**Power and Racialisation: Exploring the childhood and educational experiences of four mixed young people using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis.**

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Research Thesis submitted in part requirement for the Doctor of Educational and Child Psychology of the University of Sheffield

School of Education

June 2016

Abstract.

This Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis study aims to explore the experiences and understandings of childhood and education of four young people who identify as mixed Black and White heritage. The research utilises the theoretical positions of Critical Race Theory and intersectionality, drawing on psychoanalytic theories of power, racism and racialisation to interpret participants’ experiences.

Participants took part in semi-structured interviews, exploring the research questions A) ‘What are mixed young people’s experiences of race and culture?’ and B) ‘How do mixed young people interpret their experiences of childhood and education?’.

Analysis led to the proposal of a series of ‘higher-order’ superordinate themes across participants. For research question A, higher order superordinate themes were, ‘The significance of culture/heritage’, ‘Mixedness as challenging constructions’, ‘The significance of intersectionality’, ‘Blackness as problematic’, and ‘Mixedness as an identity’. For research question B, higher order superordinate themes were, ‘Isolation and belonging’, ‘Racialised perceptions in the development of self-identity’, and ‘The power of educational experiences’.

Implications for practice are explored by considering ‘How can Educational Psychology Practice develop through these accounts?’ with reference to specific cultural and ethnic competencies in the British Psychological Society ‘Standards for the accreditation of Educational Psychology Training’ (BPS, 2015).

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# Chapter One: Introduction.

## Definitions.

For clarity, the introduction begins by defining some of the most frequently used, and most significant terms, which are utilised or referred to throughout this research. Defining key terms aims to support the transparency and accessibility of the research. Table 1.1 below defines key terms for the reader.

##### Table 1.1 Definitions of key words used in research study.

|  |
| --- |
| *‘Race’:* The term race is used here to refer to the practical and theoretical device, developed over centuries, which has been used to categorise individuals based on appearance. I hope to communicate to the reader the complexity of the topic of race, in order to shed light on some of my use of language throughout the current research. Sheshadri-Crooks (2000) serves as a useful point of reference for the discussion of race; the positionality of the current research is summarised in the quote below:  *‘I suggest that race should be understood in its particularity as something that is neither totally like sexual difference, which is indeterminate and exceeds language, nor purely symbolical or cultural like class or ethnicity. Race resembles class in that it is of purely cultural and historical origin, but it is also like sex in that it produces extra-discursive effects. From a certain perspective, it seems marked on the body … that it seems to exceed language. … race is historical and material as well, but unlike class it is not at all malleable.’* (Sheshadri-Crooks, 2000 pp.4).  Oftentimes, phenotypical features and skin colour (Hall, 2007; Bellos, 2007) have come to signify ‘races’, including ‘White’ ‘Black’ and ‘Asian’ races. Based on this, and Sheshadri- Crook’s (2000) exploration of the meaning of the term, I discuss and adopt the term ‘race’ as opposed to ethnicity or culture. |
| *‘Racialisation’:* Refers to the action or process of instilling a person, group, or social practice with an awareness of race distinctions, or giving racial character to something or someone (Fassin, 2011) |
| *Mixed:* In the context of this study, I use the term mixed to refer to the individual young people who participated in my study, who defined themselves as having a Black and a White parent. I also use the term mixed to refer to other populations, outside of my participants, who have mixed ethnic and/or racial origins. It is worth noting at this point, that the term mixed does not sit entirely comfortably in describing the group of people whom I refer to and identify as. However, the language currently available to describe the phenomena of Black-White/Black-Asian/White-Asian etc. parentage imposes limits on how I am able to refer to this group. A variety of other terms have been used instead of mixed at varying times during the process of this research (for example, ‘mixed race’, ‘mixed heritage’). However, I have chosen to use the term mixed, as I feel it captures the quality of the phenomena that I am most interested in, but also allows a degree of flexibility in reflecting ways in which the participants in the study see and refer to themselves. |
| *‘Black’ and ‘White’, ‘Blackness’ and ‘Whiteness’:* The terms are used within this paper with an appreciation of the potential ambiguity and complexity which the terms imbue, and should be considered with reference to the nuances of the term race as discussed above (e.g. Sheshadri-Crooks, 2000). In most instances, I refer to ‘Black people’ and ‘White people’ in a descriptive manner based on skin colour and phenotype. I do not seek to delineate between ethnic or religious backgrounds when using the terms in this way. I also use the terms ‘Black’ and ‘White’ to encompass the phenomena in a descriptive manner, and to discuss related issues such as culture. I recognise that my use of language here could be seen or read as potentially ambiguous (e.g. Black as a physical descriptor or Black as a cultural descriptor), however I feel this is impossible to get away from, as presented by Sheshadri- Crook’s (2000), *‘scratch the surface of culture or ethnicity, and race will appear underneath it all to found its essence’* (Sheshadri-Crooks, 2000 pp.4).  I refer to ‘Whiteness’ from a discursive perspective, whereby being White is constructed in such a way as to maintain the benefits of privilege (Abdi, 2015). This privilege is often so hidden in ‘common sense’ or ideas of ‘reality’, that the power of Whiteness can be hidden, and the ways in which privilege is sought and maintained can also be hidden (Abercrombie *et al*, 2012). I refer to ‘Blackness’ as a racialised state whereby it is located as ‘other’ (Mirza, 1992) in a sense of political and experiential kinship of oppression in history (Mirza, 1992). Thus, my use of language recognises that there are no clear boundaries between Black and White and Blackness and Whiteness. For example, scholars of ‘Whiteness studies’ have explored Whiteness from the perspective of pertaining to White people, and as an ideological concept (Delgado and Stefanic, 2012). I feel the relationship between Whiteness and White as people, culture, or any other object, cannot be separated along such clear lines. Consequently, one can discuss Whiteness and talk about White people/culture, *and* talk about Whiteness from an ideological perspective, without them being mutually exclusive. I believe the same relationship exists between Blackness and the term Black.  With this in mind, the current research does not seek to delineate where it is not possible, but instead embrace the complexity of the terms in light of individuals and lived experiences. This means that at times, White and Whiteness and Black and Blackness may share commonalities in meaning and relationship, whereas at others White and Whiteness and Black and Blackness may diverge; the discussion may at times become messy. I have attempted to remain as clear as possible as to my positionality when the themes are discussed at various points, but an appreciation and understanding of the complexity and potential ‘messy-ness’ of the subject is likely to be of use to the reader. |
| *Identity:* The constitution and specification of parts which create a sense of the whole person (Laplanche and Pontalis, 1980). |
| *‘Class’- ‘working class’ and ‘middle class’:* In similar, although not identical ways to the terms ‘race’, ‘Black’ and ‘White’ and ‘Blackness’ and ‘Whiteness’, the potential ambiguity of class is acknowledged as a starting point for discussion. Traditionally, class has been defined through a close relationship with socioeconomic status (SES). Those of lower SES in manual jobs have often been considered, and in research, quantified, as being from within working class groups (Beider, 2014). However, modern sociology argues that such a view fails to take into account the cultural, political, and value-laden nature of class (Beider, 2014). Beider (2014) captures some of this quality in his use of the quote from Thompson (1963, pp.9) *‘class happens when some men, as a result of common experiences (inherited and shared), feel and articulate the identity of their interests as between themselves, and as against other men whose interests are different from (and usually opposed to) theirs.’*  Thus, for the purpose of this research, ‘class’ refers to a group of people who have interpreted themselves as sharing a common set of experiences, which in turn have informed a common set of values and beliefs.  Sheshadri-Crooks (2000) argues that class also has a ‘symbolic’ quality, which can be seen as capturing the nature of ‘working class’ and ‘middle class’. I would argue that whilst ‘working class’ and ‘middle class’ are becoming less easy to define, there are symbolic qualities associated with both which maintain their separation and the identification of individuals as within such groups. Beider (2014) suggests that part of this symbolism may relate back to historic associations and associated values between the working class, manual jobs and lower SES, whilst ‘middle class’ may still maintain symbolic associations with greater levels of education and more academic roles (Sheshadri-Crooks, 2000).  Thus, the symbolic nature of class is in some ways just as important for those who identify with different classes in that, whilst an individual may not meet every supposed ‘measure’ of a class (e.g. their SES or level of education may differ from the ‘traditional’ association with a certain class), they have a sense of shared identity to the symbolism of what that class title entails. |
| *Ideology:* Althusser (1971) refers to ideology from the perspective of power, and Marxist positions of the reproduction of power. In this sense, ideology refers to a set of beliefs or positions steeped in economic and political culture which maintain current systems of the reproduction of power for some and exploitation and repression for others. Althusser (1970) suggests that individuals are unwittingly ‘steeped’ in this ideology, as if it were a ‘truth’, which in itself reproduces the systems of power and repression. This links to Abercrombie *et al*’s (2012 pp. 10) discussion of ideology as ‘*the very notion of an access to reality unbiased by any discursive devices or conjunctions with power. The (mis)perceiving a discursive formation as an extra discursive fact.’* Thus, part of the power of ideology is its ability to seem ‘natural’ or ‘common sense’ to those who are subjected to it (Abercrombie *et al*, 2012). |
| *Interpellation and ‘Doubling’:* Althusser (1971) defines interpellation as the phenomena whereby an individual recognises themselves as placed in categories based on ideology, also referred to as being ‘hailed’ (Abdi, 2015). An important addition to the theory of interpellation is ‘doubling’, put forward by DuBois (1994) and extended by Fanon (1967, 1961). ‘Doubling’ or the ‘doubled self’ can be defined as an individual recognising themselves as categorised through the eyes of others, and as such behaving in a way that they feel others expect (Abdi, 2015). |
| *Identification:* Laplanche and Pontalis (1980) describe identification as a ‘*psychological process whereby the subject assimilates an aspect, property or attribute of the other and is transformed, wholly or partially, after the model the other provides*.’ (Laplanche and Pontalis, 1980 pp. 205). The authors suggest that in psycho-analysis, identification can operate whereby the individual identifies themselves with another, or the individual identifies another with themselves, or a complex combination of both, described as a form of ‘we’. |
| *Dis-identification:* ‘*the ways in which one situates oneself both within and against the various discourses through which we are called to identify’* (‘’dis-identification’’, 2014 pp.1). In ‘Bodies that Matter’ (Butler, 1993) refers to dis-identification as a misrecognition, whereby there is a ‘*simultaneous seeing and failure to see desirable identifications’* (‘’dis-identification’’, 2014 pp.1). In relation to power, dis-identification can be viewed as ‘*representing a disempowered politics or positionality that has been rendered unthinkable by the dominant culture*’ (‘’dis-identification’’, 2014 pp.1). |

## Research Aims.

This study aimed to explore the childhood and educational experiences of young people who identify themselves as having mixed Black and White parentage. Research has consistently demonstrated educational attainment gaps between Black, Asian, and BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) young people and their White peers, and disparities across health and economic outcomes (Gillborn, 2005, 2008; Johnson, 2007; Berman and Dar, 2013; Barnard and Turner, 2011, Department for Education (DfE), 2012, 2014). Individuals of mixed Black and White parentage have been demonstrated to show similar, although not identical, outcomes to their BAME peers with same-race parentage (DfE, 2012, 2014).

Research points to the mediating effect of racialised experiences in the varying outcomes between BAME and White groups (for example Howard, Flennaugh and Terry, 2012; Gillborn, 2005, 2008; Bhattacharyya, Ison and Blair 2003). This highlights the importance of considering race and racialisation. However, much of this literature focuses on BAME individuals with same-race parentage.

Fewer studies have attempted to explore the phenomena of mixed racial and ethnic backgrounds in relation to racialised experiences. This study sought to explore how race, culture, childhood and education are experienced by young people who identify themselves as of mixed Black and White parentage.

Educational Psychologists are increasingly being asked to consider their role in relation to working with and supporting BAME groups. Due consideration and sensitivity to minority ethnic and cultural experiences now features prominently in professional standards (BPS, 2015).

Despite this, the role of Educational Psychology in supporting BAME groups in education has received limited levels of interest in professional and academic research. Literature available tends to focus on the experiences of same-race parentage BAME children and young people (CYP) (for example, Abdi, 2015; Sultana, 2015). A focus on alternative BAME experiences, for example from a mixed perspective, has as yet to be found in the literature available in the field of Educational Psychology.

