dynamics inherent to the student group being played out, and more confident students in the classroom community seemed more at ease engaging with the visiting audience than others.

Altogether, Alex, the teacher at Milestone Academy, said he felt that the project was more inclusive than his usual lessons. He thought more students were actively involved, and that the group-work aspect helped with this. Yet, he said, "There were students that got stuck in many ways, feeling isolated maybe, feeling weird". Nevertheless, he added, "I think it was inclusive because with a bit of — relative compared to a normal lesson — with a bit more effort they found ways forward, doing simpler tasks". To Alex, the critical pedagogical framework he applied was more inclusive because it allowed most students to participate and it enabled him to support struggling students in participating.

Freire (1970) stresses that critical pedagogies aim for "not pseudo-participation but committed involvement" (p.69) of the students, which includes their "reflective participation" (p.65) in the process, in line with critical pedagogies' dialogical approach. In this example, Alex's pedagogical choices contributed to making the learning space participatory, he was committed to the students' involvement (Freire, 1970). For example, he gave the class a framework of roles for groupwork, such as scribe, researcher, group lead, and so on, to help students find a way of contributing. Throughout the project, the

majority of students could participate in the learning in various ways, even though some needed a bit of support, which the structure facilitated.

5.2.4.2   Supported participation

Although many students said that the freedom to self-organise was a highlight of the project, for some this felt overwhelming. The structure the roles offered was helpful, yet some needed extra support from the teacher to find a role for themselves. For instance, Alex helped Humza, a student on the SEN (special educational needs) register who often struggled in science lessons, to search for images online that would support the project. This supported the student's integration into his group. Humza also volunteered for practical tasks such as photocopying to contribute to the group project.

In contrast, Marta at Camino Institute, a student on the autistic spectrum who struggled with the English classes, generally worked on a separate workbook, even though group work was standard in the lessons and she formed part of a group table. Nevertheless, Marta was keen on finding other ways to participate in the classroom community. Like Humza, she would look for practical tasks like handing out sheets of paper or assisting the teacher in cleaning the board. Carla, the teacher, explained that she felt the end-of-unit creative projects gave all students a chance to participate: "Maybe Marta is not good at English, but she takes beautiful pictures, and then she has the opportunity to show [her skill] (…). I can talk to her and propose that she does that [give her feedback on her work]".

Humza and Marta both found ways to participate in the classroom community by contributing practical tasks, while their teachers also looked for ways to include them in the project-based learning by drawing on visuals as an alternative form of literacy. Creating a structure with a range of roles and different forms of expression allowed for a broader range of students, especially those who often struggled, to participate in their own ways (Black-Hawkins, 2010). Yet even though the pedagogical choices supported students' participation in their learning communities, they did not necessarily participate in the collective learning tasks. It could be argued that Marta was accessing more learning working on a separate workbook than handing out photocopies. In her reflections, Marta preferred to work on her own "special book… because I don't like to do the things the others are doing, which are very difficult". This statement suggests that Marta felt unable to

participate as herself in the set collective learning task (Black-Hawkins, 2010), and preferred to participate in the classroom community from the margins, by supporting with practical chores, but doing her work separately. But the quote also reveals her desire to participate in the classroom community. A different set-up in which Marta was not the only one working alone, which would still allow all students to engage with learning they felt accessible, might change her learning experience and support her participation in the learning community.

5.2.4.3   Technology mediated participation

At Camino Institute, technology played an important role in the lessons. Students were equipped with personal iPads, work was often given through Google Docs, and learning was frequently transmitted through interactive online activities. In the evaluative theatre workshop at Camino Institute, to show when they felt the classroom "belonged to everyone", students showed images of working together in groups, often mediated by a computer or screen, taking on different roles in their interactive tasks. Out of the four groups creating images of belonging, three felt everyone was able to participate when working together through technology. The technology facilitated everyone's integration. The fourth image pictured the students doing a warm-up at a physical education class.
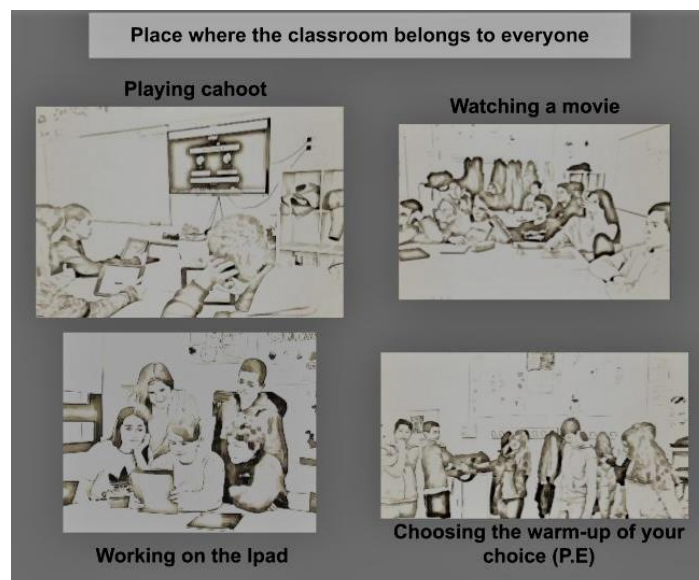
Figure 5-2 Image of place where the classroom belongs to everyone, Camino Institute

In a different example at Camino Institute, Marta initially did not want to take part in the theatre workshop until I offered her a special role: taking photos of the images instead. Marta was part of the school's photography project, which she would attend a few afternoons a week. Later, she reflected, "This exercise went really well, because it was me who took the photos and I liked it a lot (…) I could see everyone". By respecting her choice not to participate, she was able to find a role in which she was part of the class, but in control of her task. While she is not represented in the images, she is the one taking the photos. This crucial role may have given her a sense of belonging to the classroom community. Here, technology enabled a diversity of ways to participate.

5.2.4.4   Non-participation as form of participation

In the theatre workshop at Milestone Academy, some students, including Humza, decided not to participate in the production of some of the first images and remained in their seats. They consented to participate in the research, and engaged in other activities, including in later images. I understood their non-participation in the first images as their contribution. Seeing the photograph of the whole-group image, everyone's position was part of producing that image, including those who decided to remain in their seat (see Chapter 6). Respecting non-participation as a contribution required me as the facilitator to be flexible enough to shift away from how I proposed the activity initially. In ground rules established at the beginning of the exercises, I had asked students to respect everyone's work, and also their sense of feeling comfortable with the work. By remaining in their seats, Humza and the others showed respect and were also respected by others in their choice not to create images, including by me, the facilitator and researcher. In the final images, Humza and other students joined the image work. Being respected in their initial decision to opt out might have influenced them to later participate in the activity.

5.2.4.5   Students' knowledge forming part of the learning material

Peer interviews were an activity that engaged all students in the science project at Milestone Academy. In their groups, students conducted research on their topics and discussed questions they wanted to know more about, and subsequently created interviews, which they carried out mostly with their classmates. Being able to draw on each other's knowledge and presenting those findings back to each other activated even the quietest of students. Students as "critical co-investigators in dialogue with the teacher" is

key in Freire's (1970, p. 62) outline of critical pedagogies. It aims to equalise the hierarchy of knowledge, giving students' knowledge and interests as much importance in the lesson as it does knowledge from books and experts. hooks (1994) takes this idea further by emphasising experiential knowledge, the importance and uniqueness of students' own knowledge based on their experiences.

5.2.4.6   Participating in changing structures

When Jonas says he wants to learn more about his history, Black history, at Inspire Arts (see Section 5.2.3.2), he is suggesting changing the curriculum: "I am Black myself, and I don't learn about my roots. I wanna learn about that (...) I wanna learn about my great-great-great-great-grandfather". He wanted to see his own history and cultural experience as part of the curriculum. By making students' knowledge and experiences an important part of the learning space, students become actors in shaping that space. This is a step towards what Cornwall (2008) calls "transformative participation (…) participation as an end in itself" (p. 274). What Jonas is asking for is not only to participate in designing the curriculum but for his experience to be located in the curriculum, which is a location from the "margins", as Black history and experience are usually marginalised in the curriculum (King and Brown, 2014). hooks (1989) refers to this as the "politics of location", inviting participation from the space of margins for a shift in cultural hegemonic practice (hooks, 1989). In this way, the student's desire for this change of curriculum is a decolonial stance, not only in the proposed shift of content but also in Jonas' intended action of participating in the place of curriculum making, hereby challenging a norm of which bodies are "in place" or are "invading this space" (Ahmed, 2012; Section 2.4.1).

5.2.4.7   Organising *for* versus organising *with*

Not all students at Milestone Academy were able to participate in the poster conference. A group of students in the class labelled with a special educational need (SEN) was taken out of lessons that day by the SEN department. As it was the end of the summer term, and students with special educational needs were seen to be struggling to concentrate, it had been arranged for them to take part in an external sporting event. It was an unfortunate logistical clash, yet exploring it in terms of participation brings up the different pedagogical perspectives behind the two events and the lack of coordination between the different events. The SEN department arranging the trip decided the best way to support SEN-

labelled students was to take them out of lessons and have them participate in a separate outdoors event. Participatory theatre, theatre based on critical pedagogies, sees participatory work as making an event with the community (Kershaw, 2002), whereby "the quality of participation (...) for community partners must be equal to what the artists gain for themselves" (Cohen-Cruz, 2010, p. 175).

Working in a participatory way with the (classroom) community means also sharing the design and decision-making of the event. While the SEN department organised the trip with the needs of the group of students in mind, they organised it *for* (Kershaw, 2002) them, without checking in with the students' specific needs or contexts. One of the SEN students taken out of class prepared a video to accompany his group's poster, finding a way to be present after all. Alex, the teacher, thought it was a shame that the SEN students had to miss the event because it kept him from seeing how the set-up might have helped the students take ownership over their learning. In his pedagogical approach, the students' ownership of the event was key. But at his school, unlike at Camino Institute, where critical pedagogies are the norm, external structures limited his ability to organise the event *with* them and not *for* them.

5.2.4.8   Discussion of participation in critical pedagogies

I saw a spectrum of participation across the three schools. Trying to carve out spaces for critical pedagogies opened possibilities for students' and teachers' participation on different levels, from the classroom to wider school structures. Teachers encountered limitations in trying to shape participatory learning spaces through critical pedagogies, and these constraints highlighted certain issues for reflection in school structures, but also for critical pedagogies. Students' participation in the learning was supported by giving them autonomy, like choosing their learning focus, their group, or their form of output. Being able to draw on each other's experiences and knowledge (Freire, 1970; Section 2.2.1.4) made students feel like part of the lessons and facilitated their engagement. This led to some students asking for their own experiences and histories to be part of the curriculum, which would entail their participation on a structural level. Structural participation from students from marginalised backgrounds and including their histories in the curriculum would present a cultural hegemonic shift (hooks, 1989), which might support the engagement of those who speak from a culturally marginalised location, and as such pose a decolonial

stance by challenging the norms and access of a structural place (Ahmed, 2012; Section 2.4.1).

For participatory spaces to be inclusive and accessible to all students, however, structures would need to be put in place to support students to find ways to engage. Black-Hawkins (2013) reflects that "participation… requires our careful vigilance: it is not a state that can somehow be arrived at or fixed" (p. 96). Ensuring participation across diversity is constant work. At times this may include respecting students' wishes not to participate and accepting their non-participation as a contribution to the learning space. This may pose a challenge to the initially planned activity, but it demonstrates listening to participants' perceptions and needs beyond the suggested pedagogical framework (Walsh, 2015). Nevertheless, certain structures can facilitate or hinder participation from the outset. It was easier for teachers to create a participatory classroom when they could participate in the organising at an institutional level, from logistics to being able to adapt their pedagogical framework to students' needs. Teachers needed to be involved in institutional decision making and students wanted to be involved in class design.

5.2.5 Summary of theme: Carving out spaces for critical pedagogies

Section 5.2 discussed the theme *Carving out spaces for critical pedagogies*, analysing the process of applying critical pedagogies in the three different schools. The following summarises the findings, exploring the potential critical pedagogies showed working towards shaping more inclusive spaces for learning, and the limitations their implementation highlighted in the structures of the schools.

In multiple cases, the application of critical pedagogies in the classroom was facilitated when the school supported its implementation from the outset, even more so when the school was organised in a way that aligned with critical pedagogies. This included ensuring, structurally, that teachers and students had time to focus on the process this kind of work requires, and that teachers also had time for sustained care and support of their students. It was also important that teachers could participate in structural decision-making of the organisation of their classroom and timetabling, as well as in curriculum and assessment choices. These needs at times clashed with an outcome-oriented school

structure that was organised to be time-efficient, saturated with the bureaucratic task, and focused on performative rather than substantive actions. Without structural support, teachers implementing critical pedagogies in their classrooms as an intervention toward more inclusive classrooms had to work hard to carve out spaces for their pedagogical practices. Changes could be implemented but it was difficult to sustain them. This highlights the tensions around who sets the criteria of curriculum and assessment choices as well as around their legitimization (Apple, 1993; Section 2.2.1), which in turn determine which knowledge is valorised in the classroom and how much time-space it can therefore occupy or not.

Critical pedagogies supported students' engagement in learning by giving them autonomy to explore issues that affect them, draw on each other's experiences, and apply their learning within their (school) community (Freire, 1970). Nevertheless, in supporting a more inclusive classroom and the engagement in particular of those often disengaged, some students needed more structured support, and at times even needed to be respected in their wish not to participate. This may pose a challenge beyond critical pedagogies (Walsh, 2015). Whilst critical pedagogies aim to support changing the world around the students, students showed they also wanted to feel part of the world around them, or "in place" (Ahmed, 2012), as it represented an important system of valorisation for them, even if its structures were at times designed to exclude them, posing a contradiction. The research showed that by engaging from their marginal position in the structures of the school, some of the students' ideas could contribute to a possible cultural hegemonic shift (hooks, 1989), like shifting the focus of the school's curriculum. This could support students' engagement in learning and their ability to feel part of the institution. The practice in turn, could have the potential to shift the place of curriculum making and as such the institution itself (Tuck and McKenzie, 2015; Section 2.4.1).

5.3 Changing the terms of engagement

5.3.1 Introduction to the theme

Classroom relationships are at the heart of pedagogical practice (Nind et al., 2016). The critical spatial lens led me to explore the classroom as a space produced through its actors and their interactions (see Section 2.4). Critical pedagogies set out to shift structural power relationships between the learner and the institution, yet within the classrooms, power dynamics are dispersed and various. This theme analyses changes in the ways participants engaged within their learning spaces during my period of participant observation. The theme emerged in particular through the theatre workshops. Gallagher (2008) explains that working with theatre offers "openings for shifts in power dynamics and the reframing of the terms of engagement" (p.69).

The section analyses observations of pedagogical as well as spatial practices and how they changed participants', in particular, students', relationships with learning, with each other, and with their institutions. *Students' relationship to learning* explores shifts produced through pedagogical choices, changes in spatial arrangements, or through the act of learning itself. *Students' relationship with staff and peers* looks at how the different pedagogical frameworks shaped these relationships throughout the research, and *Students' relationship with institutions* explores how the pedagogical frameworks applied in the three studies shaped participants' subjectivities and changed how they engaged with their schools. The section concludes with a summary of the key findings in the analysis of this theme.

5.3.2 Students' relationship to learning

The following explores students' relationships to learning throughout the study, and how the pedagogical and spatial practices implemented affected them. It explores Freire's (1970) notion of learning as an emancipatory act and its applicability in the learning contexts observed.

5.3.2.1　Learning as emancipatory act

Critical pedagogies aim to situate learning in the world around the students and make an impact within it. Learning for change is seen as an emancipatory act for students (Freire, 1970; Section 2.2). In a perception map made by students at Camino Institute, Anna, one of the students, indicated the classroom as the place she learnt best, the playground as the place she learnt least, "the world" as her favourite place to learn, and the classroom again as her least favourite learning place. She explained with little notes that in the playground "I don't learn lessons, but I learn from my friends", and in "the world" she learnt "when I see other countries' routines". A subsequent interview revealed that the student was aware of the type of learning she was valued for in the classroom, which in other spaces she could not access as well, yet she also showed a preference for more contextual and relational learning, outside the classroom.
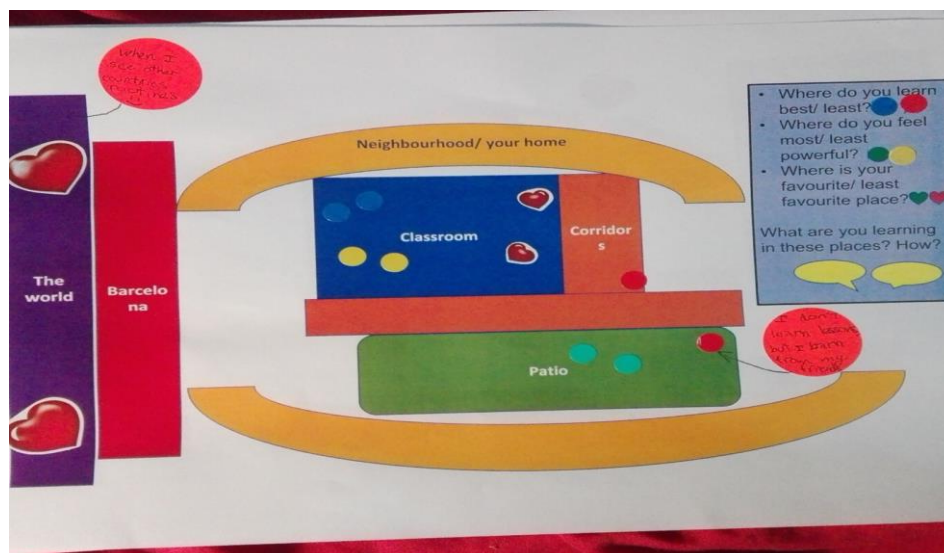
Figure 5-3 Perception map 2, Camino Institute

Different spatial set-ups can produce different types of learning, as well as different types of learning relationships, as this student identified. Throughout the project-based lessons in all three schools, teachers and students alike emphasized the impact the learning would have beyond the actual project, per the tradition of critical pedagogies. At Milestone Academy, for instance, students reported that it was important to them to communicate their findings around environmental topics to others. Reflecting on the critical science project, Mustafa shared that he liked "giving people ideas about our project and what we want to do and then explaining it further and letting them know how we're feeling for the

world". The political relevance of their projects was important to the students. Sharing their learning with others was too. Students reported they would be "looking to influence policy-making" (energy efficiency research group) with their projects, or research the "socio and environmental and economic consequences of regions where nuclear bombs were dropped" (nuclear weapons research group). Students were motivated to have a sense of agency within their fields, explain their views to others, and engage with social justice issues. Similarly, at Camino Institute, students explained how their project-based lessons aimed to make relevant contributions within their fields of study, such as researching and publicising the work of an unknown architect who worked in the vicinity of the school and, unbeknownst to most tourists, had contributed to important parts of a world-famous cultural site in the city. At Inspire Arts Comprehensive, Amber, the teacher of the intervention class, explained that to her, "This isn't about teaching them anything, it's about reigniting the spark, the doing and learning are kind of the same thing". She aimed to support the students to (re)build a relationship with learning independent of their relationships with their teachers, while also "gaining entrepreneurial skills".

All three of these examples suggest a desire for learning to be an emancipatory act (Biesta and Leary, 2012). Through learning, students would critically engage with the world around them and act upon injustices they encountered (Freire, 1970), contribute to their cities, or build a relationship with learning and learn skills that would support their financial emancipation in the future. A critical pedagogical approach may look critically at students gaining entrepreneurial skills since the figure of the entrepreneur is a hero in the neoliberal narrative and a symbol of the precarisation of the labour market. Yet, for the students at Inspire Arts, this role offered possibilities to explore their ideas and project their financial independence.

5.3.2.2　Students as knowledge producers

Another element in many of the lessons I observed was seeing students as experts. After having organised and conducted their research, students at Milestone Academy presented their work at the poster conference as researchers or experts in their research. Alex, their teacher, reflected that he noticed a shift about halfway through the project, where students started working with the material he had not looked into before:

> Alex: I thought, 'Okay, something is happening now', you know, because they discovered interesting facts about what they explored, some things I didn't know and I told them, 'Okay, you are creating science now', and I think yes, they felt it.

Alex's description shows how students were engaging with the learning and producing new knowledge in the classroom independently of him. In his perception, this was a shift that the students could feel, too, a shift towards feeling like a researcher creating science, producing knowledge. This implies a shift in subjectivity, which the teacher verbalised to his students. This shift in the students' subjectivation also changes the power dynamics between teacher and students; through their research, the teacher is put in the role of the learner, as the students' findings are new to him. Drawing on Foucault and Rancière, developing Freire's (1970) understanding of emancipation further, Biesta and Leary (2012) write, "In this way emancipation can be understood as a process of subjectification, that is, of becoming a (political) subject" (p. 16). By being perceived or identifying not as oppressed, but as an equal, students can change the terms on which they are engaging in the learning context. In this sense, students-as-knowledge-producers offers an already emancipated, equal subjectivity for the students through which to engage with learning.