The current research aimed to begin an exploration of the potential role of Educational Psychology as a practice, and Educational Psychologists’ individual practice, in exploring and supporting race and racialisation beyond monoracial BAME experiences.

## Research Questions.

The research aimed to address the current topic through the following research questions:

* Research Question A) What are mixed young people’s experiences of race and culture?
* Research Question B) How do mixed young people interpret their experiences of childhood and education?

The research questions above will also be considered in light of professional practice, through consideration of how Educational Psychology practice can develop by engaging with and reflecting on the accounts of the participants.

This research aims to explore the phenomena of mixed experiences through the lens of social constructionism. In particular, the study draws heavily on the historical context of race in which mixed individuals exist, seeing this as a key factor in the exploration and interpretation of the experiences of individuals who identify as mixed. The research draws on theory which takes socio-historical context into account when applying psychological interpretation of participants’ experiences. This includes Critical Race Theory (CRT), Fanonian theory, and psychoanalytic theories of power and racism.

In Chapter Two, I explore the theories mentioned above in more detail in order to provide a background and rationale for the research. Chapter Three focuses on the methodological and procedural aspects of the research. Chapter Four presents an interpretative analysis of participants’ experiences in relation to key themes, whilst Chapter Five focuses on a discussion of key themes in relation to psychological theory as discussed above. Chapter Six explores the relationship of the research with the practice of Educational Psychology, whilst Chapter Seven briefly discusses the strengths and limitations of the research.

## Conclusion.

This chapter has introduced the research topic to the reader, focusing on key concerns which have contributed to the decision to research this topic area. The chapter has also served to give an outline of the upcoming format of the current research as a guide for the reader.

# Chapter Two: Literature Review.

## 

**Reflective Box:**

*Anon ‘So where are you from?*

*Me ‘Err … I’m from Sheffield’*

*Anon ‘No, where are you really from? Like, where are your parents from?’*

*Me ‘Well, my dad’s from Nottingham and my mum’s from Milton Keynes, so …’*

*Anon ‘No, where are your family from?’*

*Me ‘Well, most of my family are from various parts of the UK. [pause] But my grandparents on my dad’s side are from Jamaica, if that’s what you mean?’*

*Anon ‘Exactly! I love the Caribbean! You can bring some Caribbean spirit to the course!’*

This serves as an account of my first day on the Educational Psychology Doctorate. The conversation, although not word for word; taken from my memory, took place with a guest tutor on the course; a professional, highly qualified and experienced Educational Psychologist. It was not the first time I have had a conversation like this, and I’m sure it won’t be the last.

I was very upset and offended by the comments, but it took me until near the end of my first year of training to talk to a member of staff on the course about the event. I was scared to talk to anyone about the exchange, because I felt that I wouldn’t be understood, and my upset and anger would be seen as an over-reaction, or a misconstruing of events.

In the exchange above, I tried to communicate my sense of Britishness and my mixedness (including the White part of my mixedness), in my responses. However, how I saw myself was denied by the other person, in favour of their own ‘Caribbean’ construction of me. I felt that the individual in conversation with me had no interest in *me;* just an interest in their own construction of Blackness and what a Black person was.

As I have worked through this research, and considered the reasons for choosing this topic, I am always brought back to this event. For me, this epitomises the ‘power’ that I, as a person who identifies as mixed, feel exerted over me and my sense of self. I wanted to explore this in other people who identify as mixed, and I wanted to present and explore their experiences, for my own learning, and for other Educational Psychologists.

Thus, my research stems very much from a personal perspective, and I clearly have my own standpoint on how the experiences of mixed people may be shaped. Personally, I feel this is what makes the research. However, the reader will become aware of as the text proceeds, there are a number of academic and professional reasons why this topic is of importance. Personal and professional motivations for the research are equally important to me, and I would like the reader to keep this in mind this when considering the current research.

At various points in the text, I have included further ‘reflective boxes’ to give the reader some insight into more personal aspects of the research, which may further understanding of why I made certain decisions, why I have interpreted events in certain ways, and finally, give further insight into my own thinking. Hopefully this serves to give the text a well-rounded, transparent and coherent quality.

## Introduction.

This chapter is split into sections. Chapter 2A aims to consider theoretical positions on power, race and racialisation, with a specific interest in the historical context of race and Blackness in Western society. Following this, Chapter 2B explores current literature available in relation to race and racialisation, childhood and education. The chapter goes on to examine how current and historical social forces have affected policy and practice in the fields of childhood and education, in order to embed all aspects of the research into a socio-historical framework. A final examination of current educational trends in BAME CYP is discussed in order to give insight into the relevance of the research topic for Educational Psychology practice. In Chapter 2C, the topic of mixedness is considered. This sub-chapter takes into consideration social and historical aspects of the phenomena, and the small amount of literature available on the topic. Chapter 2C considers the impact of the literature on current understandings of mixed CYP. Chapter 2D briefly explores the role of Educational Psychology practice in exploring race and BAME communities.

# Chapter 2A: Theoretical Positions on Race and Racism.

## Social and Historical Context: Power, Race, and Racialisation.

### Power and Ideology.

Althusser (1971) discusses power in terms of its need to maintain and reproduce the conditions of its existence. He discusses ‘ideology’; a set of beliefs constructed as ‘truths’, as key to the reproduction of power. Althusser (1971) maintains that

*‘the reproduction of labour power requires not only a reproduction of its skills, but also, at the same time, a reproduction of its submission to the rules of the established order, i.e. a reproduction of submission to the ruling ideology for the workers, and a reproduction of the ability to manipulate ruling ideology correctly for the agents of exploitation and repression, so that they, too, will provide for the domination of the ruling class ‘in words’.’* (Althusser, 1971 pp.5).

Althusser (1971) states that ideologies are maintained and transmitted through ‘Ideological State Apparatuses’ or ISAs, which include the church, the family, and education. Through these ISAs, ideological messages are continually represented as ‘truths’ through their foundation in the institutions of which they are a part. Thus, individuals within these institutions come to take on ideologies in every aspect of their lives, from the jobs they undertake, to the language they use and the beliefs which they hold, without even being aware of the power such ideologies are exerting over their existence (Abercrombie *et al*, 2012). Consequently, current ideologies are maintained, leading to the continued power of the system which is in place.

### Critical Race Theory.

CRT offers a theoretical perspective about the power dynamics involved in social understandings of race. The theory discusses a system whereby racism and racial inequality are a product of deep rooted and implicit structures within society (Rollock and Gillborn, 2011). CRT also explores how the social structures and processes in which we live maintain power structures which favour White ways of understanding and interacting with the world (Rockquemore *et al*, 2009). This element of the theory includes structures such as institutional organisations, such as education systems. CRT authors such as Leonardo (2002, 2004, and 2011) and Leonardo and Porter (2010) discuss White power structures with direct reference to educational structures and practices.

CRT argues that our understanding of race across all social structures is situated within a social and historical context (Delgado and Stefanic, 2012; Crenshaw, 1995). By taking this critical standpoint, CRT aims to restructure current understandings of race to promote greater equality between White and non-White groups, and move away from the suggested subordination of non-White peoples (Delgado and Stefanic, 2012) across all social structures.

### Intersectionality.

Intersectionality allows for the exploration of when two or more phenomena cross paths (Crenshaw, 1993). Intersectionality as a theoretical position often explores intersections between race and gender, and race and class, but can also explore other variations on a less powerful group (e.g. ‘straight’ and LGBT communities) (Anthias, 2013., Crenshaw, 1991,).

Intersectionality claims that theories such as CRT fail to acknowledge, explore, or account for variation from within non-Whiteness, and suggests that exploring alternative experiences from the dominant positionality within such a group (for example, female gender in Black groups) may allow for a fuller exploration of potential power dynamics and issues (Crenshaw, 1993; Carbado *et al*, 2013).

For example, critics have argued that CRT takes the position of non-White maleness, and fails to establish how non-White female experiences may create different understandings and contexts (Mirza, 1992). Critics contend that through this, CRT has contributed to the continued under and mis-representation of experiences of non-White womanhood (Collins, 2000). Thus, intersectionality plays an important role in exploring race and racism through the female perspective.

Researchers such as Frosh *et al* (2002) and Sewell (1997) have explored aspects of intersectionality through their research into the formation of masculinities in teenage boys. Both researchers posit that masculinity intersects with racialisation, particularly in non-White boys, to create and present differing masculinities dependent on the racialised backgrounds of teenage boys, demonstrating intersectionality in action from a masculine perspective.

Intersectionality as a discipline goes further in its questioning of the study of intersection across only two boundaries (Cole, 2005., Acker, 2006). This argument suggests that just as it is the case that individuals always exist within more than one category, they always exist within more than two. Feminist studies give the example of ‘Black Feminism’, highlighting that even within this field, Black women also exist along different class backgrounds and from varying socioeconomic positions which will impact on the meaning of the world around them (Acker, 2006).

As such, Acker (2006) argues that in order for intersectionality to be truly taken into account, a view of intersectionality in terms of ‘inequality regimes’ should be discussed. This gives room to discuss the impact of varying positions without the assumption that one is more or less influential than another, but that some of these positions may be more influential in different contexts (Acker, 2006).

**Reflective Box:**

Intersectionality felt important to me as a theory. I felt that it was not possible to think about myself as ‘only’ my racialised self, ‘only’ a woman, or ‘only’ from a particular class background. I reflected on my closest friendship in childhood, which continues to be a key relationship, and the relationship I have with my brother.

My closest friend is another woman with a Black and a White parent, whom I have known since I was four years old. We are born within a year of each other, went to the same schools, and have the same core group of friends. On the surface, we are recognised as very similar. However, we come from differing backgrounds; from two parents who are teachers, to a single parent household with a full time working mother with three other, much younger, children.

My brother has the same parentage and comes from the same background as myself; he attended the same schools and lived in the same area as me. However, my brother is a male, of a different age, and with a different set of friendships.

Whilst my friend and I, and my brother and I have recognised many common experiences, we have also experienced many differences. My friend and I are two very different women, and my brother and I are two very different mixed individuals. These differences seem pertinent in highlighting intersectionality and its effects.

### Epistemological Oppression.

Epistemological oppression refers to the theory of oppression through restrictions on knowledge creation and understanding (Thompson, 2003). The theory posits that power is maintained through unequal participation in the construction of knowledge (Dotson, 2012). Theories of CRT and intersectionality draw on epistemological oppression through their interest in the lack of power that non-White/female/ working class people possess in relation to structuring and understanding the world, through the exclusion of such groups in knowledge construction (Sewell, 2016).

Sewell (2016) suggests that the fundamental position which epistemological oppression holds in relation to the world means that it is likely to permeate through all structures in society, contributing to more obvious examples of power imbalances within society due to its embedded nature.

The work of Billington (2000) can be seen as relating the theory of epistemological oppression to professional practice. In his exploration of the practice of Educational Psychology, Billington (2000) suggests that Educational Psychologists can engage in power and regulation of CYP through the assessments they use, the language they use to speak about CYP, and the reports they write about CYP. Whilst Billington’s (2000) argument does not relate specifically to race, the author is relating the practice of power explicitly to the practice of Educational Psychology, and should be considered as a potential example of epistemological oppression within the field of interest within the current research.

Sewell (2016) draws on Harding’s (1991) Standpoint Theory (ST) as an important aspect of epistemological oppression. ST maintains that those with greater levels of epistemological power, for instance, White middle class males, are positioned such that viewing alternative realities, which do not contribute to the maintenance of their own power, is difficult for such groups to perceive. In contrast, Harding (1991) suggests that those individuals in positions of greater oppression may well be more able to view a wider range of realities. This position is created due to the diminished need to maintain systems of power through epistemological oppression.

Thus, whilst those in power seek to maintain their position through exclusion or dismissal of alternative epistemological positions and experiences, those in lesser positions of power have ‘nothing to lose’ through reflecting on varying epistemological positions, as their own epistemological position currently holds no power to the construction of society (Harding, 1991).

### Power and Psychological Processes.

The previous sections begin to highlight the critical importance of power in shaping lived experiences. A potential criticism of CRT and intersectionality is the lack of a psychological perspective within the theories. This is understandable given the emergence of both theories from sociological study. However, this can make it difficult for the study of psychology and psychological processes to make best use of the theories.

One way of conceptualising the links between CRT and intersectionality is the focus on power as a tool for both subjugation, and the creation of the lived experience of those who are subjugated. Butler (1995) focuses on the role of power in her psychoanalytic study of the formation of gendered identity.

Butler (1995) argues that acts of power or subjugation form the basis of individual psyches.

*Power acts on the subject in at least two ways: first, what makes the subject possible, the condition of its possibility and its formative occasion, and second, as what is taken up and reiterated in the subject’s own ‘acting’.* (Butler, 1995 pp14.

In Butler’s (1995) model of gender identity formation, power acts as formative in shaping individual identities. According to the author’s thesis, ‘power’ refers to the social structures in which individuals live. This enters the individual psyche to become the psychology of a person’s gendered identity through subjection, or the creation of individuals as a product of dominant ideologies.

*‘ .. the agency of the subject appears to be an effect of its subordination.’* (Butler, 1995 pp12).

Thus, Butler’s model brings the sociological aspects of power and subjugation as discussed in CRT and intersectionality to the forefront of the formation of the psychology of individuals.

Butler (1993) also posits that the power of a particular position of categorisation can be refuted by individuals positioned in this way. The author discusses ‘dis-identification’, whereby individuals recognise the categorisations within which others are placing them, but resist identifying themselves in this way. Butler (1993) suggests that those in a position of ‘dis-identification’ often represent a category of being which has been deemed ‘unthinkable’ by the ideologies in which they exist. Thus, those who dis-identify are still placed in positions of subjugation, as their personal position of dis-identification against the category in which they are positioned remains disavowed by the dominant ideology which they are a part of (Butler, 1993).

Whilst Butler (1995) talks about the relationship between power and the formation of gender, the psychological processes that she refers to relate specifically to power *per se*. Thus, as other authors have argued (for example Gaztambide, 2014., and Abdi, 2015), Butler’s psychoanalytic theory of power lends itself to the application of other phenomena of power. Both Gaztambide (2014) and Abdi (2015) discuss Butler’s (1995) work in relation to racialisation.

### Racism and Psychological Theory.

Kovel’s (1995) psychoanalytic theory on the origins of racism and racialisation compliments Butler’s (1995) exploration of power and psychology. Kovel approaches racism from a perspective whereby modern racism is distinguished from pre-modern ‘tribalisms’ through its ‘reliance upon an abstract essence, embodied in the notion of race, to become the point of splitting between peoples.’ (Kovel, 1995 pp 212).

Kovel (1995) defines racism as a system with its own internal coherence, allowing it to enter the psyche of individuals at various levels. He uses Diagram 2.1 below to exemplify this structure.

##### Diagram 2.1 Kovel’s psychoanalytic model of the psychology of racism. (Source: Kovel, 1995).

Ideology Psychology

Institutions

In this model, ‘ideology’ relates to the intellectual need to account for relations of power, as discussed in further detail in the ‘definitions’ table in the introduction (pp.1). ‘Psychology’ relates to the mental structures and psychodynamics of individuals, and ‘institutions’ reflect elements of society, for example the economy, the family, or education (Kovel (1995). Kovel argues that whilst the system as a whole constitutes racism, individual elements are defined and contribute to racism independently, over time leading to racism becoming a defining feature of a society.

In Kovel’s model, colonial slavery denotes the first time in history where slavery was encoded along lines of colour; Black= slave and White= free. This break needed to be intellectually accounted for in order to perpetuate and justify the wealth producing processes which developed through the establishment of colonial slavery, which in turn led to the powerful economic position of the owners of these wealth producing processes in the west.

This process contributed to the dehumanization of Black people through the ideology of Black people as inhuman or animalistic, the legitimisation of the psychology of subjugation and power over others, and establishment of the institutions which took away the rights of slaves as human beings. Thus, race and ‘racism’ as a psychological construct become inextricably linked to the need to maintain and justify the economic power of Whiteness.

Kovel (1995) reasons that whilst elements of this model may have changed over time, the need to maintain economic power has meant that our psychology of race- the structures and models we have to think about race- remain unchanged. This process gives rise to the continuation of racism in modern society.

More recent researchers, such as Gaztambide (2014) have suggested that the psychological aspects of racism are maintained through the formation of ‘racial object maps’ (Gaztambide, 2014). In this model, racialised understandings of Whiteness and Blackness are used as a means to categorise others and the self in terms of how much or how little an individual fits into these categories (Gaztambide, 2014). This categorisation functions in relation to ideologies of Whiteness, which themselves are dictated through power relationships, whereby maintenance of the power of Whiteness functions as the core goal (Gaztambide, 2014).

### Fanon: Psychoanalytic theories of Colonialism.

Frantz Fanon was an anti-colonial thinker of the twentieth century, whose texts include ‘The Wretched of the Earth’ (Fanon, 2004) and ‘Black Skin, White Masks’ (Fanon, 1967). Fanon’s personal background as a Black man, and his professional background in psychoanalysis and phenomenology, led him to write about anti-colonialism from a psychological perspective.

Fanon’s writing is particularly interested in the power of Whiteness, and the psychological systems which have developed as part of this process of maintenance, particularly within the Black psyche (Leonardo and Porter, 2010). The psychology of colonialism and Blackness are unpicked in direct relation to Whiteness. The inferiority that White structures of colonialism have created toward and within Blackness are embedded within Fanon’s work (Sardar, 2008).

In Fanon’s work, colonialism is seen as an act of violence against Black people (Sardar, 2008). Leonardo and Porter (2010) argue for the relationship between colonialism and education as different sides of the same institutional structures, which continue to inflict acts of subjugation and violence against Black people. Modern education is thus seen as a means of maintaining White dominance and White ‘comfort’ (Leonardo and Porter, 2010), which keeps Whiteness ‘safe’ from difficult discussions about race and racism.

Fanonian theory draws significantly on the theory of interpellation; embedded within issues of power and subjugation. Interpellation is discussed in the ‘definitions’ table in the introduction (pp. 1). In brief, interpellation refers to Althusser’s (1971) theory where individuals ‘recognise themselves as ‘hailed’ or placed in categories by ideology’ (Abdi, 2015 pp.60). In this instance, an interaction of dominance and subjugation is enacted through placing the interpellated into a category based on pre-set, racialised views of what the interpellated person ‘is’.

Fanon (1967) also builds on ideas of ‘doubling’ or the ‘doubled self’ as introduced by DuBois (1994) in relation to interpellation. In doubling, individuals recognise themselves as positioned within a particular racialised category by others. The associated ‘ways of being’ within this racialised category are also recognised by the individual being positioned. In this dynamic, the individual who recognises themselves as perceived in such a way takes up the position, and behaves the way they feel the other expects them to (Fanon, 1967).

This act of ‘doubling’ is seen by Fanon (1967, 1961) as an act of subjugation against the racialised group, both on an individual and on an ideological level. On an individual level, in recognising their positioning by others and responding to it as they expect the positioning to mean, the individual submits to a narrow view of themselves as defined only by their racialised categorisation (Fanon, 1967). This limits their view of themselves outside of this category, and disavows their identity on an individual level. On an ideological level, the individual submits to and recreates the ideological construction of their racialisation, thus maintaining the construction of their racialised self as a ‘truth’ of that racialised category (Fanon, 1967).

# Chapter 2B: Race, Childhood and Education.

## The Current Climate: BAME communities in society and education.

### BAME communities today.

Whilst there has been a population of BAME individuals in the UK for many hundreds of years (Owen, 2007), the greatest influx of peoples from differing racial backgrounds has taken place through the mid-twentieth century to the present day (Caballero, 2007). Alongside these influxes, disparities between BAME individuals and their White counterparts across education, health and economic outcomes have been consistently demonstrated (Johnson, 2007; Berman and Dar, 2013; Barnard and Turner, 2011, Department for Education (DfE), 2012, 2014). Similar patterns of disparity have also been consistently documented in the United States (US) (Howard, Flennaugh and Terry, 2012).

Interestingly, a vast majority of research into this topic has been conducted in US-based populations, leaving a void of recent research in the United Kingdom (UK). Thus, the reader should keep in mind that whilst this research is focused on UK phenomena, some of the research and theory referred to originates from similar, although by no means identical, phenomena from the US. Given the dearth of available literature in UK populations, US-based research has been drawn on to provide over-arching theoretical points.

In the UK, CYP from BAME groups often appear at a disadvantage throughout childhood and education. For example, with the exclusion of Chinese-origin CYP, BAME CYP consistently underperform in GCSE examinations (DfE 2012, 2014). BAME CYP, particularly Black children, are over represented in Special Educational Needs (SEN) (for example, CYP with Statements of Special Educational Needs or Education, Health and Care Plans) populations and in fixed-term and permanent exclusion rates (Owen, 2007).

In the past, and arguably to some extent in the present, such data has been argued to provide evidence of inherent differences between BAME individuals and White people (Howard, Flennaugh and Terry, 2012). For example, Howard, Flennaugh and Terry (2012) highlight how the dominant discourse around Black culture is often viewed and portrayed as less interested in academic attainment and career success. In Kovel’s (1995) model of racism and psychology, such discourses reflect the need to maintain and seek intellectual reason behind the continuation of racist systems.

Such arguments fail to take into account the historical and political context of discourses on race, as highlighted in Kovel’s (1995) model of the psychology of racism. For example, historically, the images available of Black and BAME people were shaped by colonial messages and historical justifications of the slave trade (Bernasconi, 2010). In these discourses, Black men in particular were characterised as strong, stupid, and ultimately sub-human, which continued to evolve into images of aggressive and hyper-sexual beings through the 17th and 18th centuries (Howard, Flennaugh and Terry, 2012). Black women were often seen as sexual objects with low moral standards, who could therefore be utilised for pleasure, and little else (Bogle, 2001), or ‘mammy’ figures whose sole purpose was to raise children (Abdullah, 1998).

Critical Race Theorists posit that such images became entrenched over time, but were also subject to evolution which reflected society’s needs (Delgado and Stefanic, 2012). In the 20th and 21st century, discourses around Black men as aggressive and less cognitively able have been perpetuated in imagery of the Black male as a ‘gangster’, whilst Black women are often still portrayed in a highly sexualised nature, particularly through the media (Jones-Thomas *et al*, 2011).

Theories of power, subjugation, and racialisation (Butler, 1995., Kovel, 1995., Fanon, 1967; 1961), as well as CRT theories (for example, Howard, Flennaugh and Terry, 2012., Delgado and Stefanic, 2012), contend that such constructions as those discussed above position and contribute to the formation of how BAME individuals see themselves. Gaztambide (2014) suggests that these serve to create individual psychological formations of self-identity constructed through racialised models of Blackness. For example, due to constructions of Blackness and educational attainment as mutually exclusive, a link between racialised versions of Blackness and poor schooling experiences has been suggested (Ferguson, 2001).

This is an interesting argument as it also highlights the way in which a social construction can appear as an inherent trait in a group of people if not examined at a critical level, as suggested by Fanon (1967, 2004). For example, in their exploratory studies on educational professional’s understanding of the impact of race in their classroom, Rousseau Anderson (2014) and Cooper Stoll (2014) found that professionals within the education system in the United States often spoke about their classroom from the perspective of a ‘colour blind ideology’, whereby colour or race is ‘not seen’, and a system of meritocracy informs societal structures.

Olumide (2002) and Rollins and Hunter (2013) argue that this positioning dismisses the experiences of those who face racialisation outside of Whiteness, and in fact contributes to the continuation of racialisation as a force of subjugation through its deep rooted, unconscious position within the psyche. Maintaining the position of society as colour-blind may create difficulties for those who do not experience society in this way, and reinforce Whiteness as the ‘norm’, and thus the powerful position (Abercrombie *et al*, 2012). Given the central role that education and childhood play in the formation of identity, it is possible to see how such systems may be of particular importance within childhood and education (Abdi, 2015).

#### The Current Climate: Government Policy in Education.

The UK government has for some time recognised the disparity in attainment between BAME and White people. A historical perspective can illustrate how policy documentation reflects discourses around BAME, contributing to the racialisation of non-White groups (Race, 2011). For example, the policy ‘The Education of Immigrants’ (Department for Education and Science (DES), 1971) talks about the disparity in attainment with a focus on the problems within the BAME child and their family.