5.3.2.3   Changed learner subjectivities

Their habitual learner subjectivities shaped students' relationships with learning. Depending on the subject — or, for some, across subjects — students would be seen either as achievers or as problematic learners. During this study, some of these subjectivities changed. In the evaluation session, the students in the intervention program at Inspire Arts Comprehensive explained enjoying the "bike-ability" workshop (see Section 5.2.2.5). One of the boys, Stephen, who on the whole struggled to attend the intervention program during my stay but completed the bike course, reflected, "I knew about bikes, but I could never try it [bike mechanics] out, so it was good to try it out". In his reflection, Stephen portrays himself as someone who knows about the skill to be taught. In his view, the problem was that the usual learning setting did not provide him with an opportunity to try out his skill or show and consolidate his knowledge. According to the school's data, Stephen was seen as a failing, disengaged, frequently truant student. He was put into the intervention class for these reasons. Speaking from the experience of the bike workshop, Stephen could identify as a confident learner, as well as reflect on and critique the usual learning setup from that perspective.

Rather than Stephen emancipating himself through critically reflecting on the school, and acting upon it (Freire, 1970), the changed learning setup made it possible for him to engage with a subjectivity that differed from how he was rendered in the school's day-to-day. He was not speaking from the identity of the problem student, an inferior identity within the school's discourse, but from the more equal position of someone who knows his abilities and can engage in criticism. Biesta and Leary (2012) write, "Subjectification is (…) a supplement to the existing order because it adds something to this order; and precisely for this reason the supplement also interrupts the existing order" (p. 16). A changed perspective through a different identification or subjectivation can shift or at least challenge existing discourse or the status quo.

5.3.2.4   Researching own communities

Reflecting on their experience of interviewing their peers for their research projects, students at Milestone Academy explained that the next step in their research would be to learn from those who they considered relevant, which included local shopkeepers (in the case of the group that studied the impact of vaping), or 4–5-year-olds (the group that studied smartphones), "as they really grow up with smartphones and know how to use them", as Dunyah reflected. As an adult, I would have thought a good peer group to interview were teenagers; however, from her experience and perspective, to Dunyah it made sense to interview much younger students. This also implies a shift in which types of knowledge are brought into the classroom, and which types of knowledge are valued. It expands the learning space towards the students' families and the local community. Nevertheless, the students were not able to extend their research, as they had to prepare for their GCSEs instead, where that knowledge was not valued much (see Section 5.2.2).

5.3.2.5   Learning in friendship groups

A common issue for teachers was teaching a mixed-ability class. Alex at Milestone Academy and Carla at Camino Institute both discussed their difficulties throughout the research. Alex felt that he could see a difference comparing his usual classes to the science project classes. In the first, he often felt he had to "split them [students] in ability groups and try to get something [learning] into the lower ability ones and let the other ones move on". By contrast, he felt the critical science project was "something different … a really good way to readjust the whole perception, to see differently, because some

students chose to work together because of their friendship relationships, and that worked well I think".

Alex is describing a shift from the teacher organising the learning for all students, aware that this would exclude some students, to students organising themselves in groups according to their criteria, in this case, friendship groups, and engaging with learning through this identity. Although some of the groups still formed along their usual set 'ability' lines, as Alex also noted, their main identifier was friendship, and then interest.

5.3.2.6   Discussion of students' relationship to learning

Pedagogical and spatial practices shifted students' relationships with learning. A change in learning spaces supported students to change their terms of engagement with learning. Some of the spatial shifts focused learning on the students' more personal worlds, like learning about their personal objects or in friendship groups, while others expanded learning spaces beyond the classroom. Nevertheless, all spatial shifts implied an approach that related learning to a context relevant to the students, as opposed to a universal, placeless learning approach (Gruenewald, 2003b). A learning focus on their own everyday objects allowed them to engage beyond the school's set learner subjectivities. Their existing relationship with, and therefore knowledge of these objects (e.g. their bicycle) shaped their participation in the learning spaces as knowledgeable learners. Having the choice to form their own learning groups supported students to learn in teams based on friendships rather than ability. Engaging with learning through friendship groups and personal or familiar objects, might have supported students' sense of working within *their* space, a space they felt part of (Morrow, 2011). The autonomy to learn on their own terms shifted the relationship between students and teacher and turned the students into knowledge producers, who could share new findings with their teacher. The shift in learning spaces also meant a shift in knowledge references, and students were keen to bring knowledge from their communities into the classroom. This context-specific knowledge clashed with the demands of the universally set exam culture (see Section 5.2.2). Setting up students as experts made them want to engage with the world around them as well as influence the wider field of study.

Some of these pedagogical changes saw learning as a means to emancipate the student. However, in other moments, the pedagogical and spatial shifts meant that students could

engage with learning from an altered subjectivity, and through it redefine their positionalities as learners. They did not embark on their engagement with the learning as an 'oppressed' subject, but as experts, knowledgeable learners, etc. Furthermore, by being able to have more input into shaping their learning set up, students took more ownership of their relationship with learning. They were able to shape the learning space with their learning references, their knowing and understanding (Cresswell, 2004).The pedagogical shift of and with the spatial, enabled a greater implication of the students within it (Ellsworth, 2005), and enabled alternative knowledge to be generated, "re-created through dialogue and in relation to others" (Nicholson, 2011, p. 9; see Section 2.2.1.1).

5.3.3 Students' relationships with staff and peers

Practitioners of critical pedagogies emphasise shifting power dynamics between teachers and students towards a dialogical relationship. Yet critiques of critical pedagogies (Ellsworth, 1989; etc.) highlight the importance of power dynamics in relationships among students, too (see Section 2.2). The following sections analyse the relationships between students and between students and their teachers throughout the study, and how the changes in pedagogical and spatial practices shifted these relationships.

5.3.3.1 Shifting teacher positionality

At Milestone Academy, I observed a gradual shift in the relationship between Alex, the classroom teacher, and the students throughout the critical science project. At the beginning of the project, Alex orchestrated the lessons from the moment students entered the room by repeating learning and behaviour instructions: "(...) titles in your books, choose your challenge from the board, stand behind the chairs, bags under the table, I am looking forward to your answers". In my observation notes, I wrote, "Students walk in quietly, straight into work. Sitting down at their desks, waiting to be picked. Teacher stands mainly in front." The class continued similarly: teacher-led instructions responded to by (some) students until it was time for group or project work. Once in group work, the teacher would move to more of an assisting role, supporting students' needs. Gradually, from lesson to lesson, the period of group work would expand and the teacher-orchestrated part of the lesson diminished. Towards the end of the project, students would

come into the room and immediately work in groups. Alex had transitioned from running the class to a "technical support" role as I noted in my observations. Physically, he would move from standing at the front at the beginning of the project to moving around and supporting students' needs, or even leaving the classroom to look for equipment. The shift in Alex's relationship with the students is very much in line with critical pedagogies' dialogic teaching and learning relationship (Freire, 1970).

In the evaluative image theatre workshop, Alex positioned himself sitting on a student's table to show where he felt he learnt best, among the students to show where he felt most powerful, at his desk to show where he learnt least, and on a separate table by the door, behind the horseshoe formation of the students' desks, to show where he felt least powerful. These images indicate his interest in forming part of the class and vacating his institutional position as the teacher, symbolised by the desk and computer. In contrast, some of the students positioned themselves at the teacher's desk or the board. One student, Sam, decided to stand on top of the teacher's chair indicating where he felt most powerful. In this image, Sam and Alex looked at each other, from reversed positions, exploring the swap in power. The playful nature of theatre allowed them to explore the power relations symbolised spatially in the different areas in the classroom and confront each other within the safety of the exercise (Pratt and Johnston, 2007; see Section 6.3). Notably, most students positioned themselves in relation to the teacher, or teaching area. I did not explore the relationships among the students further in this case (see Section 6.3).

Place I feel most powerful

Figure 5-4 Image of most place I feel most powerful, Milestone Academy

In contrast to the classroom at Milestone Academy, at Camino Institute the classroom was permanently set up for group work, and students were equipped with technical equipment like iPads and shared Google Docs to facilitate group work. Nevertheless, Carla, the teacher, generally preferred to teach from the front of the class and centred a great part of her teaching on the whiteboard or PowerPoints, which made it difficult for some students to face her since, in their group seating arrangement, some chairs faced away from the front of the room. At times Carla picked up students turning their backs for 'bad behaviour'. A spatial pedagogy does not necessarily determine the pedagogical framework the teacher uses.

5.3.3.2   Shifting learning spaces

I noted changes to learning spaces in all three schools. Sometimes learning spaces were physically changed around; at other times, the teachers decided to take the lesson to a different space altogether. This affected the relationships in the classrooms.

For the poster conference at Milestone Academy, students and their teacher moved all tables and chairs aside and each group set up their poster in a location of their choice within the classroom. Visiting peers and staff could walk around the space, checking out the posters and talking with their creators. The learning space emerged in the interactions around the posters. The science class hosted peers and staff who had an interest in the posters. The learning space was orchestrated by the set-up and the previous work and effort students had put into preparing their posters.

Similarly, in a reading comprehension lesson in which Carla invited students to a new library space in the school, equipped with bean bags and sofas, her relationship with the students changed entirely. The lesson was one of the most focused lessons I observed with that class. Students chose their favourite seats and worked on their texts. Carla hardly intervened during the entire lesson, and instead was able to support Marta, a student on the autistic spectrum who had previously asked for her help, and who did not like group work because it was, in her words, "too chaotic".

The spatial change shifted the usual dynamics between students and teacher and between students and their learning. The change produced a changed performativity: students became readers in a library space, and the teacher became an assistant. It also

offered an opportunity for students to learn in their way while still being part of the group. Some chose to read together, others by themselves. After the lesson, Carla explained that the head teacher was looking into applying the library's spatial design to classrooms. Yet students may have in part been excited by the change from the usual, which allowed them and their teacher to redefine their relationships.

5.3.3.3   Placing learning in the middle of the school

Similarly, placing the bike repair workshop in the middle of the playground at Inspire Arts Comprehensive (see Section 5.2.2.2.5) led to a shift in the usual spatial arrangement of the school. The very students who would usually hang out on the playground instead of going to class (and be interrupted by some authority) were here able to practice their skills visible to everyone – which was positively noted by passing teachers. One staff member said, "You can come and fix my car later!" Curious students gathered as the workshop ran over into break-time. Through this spatial shift, turning the space of truancy into a learning space, the pedagogical setup intervened in the daily structures of the school by making the students' presence on the playground during lesson time a productive one. The students labelled "disengaged" turned the playground into a place of work and study, which they maintained even as others started to have their break time. They completed the lesson as confident learners and earned a vocational certification in their bike repair skills (see previous section).

From a post-structural perspective, Youdell (2006) explores how "the performative is implicated in processes of subjectivation" (p. 511). If staff had seen the intervention class boys in the playground during lesson time at any other time, they might have deemed them defiant for not adhering to the rules. Yet, within the pedagogical frame of the intervention program, the students were able to participate in the suggested activity, for which, due in part to the visible location of the lesson, they were perceived as knowledgeable students by others as well as by themselves.

In this example, the spatial intervention allowed for the "subjects", the students, to be recognised as a different category of subjects by the school community, which allowed them, for a moment at least, to 'escape' their usual subjectivations (Armstrong, F., and Youdell, 2011; see Section 2.4). While the learning activity did not change the school's

power structures, it intervened in the spatial norms of the school and its discourse, which usually depicted the students as problem students.

5.3.3.4 Shifting perceptions amongst friends

Certain ascribed roles or subjectivities of students are part of school culture at large and can influence how students relate to one another. At Milestone Academy, I observed a group work session in which a group of boys tried to come up with interview questions for their questionnaire. I noted that Humza struggled to be involved. I suggested his peers could try out their questions on him. To a closed yes and no question, Humza replied with a simple "no", to which others, expecting a more elaborate answer, screamed, "Why are we asking him?" Humza generally struggled with learning, had various special educational needs assigned to him, and often took the role of the person who did not know anything, which his peers played into. In response to my suggestion that it might have been the fault of their questioning, the group changed their question to an open question, and Humza gave a detailed and informed answer. After this episode, Alex commented that he saw Humza more integrated and active in his group and making more informed comments than he had heard him make before. My intervention as a participant in the lesson sparked the change.

5.3.3.5 Counternarratives of engagement

For Amber at Inspire Arts, working on the relationship between intervention class students and their teachers was a focus of her work with them. They were working towards setting up a café space in a disused backyard, to which, in the final lesson, they invited members of staff for coffee and cake. By clearing out the backyard, planting flowers, and taking care of them, students started to relate in a different way to the space. They were excited about seeing the plants grow throughout the project and cared for the garden space. They developed a relationship of care for the space.

The physical and hands-on nature of their education in the garden changed their relationship with Amber and an assisting teacher. Working outside, students started to ask questions about gardening and other topics, when usually they would not ask many questions. Turning a disused space into an accessible garden space created value for the entire school, and other members of the school community associated the students in the

intervention class with that task, unlike their usual perception of them as 'problem students'. The garden they created became a "counter-public-space" (Thomson, 2007), a space that proposed a counternarrative for engagement in which the students became carers rather than problems.

Preparing for the garden-café party, the project's final event, Amber proposed that students invite those teachers they either wanted to thank or those with whom they wanted an improved relationship.

> Zeke: Yeah, I wanna invite Ms B, cuz me and her, we have a rocky situation, isn't it?
>
> Amber: I admire that enormously. Let's invite Ms B, I think she will be thrilled. Remember every opportunity as human beings we can get to build that bridge, yeah.

She helped the students write invitation cards for teachers and suggested they give out the cards personally. To help them, and inspired by the idea of the theatre intervention I proposed, Amber initiated a role play, in which she played the different staff members for the students to try out inviting them. In this way, the students slowly started changing their relationships with staff members they had difficulties with in a "rehearsal for change" (Boal, 1995, see Section 6.4). Receiving staff to the garden-café party, students stood at the door wearing aprons to welcome them. This reversed their usual way of relating: usually, they would enter the rooms of their teachers, but here the students were the hosts. The aprons helped to change their usual performativity; they were engaging with their teachers as waiters. Changing roles offers access to a different range of performativity (Madison and Hamera, 2006). Halfway through the event, Amber told the boys they should now enjoy the event and talk to their guests, which the students took great pleasure in. In my observations, I saw the students relating to their teachers, some of whom they were previously scared of, as guests at a garden-café party they hosted.

5.3.3.6   Discussion of students' engagement with staff and peers

Pedagogical and spatial practices shaped students' relationships with their peers as well as with their teachers. Changes in spatial arrangements affected relationships in the learning spaces. Turning the classroom into a space with different connotations of relating,

like a café or a library, offers students and staff alike the opportunity to relate to each other according to forms of relating typical in these spaces.

Their dynamics shifted in response. The critical pedagogies offered more dialogical relationships between teachers and students. Learning centred on students' expertise, and working with their peers, placed them in a position from which they could engage with their learning community as knowledgeable subjects. In particular, where the teacher engaged more as a support figure and shared the position of control with students, physical as well as performative changes could be noted in the classroom. Students took more ownership in shaping their learning space, making the place *theirs* (Section 2.4.3), which posed a challenge to institutional power and conduct (Ahmed, 2012). This pedagogical approach could be manifested through a specific spatial arrangement like group seating or changes to the spatial set-up, yet a spatial set-up alone did not necessarily alter relationships. The pedagogical practice exercised in the spaces at times took away the arrangement's power to transform relationships. Sometimes, teachers still subjected students to the same behavioural expectations as in traditional classrooms, which clashed with, for example, the playful outline of a classroom set up like an office.

Leaving the classroom space at times supported a change in relationships, as new forms of engaging became possible within new set-ups and their set forms of relating, as different forms of participation became possible (Tuck and McKenzie, 2015). By relating with each other not merely as students and teacher, new subjectivities became available and dynamics could shift, and new forms of participation emerged. The excitement around the newness of the changed space possibly contributed to these shifts. Through theatre work, participants tried out different ways of relating and played with power dynamics within the safe and light space created for the exercise. The safety fostered creativity and openness which enable changed engagement and transformation (Hunter, 2008; Section 2.4.3).

5.3.4   Students' relationships with the institution

The relationships between research participants and their institution were primarily formed through the institutional structures and functioning of the school, and participants' positions within these, such as whether they were students or staff, classroom teachers or in

managerial roles, and so on. Yet, the school's values, discourses, and culture, as well as participants' subjectivities within these, played an equally important role, and at times structural elements limited the possibilities of pedagogical initiatives. The following explores how pedagogical and spatial practices impacted the relationships between participants and institutions.

5.3.4.1 "School is dead"

Amber the teacher at Inspire Arts explained, "The majority of schools have all identified there is a need, that the current educational system is pushing square pegs into round holes. And these kids [intervention class students] do not fit this (...)" To Amber, the educational system had to change to be more inclusive. With the intervention class project, Amber in her role as the school's creative arts and well-being manager tried to create a learning space which was more supportive of students' needs, while at the same time supporting the students to change their relationships with the institution.

JP, one of her students, in an exercise I led encouraging the students to reimagine school, said, "School is dead". With this, he described school as irrelevant, not worth any changes. He did not participate much in the reimagination session, though he did take part in various activities of the intervention program, as well in the reflection on it. Reflecting on the reimagination session, Amber explained, "The relationship with the adults have broken down, and they [intervention class students] feel nobody likes them, school is dead, and yet they are here every day". While they did have many issues with various teachers, the four steady students of the intervention class attended school every day, even if they did not necessarily attend lessons. To Amber, the high attendance of the students suggested their will to be part of the institution, which therefore meant adults needed to make a change within the institution to support the students' relationship with it: "So, until we [adults] change, I don't think they [students] can change".

5.3.4.2 Structural changes

Carla at Camino Institute said, "We [staff] are the learning environment". Accordingly, from her point of view as part of the leadership team, Carla described different structural changes they had made to support students. Carla also explained that within the structures of the local educational system, she felt the students did "not have this pressure

because they don't have this external exam that measures everybody the same way". Similarly, she as a teacher did not feel institutional pressure: "I don't have anybody from the outside to see if I am doing right or wrong".

She was referring to external observations of her teaching. While there are school inspections in Catalonia (Departament d'Educació, 2022 b) by the local government, Carla did not mention them. In England, Ofsted in England (Office for standards in education) frequently inspects schools and evaluates them according to strict criteria which plays a big role for teachers and school management.

Over the past decade, in line with neoliberal reforms, head teachers in Catalonia have been granted much authority in the running of their schools (Collet-Sabé, 2017). At Camino Institute, the head teacher had decided to structure their teaching according to project-based learning. Being part of the school's management surely shaped Carla's perception of, and experience at, the school. Institutional relationships deserve contextualisation.

Alex at Milestone Academy felt the possibility to make changes within the institution depended on how much leeway the school would leave for critical pedagogical work when engaging with education policies: "Laws [school policies] are a bit, they can change according to, I guess, how much space there is for accepting more repressed policies and intense fine work (...)" To him, it was a negotiation with his department trying to comply with the department's policies, which generally he related to educational policies, whilst introducing his pedagogical ideas. Whether institutions managed to make changes that addressed students' needs depended on how staff and schools themselves were evaluated and the possibilities for change they had within these systems of evaluation.

5.3.4.3   Supporting spaces within institutions

Carla explained the changes Camino Institute had made to support the relationship with students as well as their families: "One of the main ideas of our school is that all the students are given an answer, okay, and everybody feels that the school is a place for them to be… The school … takes measures to include everybody". From conversations with Carla about different learning needs in her English classroom, I understood her idea of "giving an answer to each student" as a commitment to engage with the different needs

students might have. In her reflection, Carla made it clear that the school's management had to provide the structures for the school to be an inclusive space, and that this was a decision. This also highlights her view that a good relationship with students as well as their families was an important sign of the schools' inclusivity. Throughout my visit to Camino Institute, I observed various aspects that highlighted the relevance good relationships played in the school, from the way staff respected students' needs and opinions to the importance students' work played in displays all around the school, as well as how behaviour issues were treated. I observed one student fighting with another and later apologising for it, then asking Carla not to share the incident with others, which Carla explained to me she wanted to respect, as she felt the student wanted to change. While I am not clear whether Carla was acting in line with a certain school policy, it seemed to me the incident represented the overall school culture I observed. A similar incident in another school could have easily led to a punishment of the student, based on institutional regulations.

In an evaluation session towards the end of the intervention project at Inspire Arts, Zeke, one of the younger students in the group, reflected that what helped him was the active nature of the intervention class being scheduled in the period after lunch, where he would usually get into trouble for his hyperactivity: "You know what I love about this school, is like, is like, you see yeah, before this period, yeah, we have lunchtime, and then comes period 5, yeah, and I am always hyperactive, and then, cause you just came from lunch isn't it". He attributes the change to an intervention the school made to support him, which suggests a change in his relationship with the school. Across all three schools, teachers identified the need for changing the institution to make it more inclusive. In line with the possibilities their institutional position allowed them, they created spaces within the institutional structures through which they could support their students better. Through those spaces, some of the relationships between students and their institutions started to shift, however, the relationships were marked by the students' overall experiences with the institutions.

5.3.4.4   Inaccessible institution

In an interview about her perspective on the inclusion work the institution was doing, the SENCO (special educational needs coordinator) at Milestone Academy discussed the importance of "bridging the gap" between institutional demands and students' behaviour or

learning needs. At the same time, she explained that to her it was the student who had to fit into the institution, not vice versa. Discussing a student identified with 'complex special educational needs', she explained that his behavioural issues prevented him from accessing learning: "It could be actually that we, we [school] include him [student with special educational needs], and we support him, but we go on to prove that he can't access [learning]".