*‘For the West Indian child ... the environment is one in which marriage is not always considered important... the unknown father with which his mother may be living... Asian mother’s tendency to live a withdrawn life....’ (*DES, 1971,pp.4).

Modern educational policy has attempted to address issues from a more holistic perspective. During the 2000s, an emphasis was placed on providing ‘culturally diverse’ materials in schools. For example, an emphasis was placed on making sure classrooms provided children’s books and toys which reflected a wide range of racial backgrounds and cultural practices, and providing children with opportunities to explore their own backgrounds and heritages (for example, Morrison and Bordere, 2001). Many schools and Local Authorities (LAs) had teams which specialised in providing support and guidance for staff on issues of diversity (Morrison and Bordere, 2001). Arguably, such approaches may have contributed to initiating alternative constructions of race and racialisation, allowing for some aspects of non-Whiteness to enter into systems of power (Race, 2011., Gillborn, 2008).

Since the change of government in 2010, Academies and Free Schools have been heralded as a positive way to engage and empower a variety of communities, including BAME groups (Gove, 2013). In his 2013 speech, the then Secretary of State for Education Michael Gove commented on ‘The Civil Rights Struggle of our Time’ (Gove, 2013). In his speech, Mr Gove highlighted the continuing achievement gap between BAME CYP, with a particular emphasis on the disparity between the outcomes of Black Caribbean CYP compared to other BAME and White groups.

Mr Gove highlighted how greater autonomy in some schools which cater for large BAME communities has given rise to huge leaps in achievement, using specific schools to exemplify his point (Gove, 2013). The current government argues that with greater levels of autonomy, communities are more able to create a school where the values of that community can be understood and reflected (Gove, 2013).

However, not all research supports this argument. For example, in a study on Free Schools across the UK, ‘Inclusive Schools: Free Schools Monitoring Project’ (Stokes *et al*, 2012) found that there was overall a lack of engagement from BAME communities in Free School settings, which had the potential to perpetuate gaps in attainment (Stokes *et al,* 2012).

The study highlighted key points which included: the lack of consideration for diversity in many Free School projects, the over-emphasis on traditional subject models such as Latin and Classics, and the potential problems of the entry criteria that many Free Schools utilised. This final point was argued to potentially exclude BAME CYP, on the basis that their attainment levels when leaving early years and primary school settings are often already lower than their White peers (Stokes *et al*, 2012).

The evidence presented above supports the view of education as a system of Whiteness which maintains the subjugation of non-White groups. This suggests that a qualitative exploration of the role of racialisation in current education systems may be a valid line of enquiry. Arguably, given that the new schools movement has come from central government, the model may still perpetuate systems whereby BAME status is not valued or understood. As a case in point, 6% of the House of Commons is currently made up of BAME MPs, whilst the latest available data suggests that approximately 13% of the UK population is of BAME background (Audikas, 2016).

# Chapter 2C: Mixedness.

## Mixedness in history.

Mixed people are often viewed as a newly emerging group in UK society. For example, the first time a mixed category was included on the UK census was in 2001 (‘White and Black Caribbean’, ‘White and Black African’, ‘White and Asian’, ‘Other Mixed’) (Owen, 2007). However, historically, there have been mixed populations in the UK for many years. Examples of this in modern history can be seen in the port cities such as Liverpool and Cardiff (Christian, 2008). In Liverpool, there has been a long history of mixed families originating from Chinese and African sailors since before the First World War (Christian, 2008). In Liverpool in particular, these early mixed families have given rise to whole communities of mixed populations (Christian, 2008).

Whilst at the time the mixedness of such populations caused outrage, in the form of the 1919 Liverpool race riots (Christian, 2008) and the notorious ‘Fletcher Report’ (Fletcher, 1930), these populations were quickly seen as part of the Black community; thus their mixedness was disregarded. Arguably this reflects the difficulty that society has with race as a fixed characteristic, and the racialisations of Blackness in which individuals exist. The idea that an individual can be neither Black nor White is one that seems to have been too problematic for many to process.

### Mixedness Today: Society’s View of Mixedness.

CRT theorist Thompson (2012) argues that mixedness is a difficult subject for current society. The author reasons that some of society’s difficulties with mixedness stem from the fact that historically, categorising individuals as either Black or White had social and economic benefits, whereby the privileges associated with Whiteness were maintained through the idea of a ‘pure’ race (Thompson, 2012., Bernasconi, 2010). Psychoanalytic theorists such as Tate (2007) and Gaztambide (2014) suggest that difficulties with mixedness also stem from the psychological aftermath of colonialism, whereby mixedness in itself exemplifies the violent subjugation of Black people and Blackness.

Ali (2007) and Hall (2007) contend that discourses around the ‘purity’ of Whiteness remain present in our current society. Both authors take the perspective that in modern society, people from mixed backgrounds are often recognised by others through their phenotypical features. The ‘otherness’ of non-White features, such as skin colour, hair texture, or even the shape of a person’s nose, serve to identify someone as non-White, even if many or all of their other features appear more phenotypically White. This serves as a means of maintaining the level of power that Whiteness needs to survive (Gaztambide, 2014., Hall, 2007).

**Reflective Box:**

The previous two subheadings highlighted my own positioning on what mixed meant to me. I noticed that I found it much more difficult to see someone as mixed when their said mixedness was less physically obvious. For example, I spoke to an acquaintance about my research, whom I had always ‘seen’ as White. She told me that she sees herself as mixed Irish (mother) and Moroccan (father).

This highlighted my own view of mixedness as closely related to appearance. This served as useful for me when thinking about participants and how I would identify them as mixed. It served to show me that I needed the identification to be theirs, not mine, in terms of seeing themselves as mixed Black and White.

#### Mixedness in School Education.

The most recent available data which breaks down attainment by mixed parentage suggests that mixed CYP attain similarly to that of their same-race parentage BAME peers (Department for Education (DfE), 2015). For example, CYP of Black and White Caribbean descent often under perform at similar levels to their Black Caribbean peers, whilst Chinese and White CYP often have similarly high attainment levels which match with their Chinese descent peers (DfE, 2015). Figure 2.1 below demonstrates this relationship.

##### Figure 2.1 Percentage of pupils achieving GCSE grade A\*-C in 2013/14 (source: DfE, 2015).

Interestingly, the most recent DfE statistical data available does not break down mixed CYP’s attainment by BAME parentage; instead mixed populations of varying BAME parentage are subsumed into one ‘mixed’ group (DfE, 2016). As figure 2.2 below demonstrates, this paints a very different picture of attainment in mixed populations, suggesting that overall, mixed individuals are achieving greater levels of attainment than the national average, and their White peers.

##### Figure 2.2 Percentage of pupils attaining 5+ A\*-C GCSEs by major ethnic group 2014/15 (source: DfE, 2016).

The differences in attainment levels as demonstrated through differing statistical techniques demonstrates some of the complexity in exploring attainment in BAME CYP, particularly mixed CYP. Gillborn (2008) argues that, as a product of Whiteness or epistemological oppression, the continuing lack of attainment in BAME CYP has been undermined by an emphasis on the diminished attainment levels of White boys of low socioeconomic status.

Gillborn’s data and exploration from the 2005/6 cohort represents the most recently available data which breaks down attainment by ethnic and class groups in a comprehensive manner, allowing for study of the phenomena in detail. Whilst the age of his data is not ideal, the ideas presented by Gillborn (2008) are of considerable importance to the current topic.

Gillborn (2008) argues that whilst the under-attainment of White working class boys is important to explore, the heightened level of focus on it detracts from the fact that the ‘White Free School Meal boys’ cohort makes up a tiny proportion of the education system. Furthermore, as figure 2.3 below illustrates,

‘*the inequality of attainment between White British boys in receipt of Free School Meals and their White peers who do not receive this benefit is considerably larger than the difference between White and Black Free School Meal boys*’ (Gillborn, 2008 pp.234).

Gillborn (2008) maintains that this phenomena demonstrates the power of Whiteness in the education system, whereby race is focused on as the issue in a tiny population of under-achieving White CYP. BAME CYP of similar socioeconomic status, including mixed CYP, achieving at marginally higher rates than a proportion of White CYP is problematised, rather than socioeconomic status, which appears to be impacting across all CYP in receipt of Free School Meals.

##### Figure 2.3 5+ A\*-C GCSEs (any subjects) boys by ethnic origin and Free School Meal (FSM/ Non-FSM) status 2005/6 (source: DfES, 2006, in Gillborn, 2008).

Besides highlighting potential power issues within Whiteness in the school system, the data discussed by Gillborn (2008) also indicates that socioeconomic status is likely to be an important factor to consider in the attainment levels of mixed CYP. Whilst Gillborn (2008) cautions on substituting socioeconomic status for class *per se*, the potential influencing factors of socioeconomic status highlight potential issues of intersectionality within the educational experiences of mixed CYP.

Gillborn (2008) also claims that a focus on the small ‘Free School Meals’ cohort neglects the much larger group (86.8% of the 2005/6 cohort) of CYP. Gillborn directs readers to statistical information reproduced below in figure 2.4, which demonstrates that in a large percentage of the cohort- where socioeconomic status reaches higher levels- CYP from BAME backgrounds, including mixed CYP, experienced significantly reduced attainment levels in comparison to their White peers. This suggests that race or BAME status in itself continues to have a significant impact on attainment (Gillborn, 2008).

##### Figure 2.4 5+ A\*-C GCSEs (any subject) Non-Free School Meals (N-FSMs) by gender and ethnic origin 2005/6 (source: DfES, 2006 in Gillborn, 2008).

Whilst there is no available data to make such comparisons with more current attainment levels, Gillborn (2008) also suggests that a long-term analysis of BAME attainment, as opposed to selective, one or two year statistical analysis, demonstrates that BAME/White inequality is a ‘permanent feature of the system’ (Gillborn, 2008 pp.238). The relationship between Gillborn’s assertion and the attainment levels of mixed CYP is one which cannot be accurately tracked due to the lack of recording of mixed children in many governmental statistics until relatively recently. However, given the trend towards Black BAME CYP and mixed Black and White BAME CYP sharing similar attainment levels, a similar system of long-term inequality is arguably likely to exist.

Given the history and the potential for identifying mixed individuals by their ‘one-race’ BAME heritage only, it seems possible that mixed individuals may be experiencing similar racialisations about themselves as their Black peers. This may also impact on their childhood and school experiences, and their attainment in schools (Olumide, 2012).

However, others would argue that the difficulties facing mixed CYP may involve both those experienced by their BAME peers and problems which are associated with being mixed *per se* (Caballero and Edwards, 2010). For example, evidence has shown that mixed CYP are largely over-represented in social care, above levels of their BAME peers (Fusco and Rautkis, 2012); they experience the highest rates of drug treatments related to mental health issues (Fisher *et al*, 2014), and are over represented in the mental health and prison systems (Fisher *et al,* 2014; Berman and Dar, 2013).

#### Mixedness in Higher Education.

The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) presents a plethora of statistical analysis on Higher Education (HE). Analysis of attainment and outcomes at HE from HEFCE data suggests that BAME young people (YP), including mixed YP, are at a disadvantage. Available data on HE outcomes focuses on monoracial categorisations, thus mixed YP are subsumed within their BAME monoracial identity within these analyses (HEFCE, 2015., 2012). Whilst this presents problems for a clear analysis of the outcomes of mixed YP in HE, the data is still worthy of note.

For example, in 2015, the HEFCE reported that White graduates had significantly higher degree classifications than BAME graduates, with the percentage of BAME students achieving first or upper second class degrees being 15 points lower than their White peers (HEFCE, 2015). The research also found that YP from lower socioeconomic backgrounds experienced lower levels of attainment, suggesting that socioeconomic status also plays a mediating role in HE outcomes (HEFCE, 2015). The HEFCE also found that drop-out rates, or ‘non-continuation’ on HE courses were significantly influenced by racial categorisations. For example, Black students (including YP of mixed Black origins) had the highest rates of non-continuation at 9.4%, whilst Chinese background students had the lowest, at 5.2% (HEFCE, 2013).

Whilst this data cannot be used to discuss mixed YP in isolation, given the subsuming of mixed YP into their BAME parentage, it appears that mixed YP, alongside other BAME YP, are likely to face considerable disadvantage at HE level.