To her, inclusion was a set of practices put in place by the institution, yet the relationship between institution and student was down to the student. She identified as part of the institution, using the word "we", and explained that her role was to prove that the institution was doing what it was required to do to include the student, while also collecting evidence that the boy did not fit the institution, or was not able to learn due to his behaviour. She did not question the potential causes of his behaviour, nor the set structures of the institution. To her, it was the student who could not access the education on offer, despite the institution's structures for access, and she did not consider that this in fact might mean that the school itself was inaccessible.

5.3.4.5   Relationship supported by privilege

Students at Camino Institute reflected that attending private English tutoring outside of school made them feel confident as learners, and at times "bored" in class. They understood that it was more "difficult for the other people", as Miquel put it, meaning those who did not have extracurricular English classes. Their identities as confident or able learners were strengthened by having access to a resource their parents paid for outside of school.

At the same time, Carla, their teacher, reflected on the difficulties she faced teaching a class in which a third of the students had learnt English from private tutors since childhood while others did not speak the language at all. In a conversation with me, she realised that most students who were disruptive in her English classes spoke languages other than the local Spanish or Catalan at home, and for whom English was perhaps the 4th or 5th language they were learning. It had not occurred to her before to explore this correlation. After the conversation, she decided to change the focus of the end-of-term topic from a Christmas-related theme to something more general, so that "all students will be interested".

Those students who spoke other languages at home which did not include English, and those who came from more economically precarious families, were those who struggled most in her classes.

5.3.4.6   Discriminatory bias

School culture and discourse need to be viewed in a wider, societal context. Describing an incident at school where a group of boys were accused of having an explosive device, which later turned out to be a box of braces, Amber reflected, "We think what is happening outside is happening on the inside (...) often I think these boys on the street, black and in a group, people might think all sort of bad stuff about them. Sometimes I think they misbehave because that's expected of them". The institutional perception of the students was set within the context of a wider societal culture. In London, a disproportionate number of black boys are being stopped and searched (8.9 times higher than white people, according to the research group *Stopwatch* (2020). At the same time, research discusses a similar racial bias in school, which disproportionately affects black Caribbean boys, who are portrayed as "unteachable identities" (Youdell, 2006) within school discourse.

Three of the four students in the intervention class at Inspire Arts were Black Caribbean boys, who make up the proportionally most excluded group (Timpson et al., 2019; see Section 2.3). Amber also explained that students arriving at school lacking equipment or with torn uniforms were more likely to be pulled up for bad behaviour. Often their first interaction with staff upon arrival at school was to be told off for their faulty presentation. To her, their neglectful or precarious home environments impacted their relationships with the institution. In a similar vein, the SENCO at Milestone Academy explained that, in her view, "Homes with low literacy led to student exclusion and prison". Structural inequalities like poverty and racism were shaping how the institution perceived students.

5.3.4.7   Discussion of students' relationship with institutions

The pedagogical and spatial practices observed throughout the study operated within the institutional structures of the schools, which at the same time meant they were constrained by those structures' limited flexibility. The institutional structures shaped the students' experiences within their schools. How these institutions related to students was shaped by

wider structural discourses and injustices like racism or classism. Having privileges such as monetary or cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1984), like for example private tutoring and a family background which made space for private tutoring, supported some of the students in their learning and attitude to learning, contributing to making them 'good' students.

The institution's behaviour management framework, which outlined what was perceived as correct behaviour and how to engage with subsequent incorrect behaviour, was a key factor in determining the students' relationships with their institutions. If a school determined a student's learning needs were not compatible with their structures or support in place, the student could be threatened to be excluded from the school. Students were either kept "in place" through the prescribed institutional conduct (Ahmed, 2012), or by failing to do so, by "acting out of place", the institution excluded them, by first othering them, for instance through internal inclusion, and then denying them access to that place all together (Ahmed, 2012; Section 2.4.1).

Some of the teachers tried to implement changes through their pedagogical interventions, which at times successfully supported the relationships between students and their institutions by making changes that made the framework the students were working in more amenable to their needs. Yet these relationships were much better supported by a structural emphasis on sustaining good relationships between students, staff, families, and institutions. The structure could also give teachers the autonomy to make choices knowing their students' needs.

The pedagogical setup of the institution shaped the possibilities for interactions between students, staff and the institution. Its rules, framed by the institutional discourse, delineated the realm of acceptable behaviour. If those rules did not meet students' needs, the teachers of this study tried to set up alternative spaces, within the rules, that would allow for deviations from established structures, and for students to feel "in place" (Ahmed, 2012) by shifting institutional norms of knowledge production and conduct. Yet these spatial practices were not always possible. They worked in small-scale, exceptional spaces. Nevertheless, the institution, too, must be seen in the context of wider performative pressures.

5.3.5   Summary of the theme: Changing the terms of engagement

Section 5.3 analysed the theme: *Changing the terms of engagement*. The following will summarise the findings, exploring how the implementation of critical pedagogies affected the relationships between students and learning, staff, peers and their institutions.

Across the three schools, shifts in the pedagogical frameworks that made students' experiences a focus of the learning and treated them as experts of their own experiences supported students engaging through a changed subjectivity in their learning as well as with their learning communities. It allowed them to engage as knowledgeable learners from which others, including adults, could learn. This role reversal could break with, or at least challenge, inferior perceptions — including self-perceptions — of these students. Spatial changes in the learning set-up supported these changes in their terms of engagement. Spaces that offered different forms of relationality, like a café or a library space, allowed for students and teachers to take on habitual roles of such spaces, which shifted their, sometimes set, dynamics. In this way, the pedagogical practices materialized in and through the spatial, resulting in a changed implication of students within the learning space (Ellsworth, 2005). Through the spatial practice, a changed place became possible (Tuck and McKenzie, 2015; etc.; Section 2.4.1), which in turn shifted possible interactions and subjectivations, challenging institutional norms and excluding practices. Role-play and theatre work facilitated the exploration of power dynamics in the classroom through the safety of the playful setup. Hereby the "messy negotiation" (Hunter, 2008) of the theatre space, allowed for changed engagement and transformation of the classroom space, even if temporarily.

At the same time, interactions and relationships within the classrooms shaped the learning spaces themselves. Students relating with the learning through friendship groups, rather than through ability groupings shifted the atmosphere in the learning spaces. As their own choices and experiences formed the starting point of the learning, the references brought into the learning spaces changed. The emphasis on the interrelationality of the learning space, supported an unfixing of knowledge (Nicholson, 2011). This contextualised students' learning and expanded the learning spaces. It made the learning spaces more capacious, engaging with knowledge references introduced by the students (Massey, 1994), and it made the students engage with the wider field and wider world. They felt their

learning would be relevant beyond the classroom. It shifted the sense of belonging to the learning space (Section 2.4.3).

Yet the pedagogical frameworks as well as the interactions and relationships in the classrooms were shaped by the institutional structures they were operating in. To sustain such changes of engagement, the schools' structural organising needed to be supportive of them; otherwise, these changes only worked in exceptional spaces. Where institutions do not recognise wider structural injustices like racism and classism, in which the school is embedded and which affect students' lives and possibilities beyond schooling, significant changes cannot occur. The learning spaces were embedded in and connected to wider spaces of structural power, which impacted on people's experiences and possibilities of participation (Massey, 1994; Tuck and McKenzie, 2015; Section 2.4.1). Through the critical pedagogical setup, some students and teachers started to engage critically with these structural injustices. Still, such work needs to be developed further, as both students and teachers are affected by and implicated within them.

5.4   The place for emotions in school

5.4.1   Introduction to the theme

Throughout this study, students explained their experiences at school through an emotional lens. Students' emotions were also a frequent focus in conversations with staff, in particular when discussing issues students were facing. The discussion of emotions in education policy and research exists on a spectrum. On one end, students' emotional conditions are considered special educational needs (UNESCO, 1994). On the other, feelings are seen as a productive location for knowledge production, in particular among marginalised groups (Conquergood, 1998; de Sousa Santos, 2018; hooks, 2015; etc.). The two ends of this spectrum are in tension. Furthermore, Ahmed (2014) speaks of the social and cultural practice of emotions, whereby she explores the production of the emotional *other* and the power relations involved in these processes.

Thus, this section analyses the place for emotions in school and their relationship to the pedagogical practices observed. *Emotions seen as barriers* is an exploration of strategies to overcome these barriers by engaging with students' emotions to support their inclusion. *Feeling in control* addresses how pedagogical practices alter the locus of control in the teacher-student relationship and the emotions that arise from these shifts. *Enjoying learning* surveys students' accounts of taking delight in their learning, and other emotions related to this sense. The section concludes with a summary of the key findings of this theme.

5.4.2   Emotions seen as a barriers

Throughout the research, different teachers and inclusion staff brought up their students' feelings or emotional states when discussing inclusion and exclusion, or inclusive practice. In particular, they talked about students' anger, sadness, worry, or their emotions around feeling treated unjustly, and the difficulties students encountered at school in relation to these. At the same time, students expressed strong emotions at different moments in this research, especially when discussing issues with teachers. The following sections will analyse these accounts about their implications for students' access to learning.

5.4.2.1   Accepting emotions

Amber at Inspire Arts Comprehensive reflected on the students in her intervention class: "They are just feeling. They are just feeling, and they feel raw, they feel hurt". To her, students' emotions mattered. She kept their negative experiences and the marks these left on them present while working with students. Describing the students as "just" feeling might imply that they lack control of these feelings or emotions. Amber explained, "Seeing them as people, not just line up, sit down, robots, that, you know because some of them have brought in a load of baggage that day". In her reflections, Amber criticised the idea of having to "see students as robots", demanding them to fit in and follow the schools' rules of knowledge acquisition. To her, an inclusive practice would engage with their emotional states, "the baggage" they bring to the classroom. She explained that students were put into her intervention class because of their high absence from lessons, either because of truancy or being sent out for disruptive behaviour, yet their overall school attendance was high (see Section 5.3.4.1). Students' emotional outbursts would trigger conflicts with

teachers, which often resulted in their exclusion from a lesson or their decision not to return to a lesson. Yet, to Amber, the students' high attendance showed their willingness to be part of the school community, and she felt it was therefore the school's duty to find ways to engage with them. I consider her efforts at engaging with and supporting the students through their emotional outbursts an inclusive practice. Nevertheless, Amber's work took place in a separate classroom designed as an intervention, a dedicated learning space for students with 'issues'.

5.4.2.2   Creating safe spaces

Similarly, Susanne, the inclusion lead at Milestone Academy, explained her work in the inclusion unit was "about the whole student, not just the academic side of the student. It's making sure that they are happy and that they are functioning in school". Susanne also reflected, however, that this approach was not always easy to justify within the wider educational system: "It's really hard to sort of, you know, judge, like when Ofsted comes in, there's nothing, like, you can't say we've helped them with friendships issues you know, because they don't look at that sort of thing". Like Amber's, Susanne's reflections describe inclusive practice as working with the "whole student", including their emotional well-being, even though that counted for nothing to Ofsted. Her role included supporting students with things like "friendship issues", which she considered an important part of her work helping students feel well at school. She repeated several times that it was important for her that her students knew that the inclusion centre was a space they could come to with all their feelings. Her inclusive practice involved establishing a physical space within the school where students felt welcome even in strong emotional states. Apart from conflict management, she was also looking for specific support for different mental health issues.

Equally, Alex, the science teacher at Milestone Academy, spoke about the necessity of giving students "space" to deal with complicated emotional issues. He would take students out of the classroom if they were disengaging, to check in with them about how they were feeling. He was hereby *making* space to engage with emotions.

Susanne's vision is also reflected in Carla's explanation of Camino Institute's inclusion policy as ensuring there is time and space dedicated to ensuring everyone was feeling "that the school is a place for them to be". Amber and Susanne were creating spaces

outside the classroom for students to engage with their emotions, places students felt supported and safe to go to when they were experiencing difficult emotions.

5.4.2.3   Exploring emotions as learning activity

When making their perception maps, which at Inspire Arts Comprehensive was done as a whole group activity, the students had lengthy discussions about how they felt about the teachers at the school, indicating their feelings regarding their classrooms with different types of stickers. What was meant as an introductory task to explore the students' sense of belonging in their classrooms developed into a conversation about how students felt about their different teachers. They recounted conflicts and praise they had received. How they felt about their teachers and the conflicts they may have had with them affected how they felt about a class, and whether they attended lessons in that subject. Discussing which sticker to put on their French classroom, for example, Zeke said:

> Zeke: Give me the worst one at all!
>
> Amber: Mm. What is it about that then? That class situation?
>
> Zeke: One time yeah, I came into class yeah, two minutes late, one girl comes in half an hour late, she [teacher] refers me for referral, but not her [girl], imagine that! (…)
>
> Zeke: Not fair.
>
> Amber: Why don't you go to her classes anymore? That's the one you truant, isn't it?
>
> Zeke: Yeah, that's the one I always get late

Feeling treated unfairly was a recurring topic for the students. They explained how they would not go back to lessons where they believed they had not been treated fairly. Hearing which teacher Zeke was referring to, JP added, "I hate her", to which Amber responded, "We're not here to develop personal relationships with teachers". The students expressed strong emotional views about their teachers, which influenced their ability to participate in their lessons. Their learning was dependent on their relationships with their teachers.

Amber tried to address that with her comment. The final event of the intervention class project intended to support students to change the relationships they had with their

teachers. Through the research task, the students' emotional experiences became the learning focus of that lesson. Engaging with their emotional experiences made students active learners. Their emotional experiences, which caused conflicts in other lessons, became their expertise in this session. Nevertheless, as part of the research intervention, this lesson took place outside the curriculum or regular learning activity of the school. It would need further research to explore an approach which focuses on students' emotional experiences as part of a school's standard curriculum.

5.4.2.4   Emotions leading to exclusion

In a discussion later on, Amber explained that the students could hold grudges for a long time. Yet, she said "They go into that room, feeling disenfranchised from the beginning. They've been given the impression their voice doesn't count. They are not wanted. That's how it comes across to them." The conflicts students had with teachers might be sparked by something small but the consequences were often intense and provoked emotional outbursts from the students, which in turn could get the student excluded from a specific lesson. In Amber's reflections, the issue was that not enough work was done in schools to deal with the underlying emotional issues the students were experiencing:

> Amber: [T]heir behaviour has come from either a feeling of insecurity or feeling resentful, or feeling that they're not liked, not wanted, not good enough. They then turn that into a way of behaving with that teacher. They either wanna look big in front of them because they feel quite small, or they want to say, 'You can't hurt me, so I'll leave, you can't touch me' (...) We sometimes talk about the feelings in 'why did you do that and why do you think that situation came about', but we never dig that little bit deeper.

The school management labelled the students in the intervention class as having *Social and Emotional Needs.* The English Special Educational Needs Code of Practice (Department for Education, 2015) defines one category of special needs as "Social Emotional and Mental Health difficulties", which students may experience, and for which schools should have clear processes on "how they will manage the effect of any disruptive behaviour" (Department for Education, 2015, p. 98). Whilst these guidelines accept social and emotional needs as a difficulty to be catered to, emotional difficulties are portrayed as obstacles to learning, which must be managed to avoid disruption. Yet it "avoids analysis of any underlying causes" (Armstrong, D., 2014, p. 733). The policy acknowledges and labels students' emotional difficulties, and specifies that they should not be discriminated

against for their condition. Yet, as the example at Inspire Arts Comprehensive shows, students' emotional outbursts would often lead to them being sent out from a lesson, or deciding to leave. From the students' accounts, it appeared the teachers they conflicted with interpreted these instances as behavioural issues rather than emotional issues. Cole et al. (2019) point out "the lack of coordination between current school behaviour and exclusions guidance and advice on mental health and behaviour" (p. 380). According to research participants at Inspire Arts Comprehensive, the overall school culture was to deal with students' behaviour in ways that were disconnected from their needs and feelings. As a result, some of the teachers simply kicked students out of their classrooms. The intervention class was intended to counteract this dynamic, yet it happened apart from the classroom.

5.4.2.5   Discussion of emotions seen as a barrier

According to the students and teacher at Inspire Arts comprehensive, students were often sent out of lessons because of emotional outbursts. And when they elected to skip class, it was often because of a conflict or difficult emotional experience with a certain member of staff or in a classroom. In these cases, emotions were seen as a barrier to their learning. Schools took different approaches to support students in challenging emotional states, either through setting up a safe space where students could go when they felt strongly, like an inclusion office, or an intervention class, which intended to support students in their relationships with their teachers. Both approaches dealt with emotions outside the classroom. Nevertheless, some students' experiences at school were led by their emotions, and they had a strong need to engage with that. When reflecting on their emotions was part of the educational content, as was the case in a research session in the intervention class, this resulted in students becoming active participants in the lesson. While this lesson took place outside the curriculum and in a separate space, it brings up interesting reflections on the value of engaging with emotions and experiences of emotions as part of the learning focus.

Ensuring students feel well at school can support more inclusive spaces for learning. Yet engaging with emotional needs as inclusive practice tends to be disconnected from behaviour policies (Cole et al, 2019). Consequently, emotional insecurities and outbursts can get students sent out from lessons or keep them from attending in the first place. Hence, their emotional needs become a *de facto* reason for their exclusion from learning

spaces. Certain students, such as those from the intervention class at Inspire Arts Comprehensive, become associated with their emotional behaviour, which was seen as *bad* or *not appropriate* emotions within the learning space, however the contexts which produced these emotions do not form part of this association, in line with what Ahmed (2014) describes as "an erasure of the history of their [emotions] production and circulation" (p. 11).

Some schools, or inclusion staff at schools, tried to set up spaces students could go to when they have emotional outbursts or difficulties. Yet this was often seen as separate from their academic achievements, and these spaces were also physically separate from learning spaces, highlighting the separation and hierarchy of emotions being beneath reason (Conquergood, 1998; Ahmed, 2014; de Soussa Santos, 2018; etc.), and expressing this spatially. The research suggests that when students were seen as whole beings, including their emotional needs, ways could be found to support their needs and feelings within the learning spaces as well.

5.4.3   Feeling in control

The feeling of being in control over the learning space was central to the teacher-student relationships throughout the research. The emotions connected to it shaped the learning spaces and the willingness of students to participate. The control over the learning space was shifting and took various forms, and at times the struggle to feel in control impacted the experience both teacher and students had of the learning space. This section analyses the different accounts and moments around the feeling of control, when it was challenged or transformed through the pedagogical practices observed. Struggle for control is related to a struggle for power, which this section will also look at. Theoretically it engages with the spatiality of emotions and power, and how they produce subjectivation in relation to others (Ahmed, 2014).

5.4.3.1   Students in control over their learning space

Throughout the critical science project, Alex tried to create a learning space in which the students had control over their learning. Reflecting on the project, Aaminah, a student in the class, explained: "We could control what we wanted to do, how we wanted to do it, and

like, how we wanted to present it, what we want to look into, how we would do it". As the project moved along, Alex transformed from a controlling teacher who would speak in imperatives ("wait", "fill in your books" etc.) to a role that consisted mainly of tech support. He started asking students for consent when making decisions. Throughout the project, he explained, "I started to lose control, and they [students] started to gain more control of what they were doing". At some point he mentioned to me with excitement, "I don't think we're [him the teacher, and me in my assisting role] needed anymore". His aim was for students to self-organise their learning space, without the need for a controlling teacher.

During the poster conference that concluded the project, I felt the students' control or ownership over the space. After Alex gave an overview of the event, the students organised the space entirely. At some point a teacher who visited the poster conference with another class intervened, calling her students to leave. In my notes I wrote, "It is the only moment throughout that a 'teacher voice' is heard, and breaks the atmosphere, she has to take energy to break the space with her instructions to her class". As described in Section 5.3.3.2, the learning space throughout the poster conference was orchestrated by the activity and the previous work of the class; it was shaped by the process of the critical science project and the graduate shift of control. The visiting teacher struggled to regain control in the classroom as a 'teacher'. She shifted her performativity from that of a participating conference attendant to that of a figure of control in a classroom. Making use of that controlling role, she decided to withdraw her students from the shared learning space.

5.4.3.2   Control over who is in the classroom

Structurally, the teacher represents the power of the institution in the classroom. The teacher controls access to the classroom and can make use of the punitive measure of sending students out. Depending on institutional rules, this punishment can range from sending a student momentarily outside the classroom, or directly sending them to internal exclusion units — or "referral", as these spaces are called in some schools.

In conversations with the students of the intervention class at Inspire Arts Comprehensive, the control of inclusion or exclusion from the classroom was a recurring theme. The boys discussed which teacher would send students regularly to referral, and which teacher would "just keep you for 5 minutes and then you can go". The latter they referred to as

"good teaching techniques". JP was particularly upset with some teachers, who, to him, were over-exerting their power: "He just thinks he is like he is up there. I know he is a teacher, but he boasts about it too much…. when you stand outside, he'll open the door, he'll try and embarrass you in front of the whole class." When this happened to him, his response was, "I threw my book in the bin and then I left. And I was like I am not coming back to your class, and I have not come back yet. (…) he thinks he is so up there, you're just a teacher man, come down". In his description, JP attributes a specific power to the teacher for being a teacher, which acknowledges he has a certain level of legitimate control, yet he also criticises the teacher for abusing that power. Within the struggle for control over the learning space, JP takes himself out of the teacher's control by leaving, yet the consequence is that he loses access to education. In a sense, he takes away the teacher's control over him by leaving his lesson.

5.4.3.3   Transforming 'feeling in control'

In the evaluative theatre workshop at Milestone Academy, Sam portrayed an image of himself being sent outside the classroom to show where he felt least powerful. He positioned himself at the window next to the door, facing the classroom, arms folded, looking down. In the image he appears upset, trying to keep composed, being outside the room, yet with his focus on the inside. In the next image, however, for which I asked the students to show their favourite space, Sam decided to remain outside the room but changed his posture. He leaned sideways at the window, leisurely resting his arm, overlooking the corridor. In this second image, he appears relaxed, in a position of choice, and seems more like the gatekeeper of the room, rather than the one being sent out (see Section 6.4).
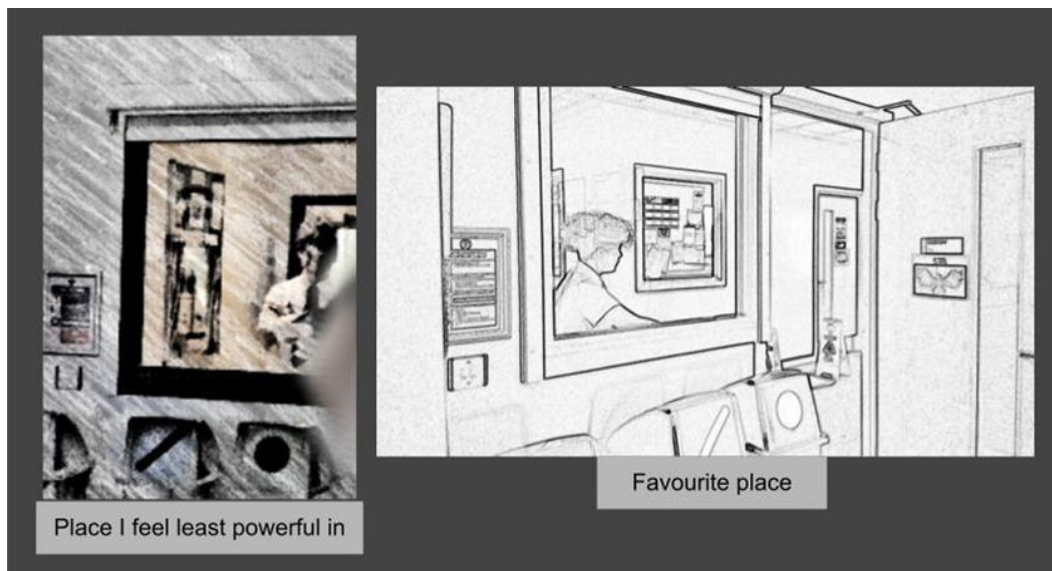
Figure 5-5 Images Sam, Milestone Academy

In this changed image, Sam turned the space of punishment into a space of being in control over himself, and possibly also over the room. With this he engaged with the feeling of powerlessness by changing the situation so that he felt in control of the classroom, transforming the power relations and is subjectivity.

5.4.3.4   Supporting students to feel in control

Reflecting on the intervention program at Inspire Arts Comprehensive, JP shared that a moment he really liked was the "[t]he tea party because like I felt like I had control". He added that, in general, he felt he had "more freedom" throughout the program. To him, feeling in control was associated with having a sense of freedom. In an interview, Amber later engaged with his comment: "free and in control basically means they have got choices. Because I am still in control, they know that". To her, it was important to remain in control, to support the students. She said things like, "You cannot let them slip for a minute" or, "You can't miss a beat". She explained that it took a lot of work to remain in control over the learning space and ensure that it was a positive and inclusive environment: "Being energised, looking forward to seeing them, we're gonna have a great lesson, be the sunshine in the room (…) If the room isn't set up with all the activities, they will see that as, 'Oh you don't care'". Whilst the student experienced the project lessons as feeling in control and feeling free, the teacher explained the effort she is putting in to

provide a safe learning space. What the student experienced as feeling in control, the teacher described as having choices and being supported.

Alex at Milestone Academy reflected, "It's not going to become better [teacher and learner relationships with each other and the learning] because you just provide freedom to something. There needs to be an understanding, and further, that there needs to be a process". He is describing the shifting of control in the classroom as a process for it to be positive. Amber's comments also hint at the physical and emotional labour involved for her as a teacher to create and sustain a safe and positive learning space throughout each lesson.

5.4.3.5   Struggling to remain in control

Similarly, Carla at Camino Institute explained that it was at times exhausting to remain in control of the class: "A lot of energy, that's it. You have to talk, and you need a lot of energy to control, to find a way to do things". For Carla, it was a battle to remain in control. She felt that to ensure that students were learning, she had to exert her authority, especially because she had not taught that class before. Towards the end of the first term, she reflected, "The other progress that I have seen is that when I want them to participate, I can get them involved in the activities". Throughout the term, she struggled to establish her rules in the classroom. She explained that it was important to her that "they do their homework, and they present all the tasks that I want them to do. Because in that way I know that they are working". To Carla, students had to participate when she wanted them to, in her tasks (see Section 5.2.4), and the tasks she set were for her to gauge the students' progress. However, to remain in control of the classroom, she felt she had to put a lot of energy in, which at times felt like a struggle to her.

5.4.3.6   Challenging the teacher's control

In the evaluative theatre workshop at the end of the term, the struggle for control in the classroom at Camino Institute became visible. In an image asking students to show where they felt they learnt best, spontaneously all students got up, left the group tables and gathered at the far end of the classroom, opposing the front of the class with the board, the usual space from where Carla, the English teacher, was teaching (see Section 6.4).
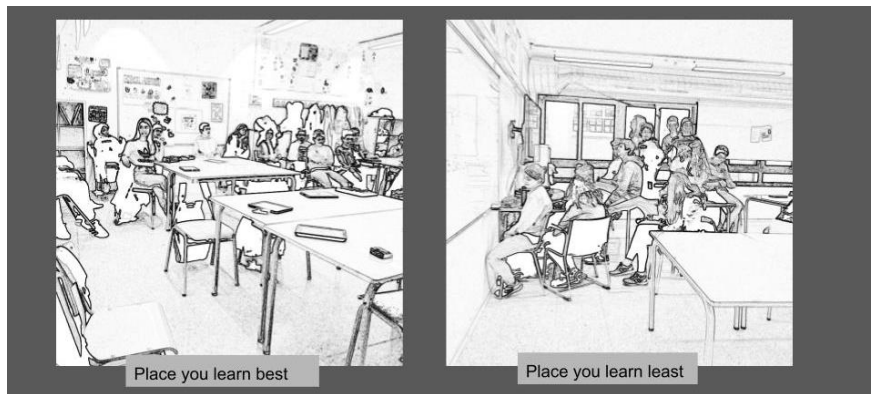
Figure 5-6 Images of learning, Camino Institute

In my notes, I wrote, "Everyone is sitting casually, some with their chairs tilted towards the back, some leaning at the wall or furniture, some with their arms folded, most are smiling. The tables are mostly deserted". In the following image, asking students where they learnt least, they all moved towards the front of the class, positioning themselves in front of the presentation screen, or almost glued to the board. In an interview with me, reflecting on the images, Carla was puzzled:

> Carla: I don't know why they associate not learning with being at the front of the class. I mean maybe because they are exposed to what, to be questioned, they are exposed to make presentations, they feel alone, but I don't know if they really don't learn in these situations. And I think this is the moment when they learn more, because they are obliged to use their knowledge to express, to explain to the others what they have learnt.

In her reflections, she is using words like "exposed" or "feeling alone", as well as "obliged". These words describe a forced and difficult learning environment, where students do not have much choice. One student, Anna, reflected on the image, "Because in front it's like, you have to listen, like in some moments you don't want to listen, or you want to talk". She also said, in the classroom, "I learn best, but it's not my favourite place to learn. Because in class we have to learn, because it's kind of an obligation". Nevertheless, several students in that class pointed out that the learning activities they liked best were giving presentations. Miquel, for instance, said, "I like presentations because I like to explain things, and I think that we learnt a lot".

Despite being asked to show their spaces for learning in this exercise, the series of images seem to show students' relationship to the teacher, represented by their proximity to the teacher's teaching space in the classroom. The exaggerated distance and closeness to

the teaching space can be read as a presentation of their relationship with the teacher. Being very close to the teaching space might represent the teacher's control over them. This is reflected in students' and teacher's reflections on "being obliged" and other descriptors of coercion.

But it is also reflected in the teacher's account of difficulty controlling students. Carla explained that she perceived students felt powerful when they were together: "They feel powerful when they are almost all together (...) they make a kind of compact group; they feel they are a group, they feel powerful". In the process of making the images, students took control of the classroom together. Together they expressed a critique of the teacher (see Section 6.4). This act of taking control of the classroom, and the relationship between themselves and the teacher, is described by the teacher as them feeling powerful by being together. Similarly, in one of the perception maps at Milestone Academy, a student showed his ideal position (golden star) would be sitting at the teacher's desk with all of his friends (orange dots).

Figure 5-7 Perception map 2, Milestone Academy

Being seated at the teacher's desk together with many friends may represent collectively taking control of the symbolic teacher's position. The yellow and red dots on this map show the teacher's position throughout the project and in regular lessons and show that the teacher is not necessarily seated at the desk. The student, represented by the silver

and bronze star throughout the project and in regular lessons, is seated at the back. In his or her ideal lesson, the sticker of the teacher is absent (represented by a light green dot), and the student and all their friends are at the teacher's desk. This mapping also shows that the control symbolised by the desk goes beyond the teacher's actual positioning, but could be read as the institutional control the student is taking over in their ideal image.

Similarly, in some of the perception maps at Camino Institute, students indicated the playground as the place they felt most powerful. In the structural power distribution in the school, the playground symbolises the students' space of control, and the classroom, in particular the board and teacher's desk, symbolise the space of control of the institution. Through the different creative research methods, students explored how to challenge the teacher's control of the classroom.

5.4.3.7   Discussion of feeling in control

To feel in control or not is often central to the teacher-student relationship. Teachers described the struggle and work it sometimes required to maintain control over their students, and some students described or showed how challenging their teacher made them feel in control. When students felt like they lacked control, they sometimes acted out, which tended to result in getting asked to leave the classroom. At the same time, some students skipped lessons to feel some semblance of control in their conflictual relationship with a teacher.

A pedagogical intervention from TO transformed the feeling of powerlessness from being sent out of a classroom into a feeling of having control of one's situation, by being in control of the classroom door. Some students felt in control in their lessons and described that as something positive, yet teachers explained the process that was needed to support students feeling in control, in which teachers do not necessarily give up their control, or do so only gradually. Nevertheless, when students felt in control over their learning space, it fuelled or supported their learning. At times, not being in control could be a challenge for teachers. Contextualising these emotions, shows how they are part of the subjectivation of the role of the teacher and the role of the student, or as Ahmed (2014) argues, emotions produce "the very surfaces and boundaries that allow the individual and the social to be delineated" (p. 10).

Furthermore, the relationship to those feelings differed and had different implications, depending on the socio-cultural contexts the

Feeling in control or feeling the lack of control for students was related to feeling powerful or not. The struggle for control over the learning space represented an important aspect of the accessibility of the learning space and its inclusivity. Addressing power through participatory creative methods in the classroom offered an opportunity for students and staff to explore their power relations and confront each other in their struggle for control. Here different perceptions of power emerged (see Section 6.4), as Ahmed (2014) explores, paying attention "to emotions allows us to address the question of how subjects become *invested* in particular structures" (p. 12). The theatre workshop allowed for felt or embodied power relations to become visible and engaged with, as de Sousa Santos (2018) observes, "embodied knowledge comes alive in living bodies … conducting the struggles against oppression" (p. 87). Pedagogical practices shaped a more inclusive classroom when they supported students to make their own choices, facilitating a process in which students could feel in control of their learning space.

5.4.4 Enjoying learning

Some students talked about how they were enjoying or hoping to enjoy, learning. Some also explained, at various stages, what they did not enjoy at school. This section analyses students' and teachers' accounts of enjoying learning and how that relates to the pedagogical practices observed, with a focus on their inclusivity.

5.4.4.1 Engaged pedagogy

When I asked Alex about the aims of the critical science project at Milestone Academy, he responded, "First of all, have a really good end of the year together, because I have been working for that the whole year, expecting these days to come (...) So, first of all, I am hoping that they will enjoy". This shows how being able to put this project together was affectively important for Alex, and his way of framing it transmits his involvement as well as his sense of care for his students' well-being.

At the end of the lesson the day before the garden-café party event the Inspire Arts students had worked so hard towards, Amber told them, "I am so excited for tomorrow! Have a lovely evening!" Amber was sharing her affection with the students and showing her emotional involvement in the project. hooks (1994) speaks of excitement as a key element in a transgressive classroom: "As a classroom community, our capacity to generate excitement is deeply affected by our interest in one another, in hearing one another's voices, in recognizing one another's presence" (p.8). Both teachers here show their excitement about the work, as well as their desire for their students to enjoy the work. By sharing her excitement with the students, Amber is practising what hooks refers to as engaged pedagogy, sharing her feelings with her students.

5.4.4.2   Achieving together

At the end of the garden-café party, Amber asked the students, "Why am I happy? Why am I proud?" To which Zeke answered, "Because we enjoyed ourselves?" His response startled the teacher, as she expected the students to pick up on some of the values she repeatedly taught them throughout the project, like teamwork and listening. Zeke's response, however, shows that he felt that he and his peers enjoyed the project and that he understood this as something worth valuing positively, as an achievement. With this, he also engages with the teacher's excitement about the project, and her efforts to support the students in transforming their conflicts with the invited teachers. Saying that he enjoyed the event stands in contrast with the students' statement about how they "hated" some of the teachers (see Section 5.4.2.3).

Amber asking the students to evaluate their success against her feeling of happiness is complex. By doing well and following what are ultimately the school's values, the students made her happy. She is thereby aligning her positive relationship with the students, and their care for her happiness, with their achievement. Yet, by replying about his enjoyment, Zeke places his well-being in the centre of the conversation. After each of the lessons of the intervention class I participated in, Amber offered the students a treat at the end of a lesson, like sweets or ice cream. She did this to show the students that they did well and at times she used the treat also as an incentive to ensure their participation. Evaluating the garden-café party, however, Amber and I discussed that their participation at the event "seemed out of pride and joy", as I noted in my observation diary, and that at this event

they neither needed nor expected treats. Here the sense of achievement was felt without the need for external reinforcement but arose out of the activity itself.

5.4.4.3 Feeling of belonging

Susanne, the inclusion lead at Milestone Academy, described her work by saying, "What we try and do is, um, we try to keep the children and the students in their lessons, keep them happy". To her, ensuring a student was able to access the learning and not be excluded also meant making sure they were happy. Yet, she felt this work was not valued in Ofsted's evaluation of the school and its inclusion program (see Section 5.4.2.2).

In contrast, Carla at Camino Institute explained to them, "The evaluation comes from the satisfaction the students have with you as a teacher. This is the only one". The school had decided the most important aspect was the students' satisfaction and happiness. In Catalonia, early school leaving is a prevalent challenge and a focus of discussions around education (Tarabini, 2015). Camino Institute's focus on students' satisfaction and happiness has to be seen in that context. Carla said, "If the students are happy, and they are feeling they belong to a place, (...) the life at school is going to be easier because (…) if you feel happier you feel you belong to somewhere. And you do want to be there, you don't want to leave". Feeling happy and feeling they belonged to the school were related for Carla; to her, this was helping the students want to stay in school.

In my discussion with Jesus, a student at Camino institute, reflecting on the image theatre workshop, he explored the images presenting *a classroom which belongs to everyone.* The students in these showed different moments of group work, often around a screen, all interactive activities. When I asked him to explain what was special about these moments Jesus noted "Well, we were more united in class". The feeling of belonging came along with the feeling of being together.

Yet Alba, another student in the class, felt that this was precisely what she was missing at the school, compared to her primary school: "There was more trust, and we were all much more united". Whilst to her, too, a feeling of belonging was related to feeling united, she was not feeling that as much at Camino Institute. Her friend Anna explained a feeling of belonging as "being together, like if someone feels that, (...) like everyone be good with him, and try to help (...) and the teachers like to maybe make some jokes at some time".

Belonging to her had to do with feeling friendship from her peers and a teacher who took time to relate in a fun way, rather than only focusing on learning.

Similarly, Dunyah at Milestone Academy reflected, "I think belonging, like, the classroom belonging to you depends on so many several things, whether you enjoy the subject, whether you like the teacher, who is in it as well, and whether you like the people who are around you". In her criteria, enjoying the learning and feeling well with the other people in the classroom, both peers and staff, was essential to her sense of belonging. In that sense, the feeling of belonging was an important element for students in their enjoyment of the learning, but also, vice versa, which can be related to students who do not feel they can participate in learning and feeling easily disenfranchised.

5.4.4.4   Learning while chatting

In the perception mapping exercise at Milestone Academy, I asked the students to indicate their usual classroom; their critical science project classroom; and their ideal classroom. An important feature for most students was that they were able to sit with their friends throughout the critical science project, which is where they also would like to be sitting in their ideal classroom. In added notes describing thoughts or conversations occurring in their mapped classrooms, students wrote, "Doing a project with the people that we chose to be with"; "Be able to talk and learn at the same time"; "How has your day been?"; "Do you need any help? (to partner)". These notes do not show the experience of those students who felt they did not have friends in the classroom and are therefore possibly not representative of all students, however, they do show that students liked the aspect of being able to choose who they were working with and that they wanted to be able to engage with their friends, care and feel cared for, which to them was not mutually exclusive to learning. Clamping down on so-called "low-level disruption" is one of the targets Ofsted is promoting in English schools, being "concerned about the frequent loss of learning time through low-level but persistent disruptive behaviour" (Department for Education, 2014, p. 1). This category includes exactly the type of talking with friends while studying that students felt was helpful in their learning. Aaminah reflected on her work with Dunyah:

> Aminah: I think together, so even though we are good friends, I think we know when
> (...) we need to work and when we can like, sort of lay back and just have fun. So, I

think working together because we like, know each other and we can just say when we needed to do things.

Her reflection shows a reflective attitude towards learning, and indeed, although students were working within their friendship groups and there was a constant low-level chatter in the room, students produced their research whilst audibly enjoying their learning environment.

5.4.4.5   Relaxed atmosphere

In my observation notes at Milestone Academy, I wrote, "As soon as they move into group work, the atmosphere is more lively, more messy, more energetic, it feels a bit like an explosion (...) They also engage in more physical contact, as soon as in their groups". The shift in the learning atmosphere was notable in the physicality, the soundscape, and the movement changing in the room. It was not a quiet learning environment; it was one of excitement and exchange. In discussing excitement, hooks (1994) explains it "was viewed as potentially disruptive of the atmosphere of seriousness assumed to be essential to the learning process" (p. 7). Whilst hooks (1994) discusses higher education in her observation, it also applies to secondary school preparation for exams. To her, it is precisely the "will to share the desire to encourage excitement" (p. 7) — what she calls "teaching to transgress".

Alex reflected that throughout the project his "routine started to change as they [students] got more and more into the project, and so did the feelings, the emotions (...) As you observed, the feeling was so relaxed and free, there was no stress". By routine, he refers to his usual, teacher-led lesson structure he let go of during the project (see 5.4.3). To him, the positive sensation of the learning space developed in line with students getting more into their work, describing it as "relaxed and free". This is reflected also in students' comments on their perception maps. Different notes emphasised how much they liked the science lessons: "I like Science", "Engaging work, fun lessons, laid-back", or "I love this lesson, I can always participate in the lesson". From this, it appears that the students enjoyed working together with their friends, autonomously and valued that they felt they could participate. The teacher trusted students to be working with each other and valued their feeling as what he observed as relaxed and free while working.

5.4.4.6   Discussion of enjoying learning

A classroom community that is recognizing and listening to each other, where students are "seen in their particularity as individuals… and interacted with according to their needs" (hooks, 1994, p. 7), hooks describes as a classroom where learning is *exciting*. Throughout the research, different pedagogical practices supported enjoyment in learning, and through this supported a more inclusive classroom. Teachers sharing their excitement with students supported a sense of achieving together between students and teacher which can be seen as part of an engaged practice. Yet, this can also run the risk that the teacher's emotional well-being is presented as an incentive for students' achievements, which can create dependencies. There might be a variety of perceptions about what enjoying learning may look like for different students. In some schools, a focus on students feeling happy at school to support their feelings of belonging to the school was seen as a strategy to prevent early leavers, which is also expressed in recent local education policy in Barcelona, which goes "beyond academic performance per se and understands that the foundation for improving performance is attaining a greater emotional bond between student and school" (Tarabini et al., 2016, p. 13). Taking this a step further, a school-wide focus on enjoying learning and lessons shared between students and teachers, and amongst friendship groups, placed enjoyment in the learning spaces. This resulted in a vibrant and at times noisy atmosphere, which might clash with a focus on behaviour management and quiet classrooms. Yet supporting students' autonomy in the lessons and trusting them to work with their friends helped students enjoy lessons and believe that they could participate. To students, their sense of belonging to their learning community was tightly linked with their sense of enjoyment of their learning, which might be relevant when exploring the disenfranchising of students who struggle in certain lessons. To them, belonging was tightly linked to their relationships within the classroom community (see also Morrow, 2011), which in turn related to their role and feeling of being accepted, or their feeling "in place" (see Ahmed, 2012). A shift in the expected behaviour conduct made the classroom a more inclusive place, nevertheless, internal power dynamics and internalised institutional norms still impacted on the valorisation of what the enjoyment of learning was meant to look like and what was considered .

5.4.5 Summary of the theme: The place for emotions in schools

Section 5.4 discussed the analysis of the theme: *The place for emotions in schools*. The following will summarise its findings.