#### Problematising Mixedness.

Much of the discourse used to explain educational statistics suggests that mixed CYP face such difficulties because of the challenges that come with being mixed and being the result of a mixed relationship. For example, it has been reasoned that mixed CYP face greater difficulties in forming a sense of identity than their ‘one-race’ peers of majority and minority groups (Fisher *et al*, 2014). Identity development theories suggest that in order to achieve a positive sense of identity, CYP need to have the opportunity to develop a sense of positive affirmation with their race and culture. It has been suggested that mixed CYP face difficulties with this, as it can be difficult for them to affirm with one race or culture, as they are often part of two (Fisher *et al,* 2014).

Further, it has been argued that mixed children often come from families which are inherently steeped in difficulties, largely suggested to stem from the fact that parents identify as from different racial backgrounds (Caballero and Edwards, 2010). A lack of access to the minority side of a mixed CYP’s developmental experience has been indicated to leave them feeling alienated and without a space in which they can identify (Fisher *et al,* 2014).

Others contend that it is the relative invisibility of the mixed population that gives rise to some of the difficulties associated with the group. For example, Morrison and Bordere (2001) and Song (2012) reason that within school systems in particular, there is a distinct lack of materials that represent the mixed population.

However, at the same time, mixed people are frequently seen in our media. Bellos (2007) and Hall (2007) argue that the representations we see of mixed people in the media today are often used as evidence towards the suggestion that we live in a ‘post racial’ or ‘colour blind’ society. However, from CRT perspectives, Bellos (2007) and Hall (2007) maintain that such a standpoint, when juxtaposed with the lack of representation seen historically and within the curriculum, is a fallacy which serves to further alienate and disempower CYP from mixed backgrounds.

Some suggest that the strict delineation of racialisation means that we seek to problematise mixedness. Song (2012), and Hall (2007) argue that the fact that society largely recognises itself as ‘monoracial’, and for socioeconomic and political reasons has sought to maintain the ‘fixedness’ of race, it is difficult to see mixing as anything other than a problem. In this argument, the authors suggest that whilst real problems do exist within the mixed population, some theorising around the reasons for these difficulties come from the racialised frame of reference employed.

For example, Song and Aspinall (2012), Song (2012), Jackson (2012) and Nuttgens (2010) all found that CYP who identified themselves as mixed had numerous positive experiences of their position. Many of these CYP strongly identified themselves as ‘mixed race’, however recognised that for society, they were seen as their BAME parentage only. This proved one of the greatest difficulties that these CYP experienced as part of growing up. The authors of these articles reasoned that such examples demonstrate how the problems associated with being mixed do not necessarily stem from internal conflicts, but the external problems that those who are not mixed place on individuals (Song and Aspinall, 2012). This links back to Althusser’s (1971) stance on ideology as a power maintaining framework, and Kovel’s (1995) model of the psychology of racism, as intersecting between individual psychology, ideology, and institutional practices.

Understanding of mixed families may also add to this problematising discourse, which reflects more about societal ideologies than the people who engage in such relationships. In their comparison of lone White mothers of mixed children from a study conducted in the 1960s to the current study, Caballero and Edwards (2010) noted that whilst there were differences between the parenting and lifestyle experiences of the groups of mothers, one of the most notable differences was the discourses in which the studies were set.

Caballero (2007) supports this argument when considering the experiences of modern mixed families. In their qualitative research, many mixed families commented on how ‘normal’ their family lives feel, and noted that whilst they may operate differently from families of one race, they also operate differently from many other mixed families. Caballero argues that such comments highlight the essential lack of homogeneity of the mixed family and individuality by its very nature; the variation available makes it very difficult to make any assumptions about what it is to be mixed.

#### The Value of Exploring Mixedness.

Arguably, it is this lack of homogeneity, coupled with the assumptions still being made about what it is to be mixed, that make this such an interesting area of research. Thus far, racialisation and race ideology have arguably been shaping approaches to researching mixedness. Exploring mixedness gives the opportunity to explore racialised experiences outside of dominant ‘monoracial’ constructions, potentially shedding light not only on mixed experiences, but how subjugation and racialisation continue to impact on lived experiences.

As discussed previously, a sub-theory within epistemological oppression suggests that those who experience oppression actually experience a privilege in relation to those who do not (Sewell, 2016). Standpoint Theory (Harding, 1991) suggests that social positions, or standpoints, impact on knowledge construction. Thus, those in positions of oppression are more able to view a wider range of realities due to a freedom from the need to maintain systems of power through epistemological oppression (Sewell, 2016).

The study of mixedness lends itself to this theory uniquely, due to mixedness’ potential position as neither Black nor White. It is possible that the study of mixedness will allow for the explorations and creations of epistemological positions that are a product of this unique position.

# Chapter 2D: Educational Psychology and BAME.

‘Standards for the accreditation of educational psychology training in England, Northern Ireland and Wales’ (British Psychological Society BPS, 2015) highlights through its professional standards ‘that culturally competent/informed practice is fundamental to EP practice in today’s diverse and global society’ (pp.18). The updated Standards place an emphasis on the development of such practice through reference to competencies which promote knowledge and understanding of diversity and cultural difference. The table below demonstrates the accredited competencies deemed essential for culturally competent and informed Educational Psychology Practice.

##### Table 2.1 competencies deemed essential for culturally competent and informed Educational Psychology Practice (source: British Psychological Society BPS, 2015).

|  |
| --- |
| Section Three: Diversity and Cultural Differences |
| 3.1 demonstrate appreciation of diversity in society and the experiences and contributions of different ethnic, socio-cultural and faith groups. |
| 3.2 demonstrate understanding and application of equality and diversity principles and actively promote inclusion and equity in their professional practice. |
| 3.3 take appropriate professional action to redress power imbalances and to embed principles of anti-discriminatory and anti-oppressive practice in all professional actions. |
| 3.4 be aware of attitudes to disability and impairment and where relevant, redress influences which risk diminishing opportunities for all vulnerable children and young people including those with SEND and their families. |
| 3.5 demonstrate knowledge and understanding of different cultural, faith and ethnic groups, and how to work with individuals from these backgrounds in professional practice. |
| 3.6 demonstrate knowledge and understanding of gender and sexuality and the impact of stigmatising beliefs. |
| 3.7 demonstrate understanding of the impact of inequality, socioeconomic and cultural status and disadvantage and the implications for access to resources and services. |

Sewell (2016) argues that Educational Psychology practice is particularly at risk of epistemological oppression due to its positioning in the construction of knowledge about individual CYP, which often places lesser levels of emphasis on the epistemological positions shared by CYP and their families. Drawing on Fricker’s (1999) model of epistemological oppression, Sewell (2016) argues that the role of Educational Psychologists can lead to their position being viewed as true knowledge, potentially leaving alternative voices and perspectives undermined and oppressed (Sewell, 2016).

Sewell (2016) and Billington (2000) suggest that the practice of Educational Psychology should include reflective and reflexive practice and debate to develop greater levels of awareness of how the role can contribute to epistemological oppression of marginalised groups. Sewell (2016) posits that an engagement with alternative voices and standpoints, developing a ‘scholastic awareness of predominant theories’ (Sewell, 2016 pp 10), and attuning to individual epistemological privileges, is likely to be important in developing non-oppressive EP practice.

The study of mixedness presents a unique opportunity to reflect on EP practice and its relationship with epistemological positions. Given the growth in the population of mixed individuals, it seems appropriate that an exploration of the phenomena should take place. Furthermore and as discussed previously, research into mixedness is uniquely placed to highlight current systems of monoracial racialisation, thus enabling an exploration of race and racialisation from outside of current dominant and subjugating ideologies.

Despite this emphasis, a search on Educational Psychology and race, culture, and working with BAME communities leads to limited examples of recent research. For details of search terms employed, please see Appendix D.

In June 2015, ‘Educational and Child Psychology’ published ‘’Race’, culture and ethnicity in Educational Psychology’. In this recent journal, the issue of identity in BAME CYP is considerably discussed (Sultana, 2015; Rizwan and Williams, 2015; Abdi, 2015). Authors explore the role of identity in young people of BAME backgrounds, with particular consideration of how the role of the EP can support BAME CYP’s identities through greater levels of understanding and appreciation of difference and flexibility in BAME CYP. Hewett (2015) and Frehill and Dunsmuir (2015) explore the role of schools and teachers in the construction of BAME identities, backgrounds and needs, and suggest the role of the EP in mediating these constructions to support BAME CYP, their families and communities.

Of particular interest is the emphasis that all articles in the 2015 journal place on the role of the EP in supporting BAME CYP. The articles advocate greater levels of understanding and appreciation of the *individual* BAME CYP they work with (Frehill and Dunsmuir, 2015). Further, the articles illustrate the important role of professional reflexivity in recognising the context of BAME CYP and, more importantly in many cases, the context and assumptions of professionals, including the EP, who support CYP.

Frehill and Dunsmuir (2015), working with traveller communities, argue that Educational Psychologists are also well placed to support schools to develop organisational structures and systems for BAME pupils, to target the promotion of community and belonging in schools. The authors found that increased levels of a sense of belonging supported school engagement in traveller communities, suggesting that belonging to a school community may be an important factor for BAME CYP (Frehill and Dunsmuir, 2015)

The recent focus on developing culturally competent and informed practice, coupled with recent published articles exploring issues of ethnic minority status within schools in the field of Educational Psychology, suggest that further exploration of race and racialisation is likely to contribute to theory and practice in the subject area.

## Conclusion.

This chapter has explored available literature relating to the current research topic. The chapter has moved from a focus on psychological theories of power, race, and racialisation, through into an exploration of race in childhood and education. In order to focus on the specific research topic, available literature on mixedness from socio-historical, political, and childhood and educational perspectives has then been discussed. Finally, literature relating the topic to Educational Psychology practice has been explored. Power and racialisation is discussed in order to provide the reader with a practical grounding of the research topic.

# Chapter Three: Methodology.

## Introduction.

This chapter introduces the reader to the methodology used in the current research. The chapter is divided in two. Chapter 3a covers ‘design’ aspects of the methodology. This includes exploration and rationale of the methodology, and an explanation as to why this approach was appropriate for the research. Chapter 3b focuses on procedural aspects of the methodology. This includes an introduction to the sampling, data collection and analysis phases.

# Chapter 3A: Design.

## Introduction.

Chapter 3a focuses on these key areas:

* *Approach to research:* Epistemological and ontological position, social constructionism, Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Intersectionality.
* *Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis:* IPA, idiography, phenomenology, the hermeneutic cycle, limitations of IPA and alternative designs.
* *Validity and Quality:* Reliability criteria and reflexivity.

## Approach to Research.

### Epistemological and Ontological Position.

Epistemology refers to the nature and theory of knowledge, in particular what ‘knowledge’ is, and how, or if, it can be acquired (Willig, 2001). Ontology refers to the study, and our understanding, of what constitutes reality (Willig, 2001). This research takes the ontological and epistemological position that knowledge is constructed by the individual and others in the social contexts in which an individual exists, leading to multiple truths.

The implication of this means that at no point can the research posit to provide the reader with the ‘truth’. Adopting a social constructionist position offers an exploration of a range of alternative constructions of ‘reality’, which reflects the knowledge, experiences, and ‘reality’ of the interactions between myself and my research participants.

### Social Constructionism and Relativism.

The epistemological and ontological assumptions lend themselves to a social constructionist framework, which in turn relates to relativist and critical realist perspectives on the nature of reality. Burr (2003) describes social constructionism as based on a set of definitions which include ‘a critical stance toward taken-for-granted knowledge’ (p 2), ‘historical and cultural specificity’ (p 3), knowledge as ‘sustained by social processes’ (p 4), and knowledge and social action as linked.

The research sees individual’s worlds as shaped through context and experience. With this argument, multiple truths and realities can exist in tandem, dependent on individual contexts and experiences, creating realities which may or may not relate to one another. Based on this, the research is most closely aligned with a relativist positionality.

From a personal perspective, I see Educational Psychology as uniquely positioned, through its use of psychological theory and tools, to explore and share ways in which different versions of reality can affect the lives of CYP and those around them. Research will allow this mechanism to be taken a step further, enabling reflection on the experiences and understandings of four mixed individuals.

The research is unable to offer distinct ‘truths’ or tangible ‘ways of working’ with a larger group. However, it is hoped that the experiences and understandings of participants, and the theoretically driven interpretations, will encourage reflection on personal and professional positionalities, experiences and contexts.

### Critical Race Theory.

Details of the theory behind CRT can be found in Chapter 2a. CRT is adopted based on a desire to provide the opportunity to explore the racialised experiences and interpretations of participants who exist in a world beyond the ‘White norm’. Researching participants who identify as mixed Black and White also creates the opportunity for exploration beyond binary understandings of race and its meaning, offering an alternative to dominant ideologies and positionalities, thus contributing to alternative epistemological positions.

### Intersectionality.

For details on the theory of intersectionality, please see Chapter 2a. One cannot exist ‘only’ as a non-White person. Therefore, the research seeks to examine how individuals’ positioning across various realms, particularly non-Whiteness and gender, influences understandings and constructions of their experiences.

## Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA).

Dilthey (1976) maintains that when an experience in an individual’s life takes on significance to them, a process of reflection and sense making is embarked upon. IPA seeks to engage with and explore the ways in which an individual has and is making sense of their experiences. IPA as a methodology also recognises that the researcher cannot be wholly separated from the research process; it involves the researcher’s attempts to make sense of a participants attempts to make sense of their experience (Smith, Flowers, and Larkin; 2009). This is known as a ‘double hermeneutic’ process.

It is appropriate to explore the theoretical concepts which have informed IPA to demonstrate the applicability of the chosen methodology to the research topic. What follows below focuses on the key concepts which inform IPA and that have informed the research approach.

### Idiography.

Idiography contrasts to ‘nomothetic’ psychological approaches, which are concerned with group and population level claims. Idiography focuses on the particular (Smith and Osborn, 2003). IPA adopts an idiographic position through its focus on detailed, in depth analysis, and exploring a particular phenomenon for a particular person (Smith, Flowers, and Larkin, 2009).

This approach is adopted throughout the research; demonstrable through the chosen area of interest, small sample size, and the detailed nature of analysis. Idiography is credited for its ability to give voice to individual experience; something which is of particular importance to the theoretical positions adopted throughout this research.

### Phenomenology.

Phenomenology is a philosophical approach concerned with thinking about the experience of being human, and what this is like (Langdridge, 2007). Husserl’s (1970) emphasis was on the importance of exploring the details of lived human experience. He saw phenomenology as involving stepping beyond the ‘every-day’, taken-for-granted experience. This could lead to ‘fitting’ understandings into what is already known or thought to be known: ‘pre-existing categories’ (Smith, Flowers, and Larkin, 2009 pp 12). Instead, Husserl promoted a process of inquiry which moved away from preconceptions and assumptions (Smith, Flowers, and Larkin, 2009).

Heidegger (1962, 1927) argued that Husserl’s idea of ‘bracketing’ preconceptions and assumptions was a fallacy, as the existence of knowledge is dependent on it being interpreted through experience (Smith, 2011). Thus, Heidegger saw individuals as a ‘person-in-context’ (Smith, Flowers, and Larkin, 2009 pp 17); a product and a creator of their lived experiences, which he referred to as ‘intersubjectivity’ (Heidegger; 1962/1927). The idea of intersubjectivity relates closely to the ontological and epistemological position of the current research, as discussed previously.

Merleau-Ponty (1962) also shared the view of ‘intersubjectivity’ with Heidegger (Langdridge; 2007), however Merleau-Ponty (1962) chose to emphasise the embodied nature of our position and understanding of the world. This has contributed to the argument that an individual can never know another’s experience in its entirety; each experience is always personal, even when experiences possess similarities (Smith, Flowers, and Larkin, 2009).

A final significant contributor to IPAs understanding of phenomenology is Sartre (1956/1943). Sartre saw individuals as continually developing beings, ‘becoming’ themselves through a process of experience. Thus, in relation to IPA, sense making does not have a beginning and an end, but continues to unfurl through each social interaction and phase of analysis.

The interactional quality of phenomenology appeals to the social constructionist positionality of the current research, whereby meaning and reality are shaped through interactional experience and the contextual world. Phenomenological theory is able to give voice to the participants of the current study as individuals, as opposed to fitting into ‘pre-existing categories’, as suggested by Husserl (1970). Orb (2000) suggests that IPAs use of phenomenology offers a way of seeking diverse voices for groups who otherwise may experience marginalisation, oppression, and subjugation, which compliments the theoretical approaches utilised in the current research.

### Hermeneutics.

IPA is associated with hermeneutics, or the theory of interpretation (Langdridge; 2007). Schleiermacher (1998) contributes a particularly useful way of conceptualising hermeneutics. In reference to a text, the author suggests that whilst as a reader, one is able to develop interpretations of a given text, this ‘must also be accommodated to the wider context in which the text was originally produced’ (Smith, Flowers, and Larkin; 2009 p22).

This approach gives value and meaning to both the participant’s sense making, and the researcher’s interpretation of this, without asserting greater levels of ‘truth’ or ‘knowledge’ to any level of interpretation, thus complimenting the research’s adoption of epistemological oppression as an important theory to consider. Heidegger (1962/1927) also added to this understanding, using the term ‘fore-conception’ to describe the experiences, assumptions and preconceptions that influence interpretations of current experiences (Smith, Flowers, and Larkin; 2009). This idea seems pertinent to the current research, in that an awareness of personal experience on a reflexive level will be essential in producing a valid and meaningful piece of research.

Further to this, Gadamer (1990) argued that, whilst a prior awareness of the influence of experiences on interpretation is important, the very process of interpretation will also bring to the fore the nature of preconceptions. This standpoint is reflected in the positionality of the current research, and one could argue, in the very nature of the research questions. The research attempts to hear the experiences of participants, and in the process of doing so, hopes to engage in a reflexive process which enables the exploration of aspects of personal assumptions and how these relate to my practice. Thus, the essence of the research is described in the term ‘double hermeneutic’ (Smith and Osborn; 2003).

### The Hermeneutic Cycle.

The hermeneutic cycle refers to the levels of interpretation which are engaged in through research (Smith and Osborn; 2003). Of particular interest is the idea of the ‘dual role’ of the researcher; as both like the participant(s) and also not the participant(s).

In the current research, the double hermeneutic goes a step further than this, in that my personal status as a mixed young person could potentially lead to more experiences or understandings in common, or at least a perception of more experiences or understandings in common, by both myself and participants. However, as the researcher, I still remain ‘not’ a participant. This is an important concept to bear in mind in order to avoid ‘fitting’ interpretations into pre-existing categories, as denounced by Husserl (1970).

Thus the notion of ‘bracketing’ could be seen as of particular importance in this instance. However, the positionality as ‘like’ the participants needs to be drawn upon and used reflexively, through a continued awareness and exploration of how ‘likenesses’ are influencing both the interpretation of participants’ sense making, and the sense making they are engaged in, based on their own perceptions of a mixed researcher in relation to them.

## Limitations of IPA.

Langdridge (2007) criticises IPA on the grounds that it is unable to access the social, historical and political context in which individuals exist. If this were the case, it would be highly unlikely that the premise of the current research could be successful. However, the social constructionist standpoint, and the nature of the theoretical approach, is evidence of the limitations of Langdridge’s argument. The theoretical positioning adopted demonstrates that participants’ experiences, their interpretations, and personal and theoretical interpretations are viewed through the lens of participants as active agents and receivers of the world around them. Actively and transparently approaching the interpretations from clear theoretical positions also means that interpretations are explicitly grounded in the participants as a part of the historical, cultural and political world in which both participant and researcher exist.

More generally, Langdridge (2007) also argues that IPA as a methodology is limiting in its focus on language as communication, thus excluding or severely limiting those who use other means of communication or find communication difficult. Sampling young adults aimed to limit this impact. However, the choice of methodology could have limited the ability of some participants to express themselves fully, and does not allow for the inclusion of adults with alternative methods of communication.

Willig (2001) and Langdridge (2007) also argue that IPA is limited in its reliance on descriptive as opposed to explanative or interpretative techniques. It would be inappropriate to suggest that IPA as a methodology could compliment explanative techniques or outcomes, as the basis of research is to provide exploration and reflection as opposed to positivist explanatory data. However, the descriptive elements of IPA are an area for further discussion.

Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009) refer heavily to descriptive elements for analysis, however it is worth noting that they also suggest using language and exploratory comments. To develop the interpretative levels of the current analysis, the adoption of theoretical standpoints gives a sound base for engaging in IPA on a more interpretative level.

## Alternative Methodologies.

For an overview of alternative methodologies considered, and a rationale as to why they were not chosen, please see Appendix C.

## Validity and Quality.

Qualitative methods of research have in the past been criticised due to a lack of well- established and clearly measurable reliability criteria. However, as Willig (2001) and others (Yardley, 2000) argue, this criticism is largely based on a positivist position. Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009) reason that whilst reliability criteria are of equal importance to qualitative research methodologies as they are to quantitative methods, applying quantitative criteria to qualitative methods is unlikely to be useful or meaningful.

Thus; qualitative researchers have developed reliability criteria which reflect methodologies employed within the field. For the purpose of the current research, the issue of reliability is addressed through a set of criteria discussed in Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009). Referring to the same key text to approach both practical and theoretical aspects of the methodological process aimed to provide a secure reference point, and allow readers to follow the rationale of the research with ease.

Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009) describe reliability criteria presented by Yardley (2000). The authors suggest that Yardley’s approach provides a particularly useful criteria based on its ability to be broad ranging and ‘offer a variety of ways of establishing criteria’ (p 179). Yardley’s criteria focus on three key areas, which are discussed in table 3.1 below.

##### Table 3.1 Reliability Criteria (Yardley, 2000).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Yardley’s Criteria | Ways of meeting the Criteria |
| *Reliability Criteria.* | * Sensitivity to context.   Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009) suggest that with respect to IPA as a distinct methodology, sensitivity to context is demonstrated through the initial choice of IPA, due to its ‘close engagement with the idiographic and the particular’ (p 180). The authors also contend that IPAs appreciation of the interactional nature of data collection lends itself to a researcher who can be highly sensitive to context. I would further maintain that the interview process itself, and the current approach to analysis (described in chapter 3b), whereby the experiences of the individual participant and the relationship between them and the researcher are explored, demonstrates sensitivity to the context of the research. |
| *Reliability Criteria.* | * Commitment and rigour.   Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009) argue that these broad criteria can be demonstrated indirectly through the researcher’s actions, and directly through the presentation of the final piece of research. Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009) would posit that commitment as a researcher has already been demonstrated through the process of organising, conducting and analysing a number of interviews following an IPA methodology. Commitment has been further demonstrated through the continuous use of supervision to learn about and reflect upon the research process.  Rigour can be demonstrated more directly through the thoroughness of the study from start to finish (Smith, Flowers and Larkin; 2009). For example, Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009) maintain that the appropriateness of the sample for the research question, the quality of the interview and the completeness of the analysis and concurrent write-up are all indicators of the level of rigour within a study. I feel confident in the rationale behind the choices of participants and research questions, and would refer the reader to Chapter 3b for more detail on these elements of the research. |
| *Reliability Criteria.* | * Transparency and coherence.   Yardley (2000) refers to transparency as the degree to which stages of the research process are accessible to a reader, largely through the write-up stage of the research. Through following steps discussed in the comprehensive text by Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009), the research is presented in a way that is accessible and replicable for readers. Wherever possible and appropriate, the rationale behind decisions made is discussed in order to add to the transparency of the research. Further to this, ‘reflective boxes’ are provided for readers, in the hope that reflective and reflexive aspects of the research will help the reader to make sense of the decisions and conclusions made throughout the research.  Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009) also suggest that the coherence of a piece of research relies upon the coherence of the argument and the methodological approach used. For example, ensuring that arguments fit and do not contradict each other is important. By grounding arguments in the text of participants and theoretical perspectives, coherence is aimed to be maintained throughout. The use of ‘reflexive boxes’ also aims to maintain coherence, in order to link the arguments presented with the double hermeneutic cycle of IPA methodologies. |
| *Reflexivity.* | Reflexivity is an important topic of discussion in qualitative research. Tracy (2010 pp. 57) describes reflexivity as honesty and transparency ‘with one’s self, one’s research and one’s audience’. Aspects of the discussion above already highlight a continued commitment to reflexivity throughout the research.  Through use of supervision and a research diary, the motivations for embarking on this research have been actively explored. My position within the research at all stages, particularly interview and analysis phases, has also had the opportunity to be reflexively considered. Personal reflexive positions as a researcher have been utilised to aid the reader’s understanding of the research in context, and to ground the research within its own context.  Personal positionality is also important to in the reflexivity of the current research. Authors who utilise the theoretical perspectives of social constructionism, CRT, FT and intersectionality (for example, Delgado and Stefanic, 2012; Mirza, 1992; Burr, 2003; Collins, 2000) argue that critical reflection on one’s own values, experiences and social positions is imperative in creating a piece of research which moves beyond racial and gender stereotypes, and towards an understanding of individual experiences.  With this in mind, my position as a mixed individual is pertinent not just on a personal level, but on an interactional level. I recognise my self-identity as a mixed person, a position which has strongly influenced my choice of research topic. It will be important to continually assess how self-identity and experiences as a mixed person influence engagement with the research topic at theoretical, practical and interactional levels.  It must also be kept in mind that mixedness is unlikely to be only a self-identity. My physical appearance denotes what would be classed as a mixed Black-White individual, and it is likely that participants view me in this way. An awareness of how my position, and appearance, may be influencing participants’ interpretations and understandings of their experiences is important to reflect on.  Considering other personal aspects which are likely to impact on the research is also important. Personal gender may impact on interactions, and has influenced personal experiences, and interpretations of experiences, to date. The intersectionality between personal gender and ethnicity is an important consideration.  It is also important to consider myself as a researcher. An awareness of potential power dynamics, and how this may be altered by my position as a researcher amongst a similar age group will be important to keep in mind. I reflect aspects of homogeneity within the participant group, but am also outside of it because of my position as researcher. The possible impact that this may have on the research will be important to consider reflexively throughout the research journey.  Key sources for reflective and reflexive practice come in the form of my research diary and regular supervision. On a more informal level, discussions amongst friends and family have also helped develop my reflexive practice. All of these outlets have been important in engaging in the reflexive elements of the research. |