Throughout the three research sites, I identified practices for inclusion. Some of these were set up structurally through the institution, some of these were part of the setup of the critical pedagogies explored, and others were part of the general practice of the members of staff participating in the research. Some of these practices were implemented consciously to support inclusion, others I observed and identified as inclusive practices. Specifically engaging with students' emotions proved to be supportive for students' inclusion across all three schools. Emotions often posed a barrier for students to access learning, in particular when these triggered conflicts with staff. In their relationships with teachers, whether students felt in control affected students' well-being and emotional availability to engage with learning. Approaches that engaged with students' emotions supported their readiness to engage in the learning. On the whole, critical pedagogies and positive, trusting relationships with staff and peers supported students in enjoying learning and feeling they belonged to the school or learning community.

Structural practices to support inclusion included setting up intervention classes and so-called inclusion spaces. While they were external to the regular classrooms, they presented safe spaces for students in strong emotional states, and places students could go for support. The critical pedagogies applied in the intervention class specifically worked at supporting students to work on their conflicts with staff and support them in changing their sometimes-difficult relationships.

Camino Institute, the school that applied critical pedagogies structurally tried to give teachers enough time in their schedule to engage with students' issues. In their view, a student's happiness would help them feel they belonged to the school community, that they had a place for them at the school, which would prevent them from leaving early. Being asked when they felt a classroom belonged to everyone, or when everyone felt they belonged to the classroom, students discussed it was important for them to feel united, together, and in good relationships with staff and peers. It was also important for them to be able to participate in a lesson and feel relaxed.

As part of the critical pedagogies projects, students' autonomous learning was encouraged, through student-led research and student-led group making. Students shared that they enjoyed that. They particularly liked to choose their own groups and work with their friends, which shifted the learning atmosphere and made it noisier. This change required the teacher's trust that learning was still going on. Teachers explained that giving students autonomy was a process in which they had to support students, particularly more vulnerable students. For students to feel "free and in control", teachers' support was needed. Some of the teachers applying critical pedagogies shared their feelings and excitement over the learning and projects with their students. This is part of an engaged pedagogical practice (hooks, 1994), and supports a better relationship between teacher and students. However, this can lead to emotional dependencies. Through the critical theatre work, some students challenged or transformed situations of conflict or exclusion, perhaps to regain a sense of control. While these were short moments, they allowed students to show what they needed for a more inclusive environment (see Chapter 6).

By engaging with embodied knowledge in the learning space, or what hooks (1994) refers to as "the passion of experience (p. 91; Section 2.2.1.5), a shift of valorisation of emotions as valuable in the learning space occurred, which impacted on the perception of the value of some of the students' experiences, hence their change from emotional other to knowledge holder. By addressing dynamics of power and control, some of the cultural and social processes (Ahmed, 2014) of the production of emotions were visibilised and engaged with, which in turn affected the power dynamics, even if momentarily. The shift of the pedagogical practice shifted the learning space, certain norms of knowledge production and conduct were challenged, and opened the space for other subjectivities to be intelligible and feel "in place" (Section 2.4.1). Drawing on the spatial lens here shows how the shift of the rules of the learning space adds an alternative knowledge in the classroom and disrupts power relations.

5.5   Chapter summary

Chapter 5 engaged with the thematic analysis of the data across three main themes. The following chapter, Chapter 6, will evaluate TO as a research method, and explore how the

data was generated through the theatre and what knowing implies when working with creative methods. With this, it will explore the methodological research question 5.

6   Theatre of the Oppressed as a research method

6.1   Introduction and chapter overview

This chapter reflects on the use of Theatre of the Oppressed (TO) as a method in pedagogical research with secondary school classes, which aligns also with the final research question. The creative, body-based, and transformative method generated rich data, yet it also provoked important ethical reflections, which this chapter will integrate with the existing body of knowledge on theatre-based qualitative research. Engaging with the theatre-based data explored through the thematic analysis in Chapter 5, the following will analyse the way TO generated and engaged with data in the research context. I argue that TO is a useful method for studying pedagogies in particular, as it visibilises and engages with embodied power dynamics that shape both learning and research. In classroom-based research, the playful nature of the theatre generates opportunities to challenge or transform power dynamics, gives agency to participants within the research, and facilitates reimagining the classroom and its attached narratives.

The chapter specifically analyses the use of image theatre in research. Image theatre is a key tool within TO. It is a non-verbal method, facilitating collective reflection on participants' own experiences and associated power dynamics through collective embodied expressions (see Section 2.4 and Section 3.2.3). First, the chapter looks at how image theatre facilitated collective expression with and through the body, engaging with participants' reflections on the workshops. Then it analyses how participants explored power dynamics through the exercises of image theatre, and how this impacted the research spaces and research relationships. Subsequently, the chapter investigates the transformative component of TO in the framing of doing pedagogical research in

secondary school classrooms. The chapter then reflects on the role of the researcher as facilitator and the pedagogical element this method adds to research. It then discusses ethical considerations around the use of theatre-based methods. Finally, the chapter looks at how the method was combined with other qualitative research methods such as participant observations, interviews, and participatory mapping, and reflects on the process and challenges of analysing theatre-based research data.

6.2 Research with and through the body

In what follows, I explore participants' engagements with TO and their reflections on the workshops, with a focus on image theatre's non-verbal aspects. I argue that image theatre as a research method in classroom research gives participants an opportunity for situated reflection and to explore thoughts through actions. Image theatre supports a collective reflection with and through the body, which changes set ways of communication in the classroom and therefore allows for a shift in who is coming to word and how, as it facilitates an affective exchange of ideas.

To support diverse communication forms, the theatre workshops were combined with participatory mapping exercises, which further helped some participants in their reflections. Additionally, participants were asked to reflect on the workshops in voluntary interviews after the workshops. The data generated through the different types of methods and the process of generating it will be discussed below.

Through the theatre exercises the body was consciously brought into the research (see Section 3.2.3). In the exercises, participants were invited to share their thoughts on their learning spaces through their bodies, and explore power, learning, and belonging through making spatially situated images in the classroom of the places they learnt best and least, felt most and least powerful, and their favourite and least favourite places in the classroom. Finally, they imagined a classroom that belongs to everyone (see Section 3.4.2). The participatory mapping exercises engaged with similar questions through the visual realm (see Section 3.4.3).

The theatre workshops, combined with the participatory mapping exercises, took place at the end of my research stays in the different classrooms, and were intended to offer a place for shared reflection on the critical pedagogies the teachers had implemented. I was able to implement the theatre work at Milestone Academy and Camino Institute. At Inspire Arts Comprehensive, the teacher (initially) preferred not to work with theatre, due to what she perceived to be the emotional fragility of her intervention class students (see Section 3.4.6 and Section 6.6).

At Milestone Academy, Alex, the science teacher, applied critical pedagogies in the form of a summer project, during which the relationship between teacher and students transformed (see Chapter 5). The theatre workshop allowed participants to reflect on these changes consciously and visibly. Alex explained that throughout the critical pedagogies project, "I started experimenting on (...) sitting in a different way" (see Section 5.3.3.1). Through the theatre exercises, he could visualise this reflection, as well as physically try out different locations.

Alex, the teacher at Milestone Academy, said that the perception maps students made gave him a useful insight into developing a better seating arrangement for his students. In the mapping session at Milestone Academy, students were asked to indicate their preferred seating arrangements, including the teacher's positioning and that of their friends. During the process of making the maps, students did not consider how their teacher would interpret their map. While his intention of using the maps to reorganise the seating arrangement seems in favour of the students, the ethical implications of him as a person in power, extracting information from the student maps needs to be engaged with (Chambers, 2006).

Figure 6-1 Perception map 3, Milestone Academy

At Camino Institute, the school's management implemented critical pedagogies on a structural level and not just for a recent project or part of this particular class. Since the students there were used to these practices, the reflection in the research workshop was more generic. One student, Oscar, echoed the physical exploration of the classroom through the theatre exercises: "Well, it helps you to know in which place of the classroom you feel better". The participatory mapping exercises reinforced participants' spatial reflections.

The exercises helped participants to conduct an active, situated reflection of their classroom. Expressing these reflections through the collective workshop spaces implied that everyone was able to see each other's spatial preferences. For the teachers, the students' expressions served as feedback on their seating arrangement. In Section 6.6 I will reflect further on the ethical implications of conducting these exercises together with students and teachers.

Some of the students commented on the collective aspects of the theatre work. Adrian at Camino Institute felt the workshop helped him to see what "other people in the class think", and Anna, his classmate, said through the theatre workshop "it is easier to see like everyone's thing, and you like, you see the real, well, the real thing". Although it is left unclear what Anna meant by "the real thing", her comment seems to refer to an affect, a feeling of authenticity of her classmates' expressions through the image work. Whilst it was difficult for Anna to explain with words what she perceived, in the theatre workshop she recognised a representation of her classmates that rang true for her. This is reflected in what O'Connor and Anderson (2015) describe as an understanding that is "created both in and through the body of the actor but is also understood and felt within the bodies of the audience" (p. 27). The work through the body engaged with what hooks (1994) calls a "passion of experience, (...) a way of knowing that is often expressed through the body (…) what has been inscribed on it through experience" (p. 91; see Section 2.2.1.4).

The theatre-based, physical expression was new to all three class contexts researched. While some individuals had experience with drama lessons, the groups were not used to doing drama together as a class, and none of them had experienced using theatre exercises to reflect on shared experiences. Two students, Dawid and Ibrahim, explained in

a group interview at Milestone Academy that they found the work challenging because they were not used to it. Ibrahim reflected, "It was actually quite difficult (...) because like, you know what it means but you can't express yourself throughout your body, it's harder, you can say it through words, but you can't say it through your body". Yet Dawid disagreed and said, "I think it was something different and I liked the ideas of doing it in a different way other than speaking, communicating through our body language".

Dawid and Ibrahim were working in the same group. While Ibrahim at first struggled to express himself with his body, Dawid felt it gave him further opportunities for communicating. For Dawid, English was an additional language which he learned more recently, while Ibrahim spoke English at home. That difference might play into their different experiences drawing on body language as a form of expression beyond spoken language. Their divergent experiences show that physical expression offered an additional form of communication to the students and in this way the method engaged with their language diversity. Overall, some students seemed comfortable with expressing ideas through the body, while others perceived it as something they were not used to. By the end, many students welcomed the possibility of expressing themselves through a different means.

Throughout the exercises in both classes, some students who did not volunteer to be interviewed, and who were therefore presumably less comfortable with verbal expression, tended to express themselves kinaesthetically with more ease or energy. A few of these students, like Oscar at Camino Institute, volunteered to be interviewed only after participating in the workshop and enjoying it.

Nevertheless, overall, it was difficult to engage in deeper verbal reflections with the students about the theatre work. Although it seemed to me they wanted to explain more, they seemed to lack practice in evaluating their creative expression. Oscar, who engaged with enthusiasm in the theatre exercises and therefore joined subsequent interviews, explained that he liked the workshops a lot "because it was something, I don't know (...) Well, something that I liked doing, you know? Which (…), well, I liked it." His struggle for words to describe what he felt was common among students. This strengthens the use of image theatre as a method since it allowed students to express ideas they seemed not able to express through words. Specifically, image theatre seemed to help students to express emotions or affect. In line with my intentions for generating diverse ways to

participate in the research (see Section 3.2.3), the non-verbal, embodied, and playful aspects of the workshops changed the ground rules of communication (Ellsworth, 1989) and diversified who was coming to voice (hooks, 1994).

Through the participatory theatre workshops, within "a field of shared emotional experience" (Denzin, 2007, p. 134; see Section 2.5.4), participants could explore their classrooms, reflect on them *in situ*, impact others through their ideas and feel, see, and recognise themselves in each other's thoughts in action. While this allowed for more diverse participation in the research, it also diversified the forms of expression.

6.3   Playing with power

Based on critical pedagogies, the exercises within TO are designed to unveil power and actively reflect on power dynamics in the experiences shared by participants, as well as among the group. In the image theatre workshops, participants were invited to show how they felt in their classrooms through a series of questions and present their reflections through shaping a body image and positioning their images in the best corresponding classroom spaces (see Section 3.4.2).

An image is like a statue participants create by striking a pose, to express an idea they feel. The image is "a consolidation of meaning in which the lives of the performers are deeply implicated within the image that they produce" (Radical Education Forum, 2010, p. 27). In that sense, an image is a non-verbal, affective sharing of an experience. However, the meaning of the image is not fixed but felt. Boal (2000) describes image theatre as a practice for "making thought visible" (p. 115). He explains, that an "image can be realistic, allegorical or surrealistic (…) The only thing that matters is (...) that it is felt by the protagonist [the person making the image]" (Boal, 1995, p. 77). Others can interpret the image with whatever feeling the image reflects for them. The meaning of the image becomes the sum of the different understandings of it (Boal, 1995; see Section 3.5.4).

Through the exercises, participants could explore and express their experiential reflections on power. Yet the nature of the theatre exercises meant that in the act of sharing these embodied reflections, participants could also play with the power dynamics amongst them,

while their images and the visibilising of power affected each other. Playing with power shifted the power relations amongst participants. So did the representation of power itself. The classroom doubled as an aesthetic space (see Section 2.5.4), and through the playful aspect of the exercises, the classroom rules and forms of engagement also changed. In the reality of the game, participants could engage with each other, the institution (represented by the classroom), as well as with the research through changed subjectivities. As a research method, image theatre was an activating method. It gave me as a researcher an opportunity to see and hear participants' reflections. Yet, as participants expressed their experiences, they could alter power relations within them at the same time.

The image of *the place I feel most powerful* (figure 5.3), explored in Section 5.3.3.1, looking at the changes in the terms of engagement between staff and peers, institution, and learning, shows the students and the teacher of Milestone Academy presenting where and how they felt most powerful. It shows participants in a range of positions throughout the classroom.

The image does not portray an everyday classroom situation, but a heightened expression of perceived power dynamics between each other, the learning, and the institution.
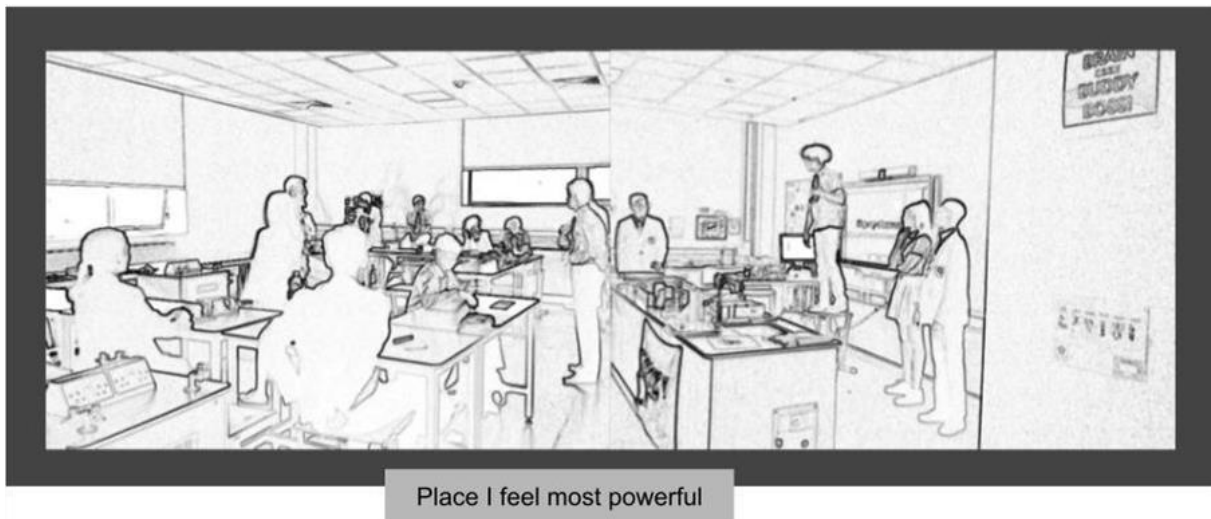

Place I feel most powerful

Figure 5-4 Image of most place I feel most powerful, Milestone Academy (Copy)

The data generated here includes the individual images participants made, the locations they chose to position themselves in and the overall image within the classroom made up

of the individual images. But also the processes of making the images are of relevance. Within these dynamic processes, I was also reflecting on the interplay between the individual images and between the images and the classroom spaces. While each participant created their own body image, they created their images simultaneously in the classroom. This meant that the individual images complemented as well as impacted each other, and all individual images together shaped one shared image within the classroom (Boal, 1995).

The image projects participants' different reflections onto the classroom as a creative space, and (re)presents the classroom as participants would inhabit it at their most powerful. For some participants, the workshop allowed for an exploration of ideas they previously shared in interviews, such as Alex, the teacher, playing with his positioning as a teacher. Some of the students placed themselves in the teacher's area of the classroom. For example, Omari showed himself standing at the board as a presenter, which enriched data identified through participant observations about Omari's relationship with learning (see Section 5.2.2.3). Ruksana, (not very visible in this photograph), placed herself in the right back corner, sitting on a table, overlooking the class from the back. Yet other participants, such as Sam, challenged the terms of engagement of the institution within the playful structure of the exercise by stepping on top of the teacher's chair (see Section 5.3.3.1). Standing or sitting on top of a chair or table to present themselves as their most powerful was also a popular image at Camino Institute, where Oscar and Jesus positioned themselves on top of the table to show their most powerful selves, and underneath a table to show their least powerful. From a theatrical perspective, status and power can be represented through levels and proxemics. Characters' distance to others as well as their height on stage visually represents their position of power.

Sam standing on a high piece of furniture in the middle of the room represents a binary understanding of power, with the tallest and highest being the most powerful. At the same time, that piece of furniture being the teacher's chair also adds a playful challenge to the teacher's power over the students. In that sense, the act of standing on that chair is also a challenge within the binary power dynamic between student and teacher.

Standing on top of furniture is considered bad behaviour, especially within schools' strict rules. Sam's act is thus also a challenge to the institutional, structural power. Within the rules of the theatre workshop, however, this act was seen as an active contribution. In

other lessons, the students standing on top of the furniture were the ones getting into trouble with teachers for their behaviour. But in the theatre workshop, this was not misbehaving but constructive participation.

At the same time, by choosing this location, Sam also took on a central position within the full-group images and a position of power over his classmates. As a generally dominant person in the classroom community, he hereby did not necessarily shift his position of power amongst his peers but visibilised it. Ruksana's position, sitting on top of the table at the far corner, could be seen to juxtapose Sam's position of power from the margins. This dynamic could be explored through an extension of the exercise to play with power among students. Through a gendered lens, Sam's choice of location and image can be read as a representation of maleness, taking power-over in a central attention-taking position, which Ruksana's observational position of power from the margins juxtaposes.

Both at Milestone Academy as well as at Camino Institute, participants used the image theatre workshops to play with the set power dynamics between teacher and students. Within the reality of the fiction (Boal, 1995), the exercises posed a momentary intervention into the power dynamics amongst participants. Participants played or performed a moment in which they were all at their most powerful within the classroom. By striking their most powerful poses, they experienced the classroom and each other from changed perspectives. Therefore, the images served as both a moment of shared reflection and an intervention into the classroom experience. Boal (1995) describes theatre as the moment when the human "can see *itself* — see itself *in situ*: see itself seeing" (p. 13), and TO is the act of critically engaging with this seeing (see Section 2.4). By physically stepping outside of their habitual places, participants were able to engage with these locations from a changed perspective. The swapped positions of symbolic power, as in the image of power at Milestone Academy (Figure 5.3), offer what Boal refers to as an "imaginary mirror" which allows the participant "to imagine variations of his action, to study alternatives" (Boal, 1995, p. 13). Through the theatre workshop, participants could engage with each other in swapped symbolic power positions. Sam and Alex faced each other, the student from the top of the teacher's chair, the teacher from the midst of the classroom, and Omari engaged with the class from his location presenting at the board. Ruksana, who I observed as a shy and studious girl in other lessons, positioned herself at the back, occupying a location far removed from the teacher, and at the margins of the classroom, representing the margins as a position of power. As a next step, the power dynamics among students could be

explored, to observe the changes of engagement amongst them, and facilitate a critical exploration of their relationships with each other.

The interaction between the different representations of power together within the classroom changed the subjectivities through which participants were engaging with each other, as well as with the institution (symbolised through the rules and the classroom). These changed relations also changed the type of power presented. The act of standing on the teacher's chair to trump his structural power shifts when the teacher positions himself as part of the class and they meet each other in a game in which the student is rendered an active participant. The whole-group image created is a first step toward reimagining the classroom as a space in which everyone is at their most powerful and the rules are changed.

As a method, image theatre is a reflection in which the responses are set up to be spontaneous in a playful setting. The images created are not necessarily a realistic representation of an experience but are a (re)presentation of an embodied sensation expressed spontaneously; "Meaning emerges in the doing and seeing" (Linds, 2006, p. 119). By choosing to locate the making of the images *in situ*, in this case in the classroom, this sensation was placed into and then altered, a familiar setting. The familiar place where research took place doubled as a creative space. "As an aesthetic landscape emerges, doubling for the social, the theatre practice becomes a form of text — a weave of potential meanings — that extends beyond the workshop space" (Linds, 2006, p. 119). Within the research, this offered the possibilities for participants to engage with the very questions around power, learning and belonging explored *in situ* and with each other, whilst momentarily projecting an altered reality onto the familiar. Nicholson (2014) refers to this as "reconstructing how space is conceived and temporarily overlaying its codes with alternative spatial practices" (p. 132). Through the changed spatial practice, the students' subjectivities shifted, which also changed their positionality as research participants shared their reflections. Sam, Oscar, and Jesus standing on top of tables engaged with the research as active participants rather than as naughty students, and Ruksana engaged with the research from the margins as a position of power.