# Chapter 3B: Procedure.

## Introduction.

Chapter 3b is designed to allow the reader to clearly follow the construction and execution of the ‘procedural methodology’. To allow for this, the procedures and processes involved in all phases of the research will be outlined. Where appropriate, a rationale is offered to explain the choices made.

Stages of research are presented sequentially, so that the reader is able to follow the research process. However, it is important to note that the nature of IPA is often more cyclical than a write-up can convey. Aspects of the procedure were revisited and elaborated upon as I became more deeply immersed in the research process.

The chapter focuses on these key areas:

* *Participants:* why they were chosen, how they were selected and who they are.
* *Pilot study:* rationale for the pilot, an overview of the procedure and the implications of the pilot.
* *Procedure:* ethical considerations, equipment, research diary, data collection, and phases of analysis.
* *Quality in research:* reliability, validity and transferability.

## Participants.

### Why they were chosen.

The aim of the research was to explore the childhood and educational experiences of young people with mixed Black and White parentage. Initially, CYP under the age of eighteen served as a target participant audience, in order to obtain an interpretation of their current situation.

However, supervision highlighted some of the difficulties that could have occurred associated with a younger sample. For example, the accessibility of the research questions for this age group presented a concern, particularly the amount of time this age group would have had to reflect on the influence of heritage on current childhood and educational experiences. From an ethical position, protecting this age group was a concern, should the research questions lead to a level of self-exploration that participants had not yet engaged in.

Through accessing a slightly older, and possibly more mature, age range, who had moved beyond school experiences, it was hoped that they would be more able to reflect upon their experiences. The age of this group may have allowed them more time to explore their own heritage and identity, in a way that may make the research questions more accessible and meaningful to them, and protect their emotional wellbeing. Additionally, on a purely pragmatic level, working with over eighteens enables informed consent to be gained from the participants alone, rather than also needing to seek the informed consent of their parents or guardians.

**Reflective Box:**

I questioned whether the older age of the participants would still be relevant for CYP in school today, given the fairly significant amount of time that had passed in the current participants’ leaving of school and childhood more generally.

I worried that the participants’ experiences would not reflect the experiences of CYP today, and thus be void of meaning.

On reflection, the nature of qualitative research means that ‘findings’ cannot be generalised further afield. With this in mind, the current participants’ findings are no less ‘meaningless’ than any other individual participants, regardless of age. The meaning comes from listening to their experiences, interpreting them in relation to the chosen topic area, and hopefully (and possibly most importantly) reflecting on what these experiences and interpretations mean for my own practice, and the practice of Educational Psychology as a whole.

### How they were selected.

A purposive sample was used to recruit four young people aged eighteen and over. More information on the recruitment of participants can be found in the ethics application for the research (Appendix E)

I wanted to ensure that my research focused on a Black-White (as opposed to for example, south or east Asian-White) mixture without creating narrow categories of ‘Blackness’, ‘Whiteness’ and mixedness, which personal perceptions could potentially create. The rationale for focusing on Black-White mixes has been discussed in more detail elsewhere (see literature review and Appendix B).

Actively allowing or disallowing individual participants into my mixed Black and White categories went against personal epistemological and ontological perspectives, and personal experiences as an individual who identifies as mixed. It was important to ensure that the selection process allowed for participants to decide whether they fitted into my category of ‘mixed Black and White’. Calling for individuals who identified as having ‘one Black and one White parent’ as opposed to using language such as ‘mixed race’ or ‘dual heritage’ aimed to overcome this problem. Whilst this approach is not without its drawbacks, it allowed for individual interpretation by potential participants. Please see Participant Information Sheets in Appendix F for examples.

Because of the older age range of prospective participants, university groups and opportunity samples from within my communities were used to share information on the research. Thus, participants came from varied locations and experiences, the unifying factor between them all being their self-identification as mixed Black-White parentage.

A potential issue with the sampling approach was that many individuals were gained through ‘word of mouth’ rather than through particular organisations or social groups. To maintain boundaries and reduce social influence, participants used in the main study were not personal acquaintances or family members. However, the potential social link between myself and the participants may have impacted on their ability to engage in the interview process in an honest way. Concentrating on providing a detailed and transparent information sharing process, with a strong emphasis on the approach to confidentiality, presented one way to overcome these potential difficulties.

**Reflective Box:**

On reflection, the participants who came forward self-selected because of the level of meaning that the research questions had to them. The interview and analysis process demonstrated the level of significance that heritage had on the participants’ childhood and educational experiences.

Participants were chosen on a first-come, first served basis. Three female and two male participants came forward. Through conversation with the first female participant, it was agreed that her interview would be used for the pilot study (see table 3.2 below for details). This left two females and two males to participate in the final research. The balance between male and female was seen as useful for providing alternative perspectives and potentially allowing for an exploration of the intersectionality of the research question.

### 

### Who they are.

The age of the participants ranged from twenty to twenty seven years old. Whilst IPA requires a level of homogeneity in its sample, Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009) suggest that this homogeneity should be used as a tool to explore the ‘convergence and divergence’ (p 50) from a certain homogenous perspective. Within the current research, the participants’ self-identification as mixed served as the homogeneity of the sample.

Table 3.2 below gives a short explanation of each participant in the research. Each participant chose their own pseudonym, which they are referred to throughout this text.

##### Table 3.2 Participant Information.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Participant Pseudonym | Description |
| *Sasha-Bey.* | Sasha- Bey was born, brought up and currently lives in South West London. Sasha-Bey was the oldest participant in the research at twenty seven years old. She was in the process of completing a BSc, having engaged in a number of different vocations before deciding to study at university level. I knew Sasha-Bey through a previous work contact. Based on the greater level of social acquaintance that Sasha-Bey and I had with each other, it was agreed together that it would be most appropriate to use her interview as part of the research pilot. On reflection, this was an appropriate choice. I found interviewing Sasha-Bey difficult. I felt my questioning came across as intrusive, based on our previously established relationship, and felt that Sasha-Bey struggled to answer questions and ‘open up’ in a more natural way because of our relationship. See Appendices I and L for examples of the interviews. |
| *Sativa.* | The youngest of my participants, Sativa was twenty years old at the time of interview. Sativa was from, and living in, North West London. Sativa worked full time at the time of interview. |
| *Henry.* | Henry was twenty two years old at the time of interview and living in his family home in Nottingham. He had recently graduated from university. |
| *Emmy.* | Emmy was twenty three at the time of interview, and lived in her family home in Derbyshire. Emmy had returned home after not completing her final year at university. |
| *Tunde.* | Tunde was twenty two at the time of interview and living in a house share in Manchester. Tunde had graduated the previous year and was working in a bar. |

## Pilot Study.

For information on the pilot study, please see Appendices G, H, and I.

## Procedure.

### Ethical Considerations.

Prior to the collection of any data, an ethics application was submitted. Please refer to Appendix E for further information.

British Psychological Society (BPS) ethical procedures were followed at all times throughout the research process. Participants were required to read and sign information and consent forms before participation, and were offered the opportunity to withdraw from the interview and the research as a whole at any time. A full debriefing process and further information and support was offered to participants upon completion of the interview, giving individuals the opportunity to address any particular concerns they had with the interview process and the topics for discussion.

### Equipment.

Interviews were conducted using an electronic recording device. Interview recordings were password protected. Interviews were then transferred onto a password protected computer, where they will remain until confirmation of successful completion of the research is received.

Paper copies of information and consent forms were completed and signed by myself as the researcher and individual participants. Both parties kept a copy of these for their records.

### Research Diary.

Throughout the duration of the research, from its earliest conception through all the active stages of data collection, analysis and writing, a research diary has been kept. This consists of an informal document including reflections on elements of the research which have gone on to inform the reflective boxes spaced throughout this text, practical questions relating to the research, and planned aspects of the research.

### Data Collection.

Interviews were conducted between May and July 2015. Each interview lasted approximately 75 minutes. Please see Appendices E, F and G for more details.

### Phases of Analysis.

#### Research Questions.

Research questions were initially formulated through supervision, and changes and alterations to them led through experiences of the pilot study. See Appendices G, H, and K for further details.

#### Basic Framework.

As a basis for analysis, the guidelines presented in Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009) were used. This approach was chosen due to the authors’ recognition of IPA as a developing, emerging and flexible analytic approach, which highlighted the researcher’s role in creating an analytic approach which suited them as a researcher, the research topic, and participants. This reflected a personal standpoint on data analytic procedures. Table 3.3 below summarises the approach presented in Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009). This table was used as a guideline for shaping the current procedural approach to data analysis, which is described in diagram 3.1.

##### Table 3.3 Table of the Stages of Analysis (Source: Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009, p79)

|  |
| --- |
| * Transcription of taped interviews. * Line by line analysis of concerns and understandings of each participant. * Identifying emerging themes within these data highlighting commonality and difference for each case and then across multiple cases. * The researcher develops a ‘dialogue’ between themselves, their themed data and psychological knowledge to ascertain the meaning behind these concerns within this particular context (Smith, 2004). * A structure is developed which brings the relationships between these themes together, or ‘gestalt’. * The organisation of this material is transparent because the analysed data can be traced back through the process of transcription and emerging themes. * The interpretation is supported through supervision or collaboration so that it is coherent and valid. * A visual guide such as a table or diagram to supplement the narrative of analyses theme by theme. * Reflection of the researcher of their own perceptions throughout this process (Smith, 2007). |

#### Transcribing and analysing the data.

Diagram 3.1 (page 70) demonstrates the phases of my analysis. Phases of analysis have been mapped on to examples of the analysis process in practice through Appendices K, L, M, and N. For a detailed explanation of my transcription technique, please see Appendix K, L, M, and N.

**Reflective Box:**

At times throughout the research process, I felt that my procedure stepped away from the procedure outlined in Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009) too much. I worried that my procedure was ‘wrong’, and that I had missed out key points to the detriment of my research.

However, as I continued to work through the data I obtained, I realised how closely I was being led by the participants, and how immersed I had become in the process. It struck me that this was the most important part of Smith, Flowers, and Larkin’s (2009) procedural instructions, and reflective of the very basis of phenomenology itself.

## Conclusion.

This chapter has focused on design and procedural aspects of the methodological aspects of the current study. The first part of the chapter has aimed to outline the epistemological and ontological positionality of the research design, further referencing key theoretical procedures which impact on the methodology. The second part of the chapter outlines aspects of procedure in order to provide a transparent account of the method in which the research has been undertaken.