In conclusion, the theatre workshop allowed participants to further explore and engage with power dynamics within the classes, in the safety of a playful, creative space (Pratt and Johnstone, 2007). The images manifested some of the power shifts and allowed

participants to further play with changing their terms of engagement (Gallagher, 2008). The ways behavioural rules changed in the theatre workshop made different terms of engagement possible. The images produced, show the power dynamics at play, and with that give a dynamic insight into how participants felt and impacted each other, whilst also shifting the representation of power in the image of the classroom, making different forms of engagement possible. The theatre form facilitated explorations around a structural axis of power, which as a next step could be unpacked further and engaged with on a deeper level, including the power dynamics amongst students. In sharing their experiences through the playful nature of the theatre, participants' subjectivities within the research change and play with the positionalities through which they share their experiences.

6.4 Research as a rehearsal for change?

The key principle of TO is to use the theatre to explore avenues of transformation of situations of injustice: a rehearsal for change (Boal, 1995). While the exercises are designed to play with power, as a next step, the method explores how to shift set power dynamics in experiences of injustice or power imbalances performed. The method's transformative potential also became apparent within the research context. Through the exercises, some concrete issues of power imbalances emerged, which participants could subsequently engage with, also through the exercises. Small transformative moments occurred implicitly through the exercises, which I reflect on below. Presenting the power conflicts and exploring their alternatives shifted the subjectivities of the research participants. Whilst they were sharing moments of injustice they experienced, they did so with the agency of engaging with actions to change the imbalances. As the facilitator of the exercise, I became implicated in these transformative acts.

An example of transformation through TO exercises in the research was Sam's transformation of his image of powerlessness outside the classroom at Milestone Academy (see Section 5.4.3.3). The classroom door was made of transparent glass and attached to a large window from the classroom to the corridor, allowing passers-by to look inside the classroom (see figure 5.4). To show the place he felt least powerful, Sam placed himself

outside the classroom door, with his arms folded, sternly looking in through the window in the position of being sent out of the classroom as a punishment. With this image, he appeared to address the issue of exclusion, and the power dynamics at play when a teacher decides to send a student out, which usually occurs due to the student's 'inadequate' behaviour. A teacher has the power to remove a student from the classroom community, which Sam's image represented (figure 5.4, see Section 5.4.3.3). In the image workshop, the next task was to show *your favourite place*. Sam, still outside the classroom, chose to remain in the same location, changing his posture slightly to leaning leisurely at the window, shifting his gaze to overlooking the corridor instead.
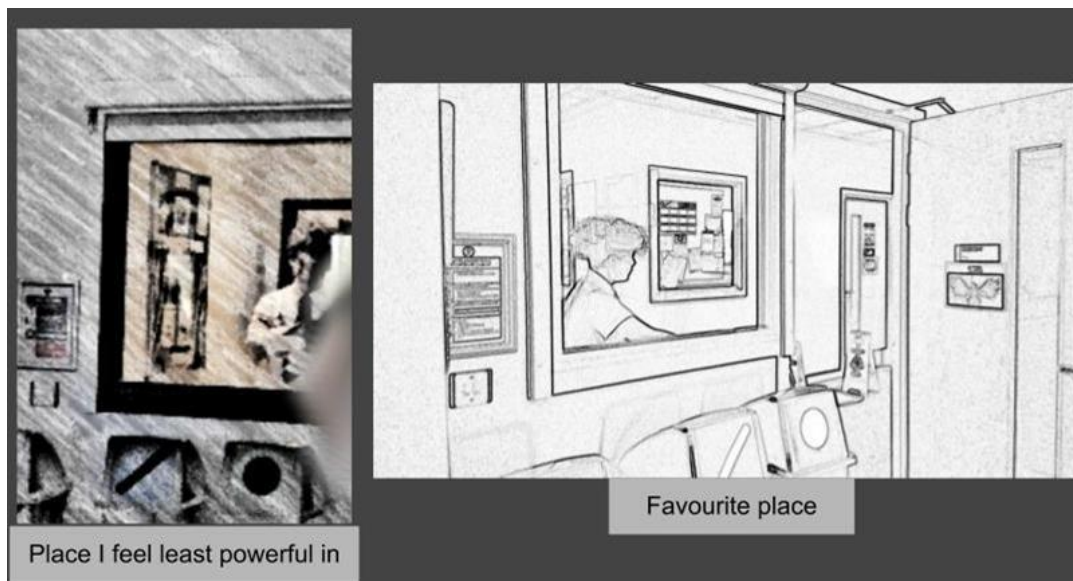

Figure 5-5 Images Sam, Milestone Academy (Copy)

By initially placing his image outside the classroom, Sam challenged a rule that I as the researcher/facilitator had set, asking for all images to take place inside the classroom. With the argument that stepping outside the classroom was necessary for his first image, Sam changed that rule. Changing a set rule transformed his position within the power dynamic between me, the researcher/facilitator, and him, the student. Subsequently, being outside the classroom became an achievement and allowed him to shift his positionality in that very location, despite the initial connotation of the powerlessness of the location. In the following image, he chose the same location as a positive, chosen place, which he expressed by changing his posture and with that the image.

In my workshop reflections, I noted that his choice to remain outside felt like a challenge directed at me. By being outside the classroom he was no longer directly under my direction. Through the game, he was able to challenge the power dynamics between us. However, through the game, he also was able to own the very place that symbolised exclusion from the classroom, find agency, and therefore change its meaning around.

Sam's transformation in his location outside the classroom can be explored as a typical transformative moment within TO. Participants explore moments of powerlessness, and through the theatre try out possibilities for gaining power within the very situation, starting with small physical changes to their position.

> In other words, in and through performance, the so-called oppressed gains agency and uses the deconstruction of a narrative of oppression as an exercise in empowerment. Through the aesthetic appropriation of the image, oppression is transformed into freedom, at least in the confines of the performance space (Banks, 2006, p. 189).

Sam was able to transform the place of powerlessness of 'being sent out' to a space of power, of 'having left', by transforming the image of himself being outside the classroom. Through that, he gave that location a different meaning. Even if this was just a fleeting moment, for that moment the space became 'his'. With this, he addresses the issue of powerlessness from being excluded, but from the place of an active participant who has the agency to shift set rules to be able to contribute and belong, pointing out issues and transforming them, at least momentarily.

The research workshop aimed to create spaces for shared reflection. Yet, the exercises also posed an intervention in the very questions this research has explored around power and belonging. Within the fictional world of the theatre, Sam was able to explore an alternative subjectivity within the physical context of the classroom set-up. This episode reveals added layers around control and power dynamics that the student experienced (see figure 5.4, Section 5.4.3.3), whilst at the same time offering glimpses of transformative interventions. The image showing the experience of a powerless, excluded student transforms with the act of taking control to change the rules of the learning space to be able to contribute a valid idea.

Similarly, the series of images at Camino Institute depicting the best and worst places for learning (see Section 5.4.3.6) posed a transformative intervention into the classroom

dynamics. Through the images, students showed a confrontational opposition between the student body and the teacher body, in contrast to the actual de-centred classroom seating arrangement in group tables.
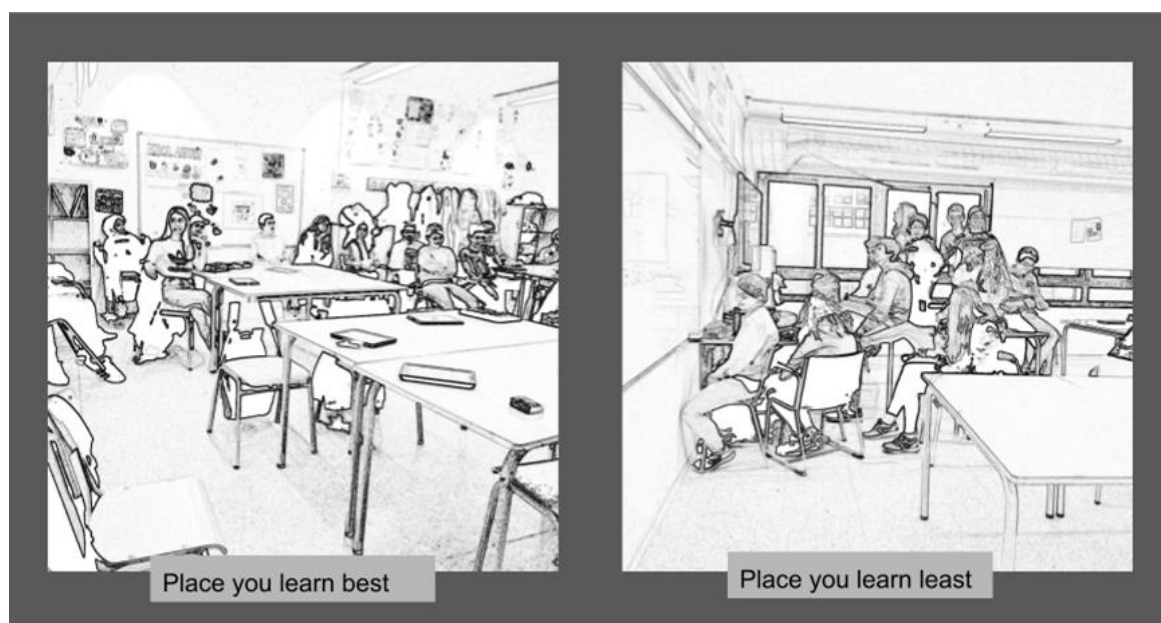

Figure 5-6 Images of learning, Camino Institute (Copy)

While the students created both images, the teacher remained on the side and watched. Their actions produced a brief shift in power dynamics by visibilising a dichotomy with the teacher beyond the suggested pedagogical framework of the seating arrangement, which was intended to support group work and a de-centralisation of the teacher. While the initial question around which their preferred and least preferred learning spaces were was only indirectly engaged with, as interviews with students later confirmed, the images explored power dynamics in the classroom that possibly hindered or affected student learning. It came across as a critique, or expression of discontent towards their teacher, who initially struggled to understand the meaning of the images, but then reflected on questions around control and well-being (see Section 5.4.3). The non-verbal image work brought up something that had not been spoken about but likely was felt by students previously.

Embodied knowledge, as de Soussa Santos (2018) suggests, is coming to life in bodies conducting power struggles. Through the theatre work, students could present their perceptions and show their teacher how they felt without a serious, uncomfortable conflict. To explore the conflict at the heart of this series of images, more work would be needed.

Nevertheless, creating the images was empowering for the students, and it sparked a discussion on power and control with the teacher in a subsequent interview.

At Inspire Arts Comprehensive, Amber initially felt apprehensive about theatre out of worries for her students' emotional safety. Later, though, she drew on the use of theatre herself to support students in rehearsing their conversations with their teachers who they had difficult relationships with (see Section 5.3.3.5). While her theatre workshop was outside the research design, introducing the idea of using theatre offered her a transformative tool to support the students.

In the theatre work with Amber, students were able to explore alternative ways of approaching teachers they felt insecure with. Amber would perform typical trademarks of certain teachers in her way of speaking or her tone, to provoke the students to practice finding their words when confronted with these teachers (see Section 5.3.3.5). Whilst her use of theatre supported students in practising their voice and gaining the courage to address teachers they were afraid of, the exercise was heavily guided by Amber as she also advised students how to speak to the teachers and how to position their bodies when speaking. While the overall exercise was aiming toward a transformation of the relationship between the students and the teachers, the process differed from the self-empowering structure of the TO method, where participants find their voices. Yet it was set up as a supportive and structured pedagogical process for the students, which they expressed they liked. With more time for the research, this work could have then been followed up with a TO workshop.

To conclude, situated within a wider perspective of research for social justice, this research drew on participatory and transformative methods (see Section 3.2). The transformative moments generated through TO methods pose a possible beginning for research as a rehearsal for change. The issues identified by participants in the workshops could be developed into a larger participatory action research study. Within the remit of this research, though, the issues were discussed in follow-up interviews where possible, and at Camino Institute sparked a further reflection on aspects of power and control with the teacher. Most importantly, however, the issues were visibilised and played with through the workshops. In sharing their experiences of powerlessness, participants did not express their experiences through a 'victim perspective', as multiple authors confirm (O'Connor and Anderson, 2015; Tuck and Yang, 2014; etc.), but through agency and action. I, the

researcher in the role of facilitator, became implicated in the action and power dynamics, which the next section will explore further.

6.5   Researcher as facilitator/ pedagogue

To implement the theatre workshop as a research intervention, I took on the role of facilitator. For this, I drew on my long-standing practice as a TO practitioner (see Section 1.2). I developed the workshop, combining my expertise in the practice with the methodological reflections that led to the research design. In facilitating the exercises, I engaged with the participants in a double function as both researcher and facilitator. To disentangle the implication of these two roles, the following will reflect on how their particular responsibilities and possibilities aligned with or contradicted each other throughout the research workshops. It will specifically explore the relationship between myself, the researcher and facilitator, and the students, how the double role impacted on choices I made and the impact this had on the research, and how the choice of TO as a method shaped the content of the contributions.

The role of the TO facilitator is a pedagogical one. Based on critical pedagogies, the facilitator is to support participants to engage critically with their environments or experiences. The TO facilitator holds the frame of the method, sets the instructions for the exercises, and then supports participants to express their ideas in a safe environment. Within the TO system, the facilitator is called a joker; as, within the playful nature of the theatre, the joker challenges participants to engage with power.

The joker can move back and forth between what Boal (1995) calls the reality of the fiction and the fiction of reality. This means that participants can engage with the joker as part of a played scene, but the joker can also slip out of a scene and address the audience as well as the participants outside their roles. The joker holds the responsibility to challenge participants to explore power dynamics at play in the scenarios shared. It is the joker who facilitates the pluralisation of individual experiences towards a social reflection. In the role of a joker, the facilitator also challenges participants to challenge her or his authority

(Schutzman, 2006). Yet, the joker does not choose the content of the work beyond these parameters; it is always the participants who choose which kind of conflicts or experiences of power imbalances to work with (Rifkin, 2010).

Merging the pedagogical role of the joker with that of the researcher exploring pedagogies offered certain opportunities and also posed some contradictions, not least because of the roles' different attached responsibilities. The joker's characteristic way of relating to participants with the offer to challenge or play with authority, including her own, supported my methodological intention to ensure participants' consent at all times and break down the hierarchies between researcher and research participants (see Section 3.2). At various times in the workshops, participants playfully engaged with my authority as the facilitator. For example, in the example described above, Sam challenged set workshop rules by deciding to leave the room, while consciously addressing me as the person in charge. In another instance, when asked for their favourite place of learning, Saad, also a student at Milestone Academy, who so far had remained in his usual seat, looked at me and said, "Watching movies". This remark was set in the context of other classes watching movies for the end-of-year lessons, while this class participated in the research workshop. The joker relationship proposed by the TO framework allowed the student to critique the research or researcher through the game. Furthermore, the TO framework made it possible for participants to choose non-participation as their contribution (see Section 5.2.4.4).

The pedagogical aspect of the role of the joker or facilitator also impacted my dual role as researcher-facilitator throughout this research. While I was adhering to a robust research design, as well as to a detailed framework of TO, the pedagogical aspect of the facilitator role implied constant spontaneous decisions made by drawing on experience to create a safe and participatory learning environment. In my research, this shaped what Gallagher (2007) calls a "porous methodology" (see Section 3.4.1). This entailed decisions on how to engage with participants challenging rules, ensuring their and everyone's safety, or supporting participants in their creative choices. In one instance, this framework led me to offer Marta, the SEN student at Camino Institute, the choice to take photos instead of creating images (see Section 5.2.4.3) to facilitate her participation and well-being. This decision, to me as a pedagogue, is a standard pedagogical practice aimed at supporting students in finding their way of being part of the learning setting. Yet, for the research this implied the added layer of the documentation of the research data becoming part of the

data. Marta's choice of photographic perspective and relationship towards the class is part of the photographic documentation. Also, technical failure becomes part of that responsibility; one of the photographs was not saved and I had to describe it from memory for the research archive.

As a researcher, I set up the theatre workshops to support the exploration of my research questions. This intention was framed within a specific methodological and ethical framework which valued a dialogical and participatory approach and always ensured active consent (see Section 3.6). Nevertheless, as the researcher, I approached the workshop spaces with a clear direction. This specific agenda contradicted the TO principle that the choice of which content to work with in the workshops should originate from the participants. Besides exploring power relations, which are also to be explored within the TO framework, the research workshop was designed to reflect on participants' thoughts on learning as well as their sense of belonging. Indeed, the method mostly supported the exploration of power dynamics regardless of the question posed. A good example of this is the instance discussed above of students creating images of learning at Camino Institute. As a facilitator, I was open to participants to show whatever aspect of their experiences they wanted to express and did not intend to refocus their work on showing me the actual place they felt they learnt best or least. Later on, we discussed this in the interviews. As power dynamics lie at the heart of pedagogical dynamics (Nind et al., 2016), this served my research's focus.

In conclusion, having set up the activities of the theatre workshop and facilitated them, my subsequent choices in interventions throughout the facilitation process with students were mainly driven by my responsibility as facilitator and pedagogue of holding the spaces and ensuring everyone's safety and ability to participate. In the process of facilitation, my interest in exploring the research questions became secondary. Gallagher (2008) refers to these negotiations as "pedagogically informed, participatory research with youth" (p. 73). While I believe my engagement with the classes as a pedagogue supported my research intentions of exploring the spaces for learning shaped in the classrooms and engaging with "pedagogy as complex, nuanced and (…) dynamic" (Curtin and Hall, 2018, p. 367), these complex negotiations have to be taken into account when designing the research project. As the researcher, I was implicated in the learning spaces as a participating pedagogue, which affected the research conducted. This sort of work necessitates support from a robust ethical framework, which the next section will explore.

6.6   Ethical reflections

Work with and through the body facilitates deep experiential expression and communication, which brings with it an emotional fragility, especially when working with participants who are not experienced in theatre work. Therefore, the work is framed by a robust reflexive practice throughout (Rifkin, 2010) and ethical considerations. Research adheres to strong ethical frameworks, and I was drawing on the BERA ethical guidelines (2011, 2018) and the LSBU ethical framework (see Section 3.6). Ethical reflections for this research indicated that working with TO methods in research with young people requires trust, time, and competence as well as an active practice of consent and continual reflection on power dynamics and the consequence the work might have.

An example of an ethical challenge I faced was the decision not to implement the theatre workshop at Inspire Arts Comprehensive. Amber, the teacher of the intervention class explained that, due to the students' social-emotional and behavioural needs, she did not feel comfortable with me conducting the workshop with them. She felt the theatre exercise could create overstimulation for the students and result in a lack of control. She worried they would "end up throwing furniture around". Whilst I trusted my competence and experience to work with the group, as well as the students, I accepted that the teacher felt uneasy about it. As she was the person responsible for this emotionally vulnerable group of students, I felt the most ethical thing to do in this situation was to work only with participatory mapping and not to run the theatre exercises. My time with the group was limited, hence I was not able to develop strong enough relationships of trust.

However, after the successful mapping exercise, Amber felt she did want to try out using theatre, and set up a theatre exercise herself with the students, which the students loved and actively participated in. As their teacher, the students had built a relationship of trust with Amber, which we were just starting to build in my short time with them. Nevertheless, as their teacher, Amber was also implicated in the power dynamics the research wanted to explore, and in running the exercises she embodied the school's expected conduct. As an outsider, I would have been a more neutral person to run the exercises. In this kind of situation, it is important to consider how risky versus how constructive the theatre work could be. This episode highlights the need for a relationship of trust to be established

when using theatre, in particular when working on limited timeframes with more vulnerable students. With more time, the originally planned TO workshop would have been possible.

Throughout the study, the set-up of the research as well as the fast-paced time-tabling of the schools meant that there was not much time available for the theatre workshops. At Milestone Academy, initially, Alex could only offer me a 15-minute break-time slot. Through a timetable swap, I was then able to take on an entire lesson of one hour, the same I was allocated at Camino Institute. Whilst one hour seemed a lot of time in the context, for conducting TO workshops with participants who were not used to the practice, it meant a steep introduction. At several points in the reflective journal of the research, I noted the terms "time" and "trust" when describing the theatre workshops. To support everyone's participation, and ensure they were comfortable with the practice, a series of sessions would have been helpful. At Camino Institute I was able to conduct the participant observation sessions over 6 weeks, as opposed to 2 weeks, which was how much time I had for my participant observation at Milestone Academy. While we did not have extra time for the actual workshop, I noticed a difference in trust towards me from the students, and a greater readiness to participate in something unknown to them.

This does not imply that conducting the workshop in one hour was not ethical; still, it is important to consider the time available and the relationship of trust established with participants when setting up the framework of the workshop and evaluating the data for the research. Rifkin (2010) suggests "competence" as "an ethical principle" (p. 19), "making decisions within your capacity at different stages of your development" (p. 26). The competence and experience of the facilitator will support the ethical setup of the workshop. Through the reflexive frame, the facilitator needs to be aware of their own experience and competence and set up the work accordingly.

The embodied work on the one hand facilitated expression for some participants and diversified who was coming to voice, as explored above. On the other hand, as participants' reflections show, the work was new to most of them (see Section 6.2). Reflecting on this through an ethical lens means that it is even more important to ensure participants can make use of their right to (not) consent. Embodied expression, as well as working through setting up collective situations, can be very impactful for the participants (see Thompson, 2009). Therefore, reminding participants that participating in the theatre exercises was optional was ethically important.

In that same vein, the decision to support Marta at Camino Institute to take part in the more distanced role of the photographer was an ethical decision, aimed at ensuring her well-being. Equally, accepting Amber's doubts at Inspire Arts Comprehensive not to conduct the workshop with her students was an ethical decision, as she felt the physical and embodied work could lead to a loss of control for her students. Rifkin (2010) speaks of implicit and explicit ways of making agreements with participants. The explicit forms of agreement were the consent forms which explained the theatre workshops and the reasoning behind them, which was also reiterated various times throughout the workshop. Implicit forms of agreement involved a robust listening practice. Hereby it was important to me to ensure I also *felt* participants wanted to participate, about which I inquired rigorously throughout the reflexive journal. Furthermore, I wanted to support participants in their possible needs to step out or take on different roles.

The TO facilitator has a responsibility for the impact of the workshop on participants. Thompson (2009) highlights the impact the transformative element of the work might have beyond the workshop spaces. Through the playful set-up of the theatre, participants can address conflicts which might be under the surface. This can have implications throughout as well as beyond the workshop spaces. It was a conscious decision within the research workshop design to conduct the workshops with teachers and students together. This could have been risky, as the teachers were in positions of institutional power over the students, and possible challenges to the teachers' power could have brought students into difficulties after the workshops. However, as I wanted to explore the pedagogical set-up of the classroom, and the teachers were actively engaged with critical pedagogies and interested in reflecting on their application of them, it seemed ethical and constructive to invite them to take part in the workshops.

At Camino Institute, in the images which were confrontational towards the role of the teacher, Carla, stepped out of the images to watch them instead, which upon reflection, was an ethical action. She thereby gave students the space for their critique, without retaliation. Nevertheless, it was important to me to have a longer discussion with her about the workshop afterwards. At Milestone Academy I invited the students to voice possible thoughts of Alex, the teacher, in the image he created, to give them a chance to speak for him. This was in the context of various in-depth interviews with Alex and having set up a relationship of trust with him. At Camino Institute I did not conduct that part of the exercise. Here the role of the joker was helpful, as, through the playful aspect of the role, critique

was made easier for all parties. When conducted safely, TO can serve as a forum through which to criticise the community (Ganguly, 2010).

To conclude, the potential of the embodied, transformative work of TO brings with it an emotional fragility, which has to be engaged with to ensure an ethical process. When using TO as a research method and the researcher acting as facilitator, it is crucial to adhere to a robust ethical framework. Time, trust, and competence are important criteria in ethical work with TO as a researcher, as well as a constant reflection and listening practice towards active consent and safe(r) spaces for engaging with complex power dynamics amongst the participants. An evaluation of the risks versus constructiveness of the work is important to be able to draw on the potential TO has to offer.

6.7   Engaging with theatre-based data

The data generated through image theatre is largely non-verbal and body-based. While the above explored how this was an aspect that supported more diverse participation in this research, and an engagement with experiential knowledge, this also posed a challenge when engaging with it in the process of data analysis and the interpretation of the non-verbal expressions. The combination with the other qualitative research methods — participatory mapping, interviews, and participant observations — supported the data generation and analysis. Whilst the intention was not to triangulate data but to gain richness through their breadth and learn from their different qualities, the different data forms support each other. The following reflects on the combination of TO and the other methods throughout the research and evaluates the process and challenges of analysing the creative data.

The TO work was complemented by other research methods which equally aided in identifying data (see Chapter 3). Together, the creative methods (TO and perception mapping) were intended to provide a chance for students to contribute their reflections on the pedagogical projects explored. Hereby, the perception mapping exercises supported the embodied work of the theatre workshops, by amplifying the reflection through the

visual. In the first school, Milestone Academy, the perception mapping exercise was designed to consolidate the theatre workshops, and each student created their map after the theatre workshop, responding to similar questions raised through the theatre work. Upon reflection, I felt the mapping exercise was a good way to start the shared reflection on the learning place, and in the two following schools, these were conducted as exercises in small peer groups, and before the theatre workshop in the case of Camino Institute (see Section 3.4.3). This supported students' engagement in a debate around their learning spaces and helped them prepare for the questions the theatre workshop posed. While students had many of these debates with each other in small groups, which in the case of Camino Institute implied I was only able to observe some of their discussions, it appeared to serve them as a useful preparation for the exercises. The perception maps served as useful data, crystallising some of the points identified throughout the observations, and formed a basis for the interviews.

Interviews with students in addition to the workshops facilitated going into depth on some of the research questions, as well as gaining their feedback on the theatre work. Yet, as these were conducted voluntarily, only a small sample of students agreed to be interviewed, a group that differed from the students who were more active and expressive in the theatre workshops. Moreover, students found it difficult to verbally reflect on ideas they shared through the theatre exercises (see Section 6.2). This supported the point that the theatre workshops helped diversify voices and ways of knowing, yet added to the challenge of the analysis process.

Methods like participant observation and interviews helped develop relationships with the groups I worked with, especially the dialogical work with the teachers. Interviews and reflective journal keeping helped to expand on the creative reflections and supported the creative data produced. TO incorporated and expanded the ethics and principles of the research framework of engaging with critical and inclusive pedagogies. At the same time, TO enriched my reflection on power dynamics; it crystallised certain aspects and visibilised power imbalances in the classroom (see Sections 6.3 and 6.4). It allowed participants to engage in these reflections with agency whilst having the possibility to playfully challenge or transform some of the power imbalances (see Section 6.4). Through the exercises, the terms of engagement and participation could shift, even if momentarily, including the relationship between participants and myself, the researcher as facilitator (see Section

6.5). Especially for reflections on learning and belonging, the other research methods complemented and consolidated the data produced through the theatre work.

Because of the emotional fragility associated with this type of work (see Section 6.6), interpreting and analysing collaborative, embodied data demands careful ethical considerations. It was important to me to draw on TO's own analysis process, which implied engaging with my own experience of participating in the collective work (see Section 3.5.4). Additionally, I was drawing on a robust reflexive framework, while acknowledging that an interpretation of data always is subjective (Britzman, 2000).

The experiential aspect of ethnographic research is much discussed. Pink (2009) explains the "analysis of experiential, imaginative, sensorial and emotional dimensions of ethnography is itself often an intuitive, messy and sometimes serendipitous task" (p. 119). The analysis process of the creative data was both, enriching as well as challenging. It was enriching because it allowed me to connect back to the workshop moments in the classrooms and revisit the images produced as well as the processes of producing them, to reinvestigate them. Through it, I could engage with my sensorial and emotional understanding of the theatre workshops.

The challenging aspect was to move from the collective experiential dimension to the written word and to identify what the images allow me to know, and how. In discussing research in youth theatre spaces, Turner-King (2020) argues for what she calls "a responsibility" of artists, practitioners and researchers "to search for new ways to listen, respond and care about what they hear, see and sense" in theatre work with youth, implying an engagement with the "lived experiences of conviviality, embodiment, and affect" (p. 48). For example, looking at the classroom image of *the place I feel most powerful* produced at Milestone Academy, the most dominant aspect of the image is Sam standing on top of the teacher's table, in the centre of the image, facing Alex, the teacher standing in the semi-circle of student desks. However, looking at it, I also knew the shift in engagement Ruksana underwent, by sitting on top of the desk at the back of the room. This knowing is part of my sensorial memory, of having spent time in the classroom with the students, engaging with their dynamics with each other, and how these were expressed spatially. In knowing Ruksana as a quiet, studious girl, and having seen the back tables usually being occupied by the noisier boys, as well as seeing the act of sitting on top of furniture as a representation of power (see Section 6.3), I understood her image

as a shift in her terms of engagement. Nevertheless, this knowing is situated in my experience of the class and my background in how I come to know (see Section 1.2). Similarly, my analysis of Saad's and Humza's non-participation in the image work at Milestone Academy (see Section 6.5) forming part of their participation, is shaped by my sensorial experience of the workshops. My knowing of the situation is based on the non-verbal interaction between us and observing their changes throughout the workshops. Nevertheless, my reading is also informed by my experience of working both as a teacher, as well as a theatre practitioner with young people.

Discussing the sensorial aspect of analysis, Pink (2009) argues that analysis is "a process of re-insertion, through memory and imagination work" (p. 120) and suggests "the analysis itself should be situated *in relation to* the phenomenological context of the production of the material… thus, enabling us to re-encounter the sensorial and emotional reality of research situations" (p. 121). Staying close to the experiential dimension of the theatre workshops in the process of analysing the embodied and non-verbal data seemed crucial, both ethically and also to be able to make sense of the data. Nevertheless, in the process of re-encountering the experiential reality of the workshops, I was aware that I was exploring my perspective of the image work. As stated within the analysis process of the TO method itself (see Section 3.5.4), by re-engaging with the experiential reality of the workshops, I tuned into the shared perceptions of the workshop moment, however, my analysis process was guided by my subjective reading of the images. Whilst this is true also for word-based research data, such as interviews, image theatre is deliberately open to a diversity of interpretations through the "multiple mirror of the gaze of others" (Boal, 2002, p. 175).

Image theatre, as a research method, fosters conscious engagement with an openness to a diversity of interpretations, as well as with playfulness, which together shaped the images produced. This reflection is done collectively, with one idea shaping the other. This implies the research material generated through the theatre facilitated a collective engagement with key themes of the research and the different perspectives on it. The quality of data generated through the theatre-based methods is therefore shaped by this context of playfulness and multiple forms of imagination.

This creates richness within the research process and exploring the learning spaces, however it does not necessarily produce answers, but rather openings for reflections.

Working with arts-based methods to explore how teachers learn, Hernández-Hernández et al. (2018) reflect, "We were able to locate moments, relations and experiences of learning, but not how learning takes place" (p. 110). They conclude that the individual cartographies their participants drew allowed them to understand "anything unexpected that surprised them [participating teachers] (or us [researchers]), which seems worth sharing" (Hernández-Hernández et al., 2018, p. 114). Similarly, I recognise that ultimately, within the rigour of the research framework, the interpretations of the images are based on my own embodied and experiential knowing of the workshops as a participant in them, and the connections I am making as the researcher engaging academically with the subject.

The analysis of the image theatre-based data offers rich material for reflection of rich experiential research processes. Pink (2009) writes, "Ethnographic analysis (…) involves making connections between, on the one hand, complex phenomenological realities and the specificities of other people's ways of understanding these, and, on the other, scholarly categories and debates" (p. 128). The analysis of the theatre-based data in this research is based on a sensorial and experiential knowing of myself as a participant and practitioner, shaped as a researcher by the literature and enriched by the analysis of data from other research methods. Engaging with my experiential knowing of participants' expressions should be framed by a rigorous ethical reflexive framework, and the quality of the data must be assessed in the context of the process of producing it. This allows for rich reflections that engage with experiential and embodied knowledge.

6.8   Chapter summary

In this study, participants and researcher generated the data together through the theatre workshops, taking on different roles. Chadderton (2011), suggests that the researcher "does not collect data as much as generate it through her [*sic*] own involvement" (p. 78). As the researcher, entering from a participant observer into the role of a facilitator, I shifted my positionality within the classroom, being open to different forms of relating with participants. I made myself vulnerable (Nind et al., 2016) and approachable to students. By taking on the role of the facilitator and opening my research questions up through the theatre exercises, I was putting my questions into conversation with the students and the

teacher (Gallagher, interviewed by Thomson and Sefton-Green, 2010). At the same time, however, this allowed participants to challenge or alter the power dynamics explored.

The playful and collaborative aspect of the exercises changed the representation of power in the images, which made different interactions possible. The game became part of the conversation reflecting on the spaces for learning, and the very spaces for learning became a part of the game. The spaces image theatre opened as research intervention allowed for a shift in relationships and in who is coming to voice. Nevertheless, the process of the workshop also impacted the very relationships I was studying. This can be an opportunity to "productively interrupt our traditional qualitative accounts of classrooms" (Gallagher, 2007, p. 58). At the same time, this process blurs the lines between the pedagogical and the methodological, which however supports the ethical framework set up for this research with secondary school students. The work engages with and works with affect, which supports a connection with experiences which would otherwise not be shared. However, it poses a challenge for the analysis process. It throws up important questions on the interpretation of collective embodied processes and sensorial, experiential knowing, which are relevant for qualitative, arts-based research in general.

TO as a practice creates a shared space to reflect on power dynamics. Nind et al. (2016) suggest, that in "studying pedagogy as embodied practice (…) we can study issues of hierarchy, equity and justice" (p. 189). By drawing on TO, in particular image theatre, these issues are not only studied but also visibilised and challenged by participants. TO is an emancipatory practice. Applied in classroom research with young people, it allows them to engage with the research in an active role, sharing their stories with agency and not through a victim perspective. TO as a method puts the focus on the structural issues they are struggling with. The research carried out via image theatre, through and with the body, is impactful, as it engages with experiential, embodied ways of knowing. Expressions and reflections are felt in the act of doing, generating a shared reflection. In this sense, TO as a research method offers diverse ways to learn and participate in the research spaces for participants as much as for the researcher or facilitator. It, therefore, supports a more inclusive research practice.

There are important ethical considerations whenever pedagogy and research meet in the role of facilitator/researcher. The ethical framework of the practice enriches an ethical research framework and the ethical considerations the practice brings up are relevant for

qualitative pedagogical research more widely. Nind et al. (2016) say, "Classroom and other learning environments are physical spaces and vested with memories and meanings … experienced at a bodily level" (p. 199). Placing the TO workshop in the classrooms studied allows for a playful and critical engagement with the learning spaces and the institution they incorporate through the body. This situated work facilitates projecting reimagined classrooms onto the familiar spaces, in which new ways of relating become possible, even if only for a moment. In pedagogical research for social justice, image theatre offers a participatory research method that allows for an embodied and transformative engagement with power dynamics that mark both the learning and the research spaces, while supporting participants to actively imagine different forms of engagement and participation.

7   Conclusions: Reimagining the classroom

7.1   Introduction and chapter overview

This chapter concludes this thesis. It starts by recapping the research questions and summarising the findings. Then it reflects on the study's methodological design. Following that, it outlines the contributions this thesis makes to inclusive and critical pedagogies and Theatre of the Oppressed (TO) as a research method. It concludes by situating the specific contributions of the research and the challenges of reimagining the classroom in the context of the current educational context in England, Catalonia and beyond.

7.2   Engaging with the research questions

The overall guiding question of this research was: How can critical pedagogies create inclusive spaces for learning in secondary school classrooms? In the thesis, I explored this central question by studying students' engagement with learning (RQ 1), the social production of learning spaces (RQs 2, 3), and understandings and practices of inclusion (RQ 4). These questions were answered through studying three critical pedagogies projects in three secondary schools in England and Catalonia, explored through TO, specifically image theatre, as a research method and by drawing on a critical spatial lens. Finally, I evaluated the use of elements of TO as a research method in this context (RQ 5). Research participants were three classroom teachers working with critical pedagogies and their students, and when available, schools' support or inclusion staff.

Overall, I identified three key themes. The first, *Carving out spaces for critical pedagogies*, shows the structural barriers and opportunities of applying critical pedagogies in the classroom. It focuses on assessment and valorisation, temporal and participatory practices within critical pedagogies. The second key theme identified, *Changing the terms of engagement*, highlights the relationships between students and their processes of learning, their school staff and peers and their institutions, and traces how these shifted throughout the research. The third key theme identified, *The place for emotions in school*, discusses the role that emotional outbreaks play in students' access to learning, their relationships with staff, their experiences of learning and their sense of belonging. It further explores how pedagogical practices engaged with those emotional outbreaks. In what follows, I discuss my findings by engaging with the 5 research questions outlined above.

7.2.1 In what ways can critical pedagogies engage and include students, in particular disengaged students? (RQ1)

Thematic analysis of the data suggested that there were several ways in which this was taking place. In particular the theme *Carving out spaces for critical pedagogies* (Section 5.2), shows that critical pedagogies can support students' engagement and inclusion in learning through practices such as through:

- situating learning approaches;
- valuing students' experiences as part of the learning;
- embedding and applying learning in a community;
- creating process-based time-spaces in which students feel supported to develop their learning;
- enabling students to bring their own ideas and references to learning spaces; and
- supporting students in organising their learning spaces.

At the same time, the study found that practices informed by critical pedagogies were challenged both institutionally, by the neoliberal education system and learning culture, and by students themselves, who at times expressed diverse needs and desires. For example, critical pedagogies tended to operate outside of schools' formal assessment structures, and teachers invented alternative ways to publicly recognise the value of students' work. Yet, some students became more engaged when they also received recognition in institutionalised ways, like through grades. At times, teachers as well as the researcher had to accept students' choice of non-participation in critical pedagogical

activities. At other times, while engaging in the critical pedagogical activities, students voiced their desires to take part in structural decision-making. Institutionally, schools' performative metrics did count some elements of critical pedagogical work, such as student-led events and creative work. Yet, in their application, critical pedagogies clashed with the outcome-oriented and time-scarce neoliberal approach because their processes require longer time frames, which students critically evaluated by saying they needed more time for their work.

Furthermore, the theme *The place for emotions in schools* (Section 5.4), the study suggests that a focus on sustained care, diversification of assessable skills, support for more vulnerable students throughout the process and engaging with students' needs and desires, made the critical learning spaces more inclusive and supported a wider student engagement.

7.2.2 How do participants' interactions and relationships within the classroom shape their spaces for learning, and how do pedagogical frameworks shape participants' interactions and relationships? (RQ 2 & 3)

Critical pedagogies intend to transform participants' interactions and relationships within the learning space (Freire, 1970) by shifting the position of learners. Across the critical pedagogies projects, students engaged with learning as experts in their own experiences, worked in friendship groups and started to explore critically how they liked to learn. This shaped their ways of engaging with the learning and each other. Elements of the theme *Changing the terms of engagement* (Section 5.3) were relevant to this question. For example, by highlighting how learning spaces became more student-led, as students participated in them as knowledgeable learners, friends, and contributors to subject-specific themes or community issues. Students' learner subjectivities changed in response.

The pedagogical framework describes the interactions and relationships within a learning space (Nind et al, 2016). By setting up the classroom as a conference room, a café, or a library, and embedding the lessons in the conventions of these spaces, students'

relationships with each other and with their teachers shifted toward the set roles of these spaces, rather than the roles of the classroom. Established hierarchies, conflicts, and learner identities shifted in response. Changes in learning activities and location helped some students to transform their subjectivities from disengaged or troubled to knowledgeable learners and valued members of the school community, providing for the shared spaces and as such creating counternarratives of engagement. However, wider structural discourses such as racism or classism shaped the schools' institutional perspectives on the students. This affected students' relationships with their institutions beyond the classrooms and impacted their access to learning.

7.2.3 How do participants understand inclusion and how are the practices researched inclusive? (RQ 4)

Most staff participating in the research across the three schools saw inclusion as a holistic practice, which involved approaching students in all their facets, not just in terms of their academic performance. Some teachers engaged directly with the underlying issues which initially led to students' non-engaging behaviour. Institutionally, the understanding of inclusion varied from ensuring that each student received suitable attention academically and emotionally, to seeing inclusion as a set of interventions aimed at ensuring students' access to learning. Exploring inclusion as their sense of belonging to a classroom, students discussed the need to feel good with their teachers and peers, to enjoy lessons and be able to participate in them and to feel in control and free.

Aspects of the theme *The place for emotions in school* (Section 5.4) suggests that students were engaging with their emotions as part of the pedagogical practice making education more inclusive in all three schools. Often, this work took place in separate spaces, outside the regular classroom, like an intervention class, an inclusion office, or a teacher chat in the corridor. Creating safe spaces for emotions, or exploring them as part of learning activities, supported students' participation in their learning communities and challenged processes of exclusion around emotions by engaging with the social and cultural contexts they are connected to. The emotions around the feeling of being in control of the learning spaces were a key issue for students and staff. Some staff, as part of their inclusive or critical pedagogical practices, worked on supporting students to feel in

control. At times, the emotions around the feeling of being in control led to struggles between staff and students, escalating to conflicts, which could lead to a student's exclusion from a learning space or their choice not to attend. At the same time, both staff and students enjoyed learning throughout the critical pedagogies projects. Some teachers consciously shared their sense of enjoyment of learning or achieving with students in an engaged pedagogical approach, which at times ran the risk of causing emotional dependencies. Students described they felt a greater sense of belonging in those moments when they were able to enjoy lessons and feel relaxed. This enjoyment and relaxation often came with a heightened noise level in the classroom. Contrary to arguments made by those who formulate behaviour policies against low-level chatting, however, students were still learning. Enjoying lessons and feeling in control were important to students' and teachers' well-being in the learning spaces. For some teachers and in some schools, making time for emotions at a structural level was a key component of their inclusive pedagogical practice, as the analysis of the theme *Carving out spaces for critical pedagogies* (Section 5.2) highlighted.

7.2.4 How can elements of Theatre of the Oppressed be used as a research method in classroom-based research? (RQ 5)

TO, and in particular image theatre, enables qualitative research with and through the body. This method offers possibilities to engage with embodied knowledge, which is often hard to express through words, by creating collective, active, and visual spaces for reflection. The practice of TO focuses on exploring power dynamics. The theatrical aspect makes this engagement playful. For classroom-based research, participants can play with and alter the very power dynamics being studied. This research suggests that this supports an exploration of pedagogical practices, which are shaped by the power dynamics in the classroom and participants' understanding of them.

The researcher in a double role – as facilitator and educator, and as researcher - raises ethical responsibilities which may at times be contradictory. The method thus requires a high level of reflexivity and continuous self-evaluation. By implicating themself in the theatre space, the researcher makes themself approachable and vulnerable *with* research participants, by supporting a more consensual and dialogical research relationship. The

body-based work of the theatre also brings a vulnerability with it, and the researcher/facilitator has to constantly evaluate risky versus constructive activities. Ethical reflections in the evaluation of the method showed that the researcher/facilitator has to be clear about their competencies and continuously assess the process, time, and trust relationship. These reflections are key in deploying TO as a research method and to strengthen an ethical research framework committed to social justice.

In addition, the evaluation highlighted that moving from body-based and creative data to the written word in the process of data analysis also requires an ethical and reflective approach. The theatre work provides rich, sensorial, and experiential knowledge, which can be explored as that. It can lead to a rich research process and rich reflections, framed by TO's system of subjective, collective interpretations, which aim to create a shared understanding based on individual embodied experiences and memories. This collective, embodied and non-verbal process can at times be in tension with a word-based, individual approach to data analysis. There is scope for further research on more collective analysis of the creative work, exploring the limits and possibilities between the theatre and academic practice. In combination with other research methods, such as perception mapping, interviews, and observation notes, body-based reflections can be engaged with and developed further, to open up multiple understandings, maintaining an embodied dimension. TO as a research method can be extremely useful for identifying unspoken issues in the classroom, whilst enabling an active reimagining of the classroom *in situ* and practice.

7.3 Evaluating the methodological design

Methodologically, this research drew on ethnographic and participatory research approaches, as well as on theatre-based research. Data was generated through participant observations supported by observation notes and reflective diary keeping, interviews and creative workshops consisting of TO and perception mapping, which were photographed and sound recorded.

The methodological design of this thesis intended to create dialogical spaces and foster participation (see Section 3.2). The creative workshops played an important part in achieving this; this objective was also supported by the interviews and participant observations. The basis of the three different research studies, from their selection to the participatory component of the research design, was the relationships with the teachers and their interest in the research focus. These were developed through informal conversations and semi-structured interviews, which served as dialogical spaces for shared reflections as they allowed teachers to also ask me about my observations of their pedagogical practice.

A key method in research with the students were the TO and perception mapping workshops. In addition to their participation in the creative workshops, students were invited to voluntary interviews. This allowed those students who were interested in talking more directly to me and contributing to the research, to participate. Most students chose to be interviewed with a friend or as a friendship group, which supported them in feeling comfortable with me and at times students discussed with each other, which the semi-structured format supported. The interviews with students offered insights into general research themes but also helped to evaluate the theatre workshops.

Perception maps and photographs of image theatre sessions were used as prompts in student interviews. Being able to look at the photographs of the images of the theatre workshops in the interviews was helpful in this, but it was not logistically possible in all cases due to time constraints. The perception maps helped to visualise the questions the theatre workshops explored and allowed students to visually explore their thoughts about their classrooms. Expressing their ideas through sticking stickers on a map of their learning spaces made their ideas tangible, which students seemed to enjoy as the method provided a lively and engaging atmosphere and triggered longer discussions amongst students about their classrooms.

Finally, the participant observations supported me to connect to students and gain insights into the classrooms and their dynamics, which also helped the theatre workshops at the end of each research stay, and during the analysis phase of the theatre work. The structuring of the observation and reflective notes helped to ensure focus and consistence across the three studies. The reflective notes helped to document my experiential and sensorial impressions, which were helpful in the analysis of the theatre-based data.

Overall, the research methods (participant observations supported by observation notes and reflective diary keeping, interviews and creative workshops consisting of TO and perception mapping) were complementary and enabled the researcher to gain a holistic understanding of classrooms and their dynamics, which was fundamental to meeting the research objectives.

7.4 Contributions to knowledge and practice

In this section, I discuss the contribution of this thesis to inclusive and critical pedagogies and TO as a research method. As a professional doctorate, my research was practice-based. While I did not intend the thesis to come up with specific guidelines or action points, the study does raise a set of reflections, which I hope will be valuable for pedagogical and methodological practices. Specifically, this research (1) contributes reflections around temporal and spatial practices within the application of critical pedagogies as inclusive practices; (2) adds to the debate on the application of critical pedagogies in classrooms, taking into account their shifting power dynamics; and (3) shows how elements of TO - specifically image theatre – enable a more embodied exploration of learning spaces, pedagogical practices, and classroom dynamics.

In Section 7.2.4 (above this chapter), I discussed how I contribute to scholarship on pedagogical research by presenting an innovative and self-reflexive application to TO as a research method. The following will discuss the contribution to critical and inclusive pedagogies this thesis is making.

7.4.1 Making place and time through critical, inclusive practice

As I have argued throughout the thesis, the places of learning and the qualities of their time-spaces affect the learning experiences of students and teachers. A focus on spatial

and temporal practices in teaching in general, and specifically in the classroom application of critical pedagogies, can support the production of more inclusive learning spaces.

Critical pedagogies propose a situated approach to teaching and learning (Freire, 1970), which contrasts with a universally set curriculum and exam culture (Gruenewald, 2003b), common in the neoliberal education system in both England (Ball, 2012c) and Catalonia (Collet-Sabé, 2017), despite their differences. An inclusive approach to teaching and learning, on the contrary, sees and works with the specificity of each student, class, and context (Florian and Black-Hawkins, 2011). When critical and inclusive pedagogies are practiced together, the situated curriculum approach that critical pedagogies propose is extended to include the diverse contexts of students and by extension teachers, and their relationships to each other and the learning process. Considering the spatial "as an ever-shifting social geometry of power and signification" (Massey, 1994, p. 3, see Section 2.4), and within this, place "as a particular articulation of those relations" (Massey, 1994, p.5), this research has contributed to an understanding of secondary school classrooms as places informed by institutional and personal power relations. Moreover, it has built on Pink's ethnographic understanding of place as an event that "is constantly changing through social and material relations and practices" (2009, p. 32), and the concept of an *emplaced practice*. As this research shows, pedagogical practices shape learning places. In the context of applied theatre, Nicholson (2014) has observed that "[p]laces have an affective power that is, itself often pedagogical" (p. 60); similarly, Thomson and Hall (2016), discussing schools as places, say, "[p]lace is something that we experience" (p. 13). By deploying theatre-based research methods, in this research, I was able to engage with and visibilise embodied, experienced and emplaced dynamics of inclusivity in secondary school classrooms, and how critical pedagogies can act to transform them.

Building on this scholarship, and based on the findings of this research, I argue for the relevance of place-making as part of inclusive pedagogical practice. The research showed that changes to the physical spaces of the classrooms, to give a tangible example, supported shifts in learning relationships and allowed for new learner subjectivities to emerge. This was particularly helpful for students who were previously perceived as disengaged in the classroom. At the same time, where the physical arrangement of a classroom did not match the pedagogical approach of the teacher, conflicts arose, which students were able to make visible and address through the theatre workshops. Therefore, I am suggesting that pedagogical practice could incorporate a greater focus on *place*,

reflect on the "social and material relations" (Pink, 2009, p. 32) which produce the learning spaces, and explore how place-making can support pedagogical practices. A physical shift in a learning space can produce a different place for learning. For students, feeling part of the learning space supports their sense of engagement with it, which a spatial pedagogical practice needs to take into account. As this research emphasised, for it to be inclusive, critical pedagogical practices need to engage also with marginalised students' experiences, including being prepared to question the frameworks' own perceptions of social justice.

Building on this, the research argues that emotions are key to ensuring inclusivity in *emplaced* pedagogical practice, making spaces and time for emotions in the learning spaces, ranging from allowing emotional outbursts to enjoying learning. This has the potential to challenge established institutional rules of conduct and hierarchical and *othering* perceptions of emotions, the cultural and social contexts they are produced in (Ahmed, 2014) and the knowledge they can generate (de Sousa Santos, 2018; hooks, 1994). At the same time, the research showed that time-space qualities can make all the difference in how critical pedagogies are applied within the neoliberal education system. Students perceived the difference between symbolic and performative (Ball, 2012b; Thompson and Cook, 2017) or sustained and process-based time. To make spaces for emotions as part of an inclusive spatial and temporal practice also means to acknowledge and engage with participants' needs for control, students and teachers alike. Recognising each other in the learning spaces and engaging with each other is part of what hooks (1994) refers to as 'engaged practice' and 'learning as excitement'.

7.4.2   Critical pedagogies and shifting power dynamics

Critical pedagogies are originally conceived with a structuralist theoretical perspective of oppressor and oppressed (Freire, 1970). However, building on more performative approaches, this research looked at classroom power dynamics as continually shifting within a system of structural injustices. A binary understanding of power in the classroom sees students as a homogeneous, oppressed group. Yet, this perception does not engage with the differences among the students and their narratives about their situation and complexities (Ellsworth, 1989). In this research, I understood power as productive, and

subjectification as shaped by it as well as implicated within it. Subjects change the narratives and engage with them by shifting their subjectification (Biesta and Leary, 2012, etc.).

When I explored critical pedagogies in practice, I identified how shifting contexts allowed for different subjectivities to be generated, going beyond the perspective of the oppressed in need of emancipation. In practice, the situatedness of critical pedagogies, saw teachers negotiating the practices' initial theoretical framework with the diversity of the classroom realities and the contexts these were embedded in. I observed how shifts in learning set-ups, the learning focus or spatial shifts changed learners' relationships to learning, producing changes to an existing order, in which different ways of relating became possible for all participants, students and teachers alike. At times certain ingrained power dynamics, for example, gendered dynamics amongst students, were still replicated, however, the shifts in learning spaces made them more apparent, and with more time could be engaged with through the framework.

This research shows that the situatedness of the practice supports shifts in learning set ups in practice, which allows for shifts in learner subjectivities and an engagement beyond the fixed roles, shifting discourses, even if momentarily. It enables the generation of alternative knowledge and has the potential to challenge established power dynamics. The study hereby contributes to understanding the relevance of proactive work around shifting discourses, which allows for different narratives to emerge in schools, initiated by the practice of critical pedagogies, but beyond their premise of oppressor and oppressed. In this way, this research inquiry has updated the 20th century ideas of critical pedagogies by reimagining them within a 21st century classroom. Drawing on TO supported this understanding, as the theatre space shapes "an ambivalent space of association in which to witness consonance, dissonance and interrelationality" (Nicholson, 2014, p. 62), which enabled an exploration of alternative subjectivities and gave locations a different meaning. The emphasis on place and embodiment through the theatre (Nicholson, 2001), allowed an engagement with knowledge as unfixed.

7.5 Critical pedagogies and inclusive learning in a changed context

The original aim of this study was to explore the application of critical pedagogies and their potential for shaping inclusive learning spaces at the classroom level. However, contemporary inner-city European secondary school classrooms have undergone various, unexpected changes since the inception of this thesis, which warrants a final note.

The qualitative research took place between July 2017 and January 2020. A few months later, the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic brought about drastic temporary changes in classrooms, whose long-term implications are still to be understood. Social restrictions surrounding the Covid-19 pandemic have meant a large proportion of teaching was temporarily shifted online, which affected the type of teaching and learning that could take place. Throughout the lockdown, national exams in England could not take place and were temporarily replaced by prediction algorithms, which as a result meant that" pupils from lower socioeconomic backgrounds were 'more likely to have seen a bigger down-ward adjustment'" (Kelly, 2021, p. 728). The sudden state of emergency meant certain aspects of schooling had to be adapted, like behaviour rules, home-schooling, and most of all questions of care. In Catalonia, as in many other places, this impacted the accessibility of schooling, as in particular students from disadvantaged economic backgrounds often did not have the resources, support or learning spaces to participate in online or home learning (González and Bonal, 2021).

These unprecedented circumstances saw both progressive as well as regressive changes. As a result perhaps of the general crisis, certain structures and power dynamics could be questioned. Amid this, a global Black Lives Matter uprising inspired, in particular, students from marginalised backgrounds in England to develop decolonial discourses and proposals for the curriculum. At the same time, and as a response, the Conservative government in England introduced new education policies (Department for Education, 2020b), stifling criticality in the classrooms (Garratt, 2020). In Catalonia, sweeping neoliberal changes in schools were met by an ongoing wave of teacher strikes, amongst others protesting for the maintenance of subjects like philosophy in the curriculum which

fosters criticality and calling out the unequal opportunities of the innovation agenda (González, 2022). In this context, the application of critical pedagogies in secondary school classrooms becomes even more challenging *and* even more necessary. In a context producing greater inequity, the question of how to shape inclusive classrooms takes on greater importance. This thesis contributes an in-depth critical reflection on critical pedagogical approaches in practice, which can offer directions and ideas for how to create more inclusive spaces for learning in secondary school classrooms.

To conclude, it is clear that inequalities in education are structural and deeply embedded in society beyond the classroom set-up, affecting the production of and access to learning spaces. Yet, within this context, power dynamics in classrooms are continuously shifting. A shift in pedagogical practice, which shapes power relations and interactions in the classroom, can carve out different learning spaces, and change terms of engagement between learners, teachers and institutions. Making place for emotions can make a difference in the learning spaces and participants' experiences, students and teachers alike. While these shifts are often temporary and spatially specific, the experiences of these shifts can show students and teachers that other ways of relating are possible. This can help students to critically engage with underlying inequalities and question what is socially and structurally perceived as the norm, including how they themselves are perceived in the learning spaces. The temporary and performative space of theatre work can make these shifts visible, and make it possible to engage and play with power dynamics in visual, embodied and non-verbal ways. As a research method, TO can create rehearsal spaces for identifying and changing such dynamics. In the context of a critical pedagogical approach to inclusive learning, it can open up the possibility to reimagine the classroom and performatively embody this collective reimaging.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Participant information sheet (adults)

London South Bank University

Research study: How can teaching support inclusive learning environments in secondary schooling?

Dear

I would like to invite you to take part in this research study, being aware of your upcoming project work. Before you decide whether or not to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully:

In the light of an ever-growing diversity in European classrooms regarding students' backgrounds and learning behaviours and rising numbers of exclusions at the same time, this research is looking at learning programs which are trying to create a more inclusive learning environment. Specifically, I am interested in programs which make students' experiences the centre of the lesson structure and content.

To conduct this research, I would like to reflect with students and teachers together about their alternative learning program, and how they feel it engages them. I would be joining your classroom for a few designated sessions (about 6 sessions would be ideal), participate in the everyday activities as appropriate and use following research methods:

- Mapping exercises, which means participants can describe how they see their learning space through drawing.
- Theatre exercises, so participants can explore their thoughts and ideas about the work they are doing.
- Interviews with students and teachers who are interested in helping me evaluate my method and reflect on my research question.

This process aims to be in line with the pedagogical values applied in your classroom and hopes to contribute to the work you are doing by offering you and your students a creative space for shared reflection. The process will work closely with the participating teacher, to ensure no disruptions to the learning will occur.

The following information will lay out the research process:

- It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part, you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason.

- If you and your students agree to take part in the research, we will arrange an appropriate time period and format for me to join your lessons. At a suitable point during my stay, I will facilitate the theatre and mapping exercises with the class. Following on from that, I would like to conduct interviews with 3-4 volunteering students, as well as teachers/management taking part in the project. At the end of my stay, all participants will have the opportunity to feedback on the process as a whole.

- The interviews and the theatre exercises will be sound recorded, and during the theatre work, I will be taking photographs. Both, sound recording and photos will only be used for internal purposes.

- This research is part of my research degree at London Southbank University, within the school of Law and Social Sciences, in the department of Education, focussing on education and social justice. The research will be written up for my Doctoral thesis. It might also be used in publications and presentations. Anonymity and confidentiality will be maintained in all these.

- Data generated by the study will be retained in accordance with the University's Code of Practice. All data generated in the course of the research will be kept securely in paper or electronic form for a period of 10 years after the completion of a research project. Your privacy and anonymity will be ensured in the collection, storage and publication of research material.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or comments on alfandan@lsbu.ac.uk.

Alternatively, you can contact my supervisor Helen Young on **youngh@lsbu.ac.uk**.

If you have any concerns about the way in which the study has been conducted, please contact the School Ethics Coordinator, Shaminder Takhar (takhars@lsbu.ac.uk)

Please find attached the consent form.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.
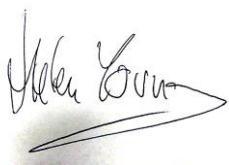
Kind regards
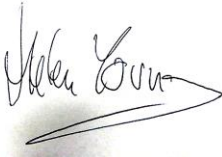
Nelly Alfandari

Project contact details for further information:

Project Supervisor/ Head of Division name: **Helen Young**

Signature:

Phone: **+44 (0)20 7815 5451**

Email address: **youngh@lsbu.ac.uk**

Appendix 2. Participant information sheet (students)

London South Bank University

Who do your lessons belong to?
★ To the teacher?
★ To the students?
★ To some students?
★ To your community?

How and when do you feel you belong to your classroom?

I would like to invite you to take part in my research, because I am very interested in what happens in your (...) classroom.
I would like to know:

➢ What happens in your lessons?
➢ How do you feel about your lessons?

I hope **thinking together** about your lessons be useful for your (...) project!

For my research, I will visit some of your lessons, and run different activities:
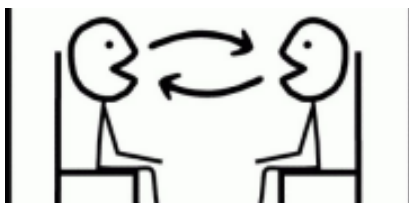
Interviews: help me think about my research!

Theatre exercises: share your thoughts and ideas about your lessons!
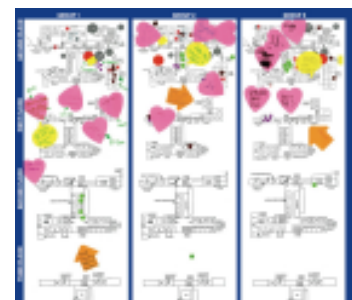
Mapping exercises: Draw how you see your classroom!

Appendix 3. Consent form

London South Bank University

Research Project Consent Form

Full title of Project: How can teaching support inclusive learning environments in secondary schooling?

Ethics approval registration Number:

Name: Nelly Alfandari

Researcher Position: EdD candidate

Contact details of Researcher: alfandan@lsbu.ac.uk

Taking part (please tick the box that applies)	Yes	No
I confirm that I have read and understood the information. I have had the opportunity to ask questions.	☐	☐
I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without providing a reason.	☐	☐
I agree to take part in the above study.	☐	☐
Use of my information (please tick the box that applies)	**Yes**	**No**
I agree for the data I provide to be stored (after it has been anonymised) in a specialist data centre and I understand it may be used for future research.	☐	☐
I agree to the interview and theatre exercises being audio recorded and photographed.	☐	☐

I understand photos and sound recordings of me will not be shared with people outside the project, and that anonymity and confidentiality will be maintained for anything I share.	☐	☐
I agree to the use of anonymised quotes in publications.	☐	☐

_____
Name of Participant   _____   _____
                                                      Date   Signature

Nelly Alfandari   ___   _N. ⟋⟍⟋_

_____
Name of Researcher   Date   _____
                                                                             Signature

Project contact details for further information:

Project Supervisor/ Head of Division name: **Helen Young**

Signature:

Phone: **+44 (0)20 7815 5451**

Email address: **youngh@lsbu.ac.uk**

Appendix 4. Ethics approval

Nelly Alfandari

Friday 11th May 2018

Dear Nelly,

RE: LSSEP177 Critical pedagogies in alternative inclusion programs

Thank you for submitting this proposal for full review.

I am pleased to inform you that full Chair's Approval has been given by

Dr Shaminder Takhar, on behalf of the School of Law and Social Sciences.

I wish you every success with your research.

Yours sincerely,

Dr Shaminder Takhar

Associate Professor in Sociology

Chair, School Ethics Panel

School of Law and Social Science

Appendix 5. Interview questions

Interviews:

Interview themes:

- Use of pedagogy to engage and include learners
- Relations between students, teachers and relation to the learning
- Structures of inclusion set up in the school
- Understanding of inclusion for key participants
- Reflection on Theatre of the Oppressed as research method

Questions:

Teacher:

- Describe the classroom/ relation to students & teaching,
- Your intentions and planning/ expectations/ worries
- Your evaluation, what worked, what would you change, and what surprised you?
- My presence/ impact, changes to classroom, to pedagogic intentions/ work
- Theatre activity: new insights, issues/ difficulties, usefulness, impact
- What does inclusion mean to you?
- What structures for inclusion are set up in school?
- What structures for inclusion do you set up in your class?
- What does "critical pedagogy" mean to you?
- Questions/ comments

Management:

- What does inclusion mean to you?
- What structures are set up in school?
- What do you think about the project?
- Questions/ comments

Students:

- do you feel your classroom belongs to you? When/ how?
- Do you feel you belong to your classroom?
- Do you like the project? Your favourite/least favourite moments/ what is different to other lessons? Does it help you to learn/ what?
- What was it like to have me in the classroom?
- What did you think of the theatre workshop? Favourite/ least favourite moments/ new learning/ how was it different/ what did it do to the classroom?
- Comment on your maps/ images created (annotate pictures?)
- Questions/ comments

Appendix 6. Coding examples

Figure A6-1 Coding example: Image

Figure A6-2 Coding example: Interview

Figure A6-3 Coding example: Reflection notes

Appendix 7. Key themes

Figure A7-1 Key-themes