Diagram 3.1 Phases of Analysis*.* *Independently developed with reference to methodological guidelines from Smith, Flowers and Larklin (2009).*

Transcribing interviews (line by line)

Transcription Phase (see Appendix K)

Listening to interviews

Transcribing interviews (whole text)

Exploratory Analysis Phase (see Appendix L)

3rd analysis for exploration/questions

1st analysis for description

2nd analysis for language

‘Thematic’ Analysis Phase (see Appendices M and N)

Emergent themes to ‘sum up’ exploratory themes

Sub-ordinate themes based on grouped emergent themes

Super-ordinate themes based on shared concepts in sub-ordinate themes

Creating ‘’umbrella’ higher-order themes to group across participants

# Chapter Four: Analysis.

## Introduction.

This section provides an interpretative analysis of the transcript data in relation to the research questions a) ‘What are mixed young people’s experiences of race and culture?’, and b) ‘How do mixed young people interpret their experiences of childhood and education?’

As a methodology, IPA aims to present the voices of individual participants, whilst providing an interpretative account of the potential meaning of their experiences. This section presents a set of ‘higher order’ superordinate themes, which are proposed to reflect aspects of individual participants’ experiences. Individual participant superordinate themes will be discussed under the heading of higher order themes. Participants’ experiences may converge or diverge within the superordinate theme, however there is always an ‘essence’, which through analysis, has brought each individual’s experience together under the higher order theme.

## Research Question A) What are mixed young people’s experiences of race and culture?’

This section of analysis focuses on participants’ experiences of race and culture. The analysis focuses on participants’ interpretations of racial and racialised experiences, and cultural experiences and constructs through the course of their development. Analysis attempts to make sense of their interpretations in order to explore the relationship between experiences of race and racialisation, culture, and participants’ mixedness. Table 4.1 below demonstrates the higher order themes and corresponding participant superordinate themes.

##### Table 4.1 RQ-A higher order themes and corresponding participant superordinate themes.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Research Question A: What are mixed young people’s experiences of race and culture?** | |
| **Higher order superordinate theme** | **Participant superordinate theme** |
| *The Significance of Culture/heritage* | Sativa: Cultural Significance |
| Tunde: Impact of Context on Self/ World Understanding |
| Emmy: The Value of Diversity |
| Henry: The Relationship between Self and Context |
| *Mixedness as Challenging Constructions* | Sativa: Mixedness as a Challenge  Expectations and Understandings of Mixed Families |
| Tunde: Mixedness as Challenge for Others |
| Emmy: Identity as Dictated through Society |
| Henry: Mixedness as a Problem |
| *The Significance of Intersectionality* | Sativa: Intersectionality of Race and Gender |
| Tunde: The Inter-relationship between Blackness and Gender |
| Emmy: Gender and Race as Problematic for Others |
| *Blackness as Problematic* | Sativa: race as a Difficult Subject |
| Henry: Blackness as a Problem |
| *Mixedness as an Identity* | Emmy: Mixedness as a Stand-alone Identity |
| Henry: Non-Whiteness as Unifying |
| Henry: Mixedness as Tangible |

### Higher Order Theme 1A: The Significance of Culture/ Heritage.

Analysis of transcripts has led to the proposal that culture and/or heritage form an important part of participants’ experiences of race and culture. Culture appears to feature as an object that participants use to define themselves against, whether this be to strongly identify with and ‘be’ ones culture, or to move away from as a means of defining oneself as an individual. It was interesting that every participant discussed culture with a strong reference to Blackness, or more generally, non-Whiteness.

#### Sativa: Cultural Significance.

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| --- |
| *‘I don’t know if, there’s a fundamental kind of, attributes of the person which is being outspoken and on top of that there’s the cultural layers’ (566-568)* |

The quotes above capture some of the ambivalence than Sativa demonstrated towards culture. Sativa found the idea of ‘culture’, and possibly ‘Black culture’, constraining to her, and was seeking to find a way of distancing herself from being defined by a particular culture. This appeared as an act of self-definition, potentially at a time in Sativa’s development where she is able to become more autonomous in relation to her parents and childhood experiences. Sativa firstly discusses her Aunty, a family member with whom she has a particularly close relationship with, in relation to her behaviour as an individual, then as a Black woman. Sativa appears to be trying to separate these elements, and find causative relationships which link her auntie’s individuality, culture, and her behaviour. This suggests a view of individuality and culture as a form of racialisation as impacting on individual personality in different ways, each layer building on the other to create a whole self.

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| --- |
| *‘I went to school I was building up an idea of myself as a person, not as a, not as a culture.’ (804-805)* |

Sativa explores culture and heritage as a part of herself. The theme seems particularly important for Sativa as a means of finding herself within ideas or performances of herself as a cultural stereotype. She seems to be expounding the racialised version of herself in order to find her true self.

|  |
| --- |
| *‘Because you know, you do get to choose your own culture in London. Like it’s more about the people you hang out with, and [pause] the scenes you’re in’ (873-875)*  *‘well like Caribbean music and stuff before I went to secondary school. When I, I found [pause] those kind of things later and not in [pause] and it wasn’t in a, like a Black context either it was in like a mixed context so that’s always good.’ (821-824)* |

This is taken further as Sativa discusses her experiences with reference to culture as a choice; as opposed to something that an individual is born into. Sativa describes a sense of her own culture as something that has been moulded by herself and those around her. She has control over it, and defines what it means to her, rather than culture defining any element of her personality or state of being.

#### Tunde: Impact of Context on Self/ World Understanding.

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| --- |
| *‘peoples’ parents would come in or brothers and sisters, and show us like, I remember like a guy showing us how to put on his turban’ (116-118)*  *‘whatever race you are, I feel like, understanding where you come from, is a big thing. In order to like, understand yourself and like, progress in life.’ (471-473)* |

Tunde appeared to show a much stronger affiliation with what he saw as the culture he was born into. He placed particular emphasis on cultural experience, as opposed to learning, as a means of connecting with the world, and providing a greater understanding of the self. For Tunde, culture and heritage appeared as formative in his developing understanding of self whilst growing up.

Tunde’s culture and heritage provide a backdrop to his developmental journey thus far. Through this, he has been able to reference and catalogue his experiences in order to make sense of them; defining himself and others in relation to them.

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| *‘It’s more to do with like, identifying like, a lifestyle or way that you like, view the world’ (182-183)*  *[White peers at school] ‘no, like, cultural connection with. Erm on the basis of their backgrounds have been so different to mine’ (215-216)*  *‘because of being mixed race I’d be like ah I need to think about race, whereas like as I get older I start to think more with to do with me being like, like wanting to find out about the world.’ (400-402)* |

Tunde’s cultural identity appears to encompass class as well as race, colour, ethnicity and religion, and reflect the locality of his place of birth and childhood. Tunde places his culture, and thus his identity, firmly outside of the White ‘norm’ through his choices of topic and the language he uses.

#### Emmy: The Value of Diversity.

|  |
| --- |
| *‘because, all of, erm [pause] the whole, they all looked exactly the same, all of the, popular girls looked exactly the same. And I guess I just didn’t, fit in, that mould, and [pause] so yeah they were, they were nasty’ (200-203)* |

Culture appeared significant to Emmy in the form of diversity, or at times, a lack of it. Emmy’s experiences highlight a view of cultural diversity as an important part of supporting the positive development of her identity. We see the effects of a lack of diversity on Emmy’s perceived ability to form relationships and feel a part of her childhood community, as she discusses her diversity in relation to her peer’s racial and cultural homogeneity.

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| *[being mixed] ‘it would have been easier to go, to a school with, more, mixed or Black children’ (289-290)*  *‘I think, because there were quite a few, Black people, and mixed people on my course, erm, it wasn’t even an issue’ (570-571)* |

A lack of diversity also appears to have impacted on Emmy’s ability to develop confidence in herself as a mixed individual. She explores the difficulty she had in being mixed as a child in her school experiences, and her direct comparison of this on her experiences of a diverse college experience. I felt that cultural diversity served as a vehicle to either reinforce or diminish Emmy’s ability to exist as a representation of non-Whiteness in her environment. With other models of cultural diversity available to her, Emmy seems more able to establish a positive sense of herself as a mixed person.

#### Henry: The Relationship between Self and Context.

|  |
| --- |
| *‘we know about cultures and we know who we are.’ (121-122)* |

Henry appeared to have a strong connection to culture, and clearly linked the cultural heritage of himself and others with the idea of knowing oneself. In contrast to Sativa, Henry appeared to see culture as a fixed part of an individual. Henry identifies his sense of self as embedded within his understanding of his cultural heritage. The relationship between Henry’s cultural heritage and his understanding of himself as an individual seem interchangeable.

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| --- |
| *‘I was moved back towards, er like multiculturalism again it was like yes we’ve got like, loads if different people here. Erm, this feels more like me’ (170-172)*  *‘this is where you come from this is your roots, this is where you come from and I think it really does benefit your whole sort of, view on life’ (480-482)* |

Henry’s cultural identification appears to move beyond ‘Black’ or mixed culture. Whilst he identifies himself as ‘being mixed race’ (382), the significance of culture to Henry appeared to be an affinity with ‘multiculturalism’, in the form of varying alternatives to Whiteness as a cultural-political group.

**Reflective Box:**

I noticed how ‘positioned’ I felt, in terms of my own mixedness, when talking about culture with each participant. I felt as if I was continually trying to find where my own understanding of culture fitted in comparison to their own, but also which one felt more the ‘right’ way. For instance, when talking with Sativa, I felt somehow that the importance of my culture to me was being positioned as a negative thing by her own positionality. In contrast, when talking to Tunde, I really began to reflect on culture as a means to creating identity, and think about ways in which connecting to my culture on more levels and from more perspectives (e.g. my White British culture and my extended Indian culture, which I feel I have spent less time exploring and getting to know).

### Higher Order Theme 2A: Mixedness as Challenging Constructions.

Mixedness was covered in depth by all participants. Analysis demonstrated mixedness as a construct as something that could be challenging, confusing and uncomfortable to try and make sense of, by participants, and those around them. Participants were often trying to navigate their way through understanding themselves as mixed individuals in a context where race and culture are constructed on the basis of Blackness and Whiteness.

Mixedness appeared as a challenge to the dominant constructs of race and culture which participants were exposed to and a part of. At times, participants appeared to be struggling with managing others’ constructions of them in this Black-White way. At others, participants themselves appeared to be placing themselves within these categories, perhaps as the only vehicle they knew when attempting to categorise themselves.

Analysis also brought to the fore the commonality of particular dialogues and constructions around mixedness across participants, denoting mixedness as inherently problematic or difficult. Participants seemed to be placed in a juxtaposition of understanding and celebrating themselves as mixed individuals, whilst navigating common and powerful racialisations of mixedness.

#### Sativa: Mixedness as a Challenge.

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| --- |
| *‘then you start to question, well why do I feel like I should act this way, in front of my White family and act this way in front of my Black family’ (552-554)* |

Sativa appeared to be attempting to make sense of her mixedness in direct comparison to ideas of Blackness and Whiteness. She explored issues of what constitutes being Black or White, and where mixedness and individuality fit in with this. There is a stark example of this as she discusses her childhood experiences of behaving in different ways with her Black and White family. Here, Sativa suggests that ways of ‘being’ Black or White are an ingrained part of her understanding of race and culture, and that even with an individuality beyond these categories, she still feels the power of them to define who she is.

|  |
| --- |
| *‘it annoys me that I wouldn’t call myself White, but I would call myself Black [pause] because [pause] that means I’m defining Black more than I’m defining White (627-629)* |

Sativa also explores her self-labelling in relation to Blackness and Whiteness, suggesting that calling herself Black is acceptable, whereas calling herself White is not. She talks about defining Blackness more than Whiteness, suggesting that constructions around Blackness are more tangible than those around

Whiteness.

**Reflective Box:**

Sativa’s point about self-identifying as White (or not, as the case stands) resonated with me. I strongly identified with her feelings, and I feel her point is something which has been difficult to grasp throughout this research- the role and position of Whiteness for these mixed participants.

|  |
| --- |
| *‘That’s another reason I cut it again because I was, it was just like, everyone was liking it too much [laughter] it was just too much’ (418-420)* |

Sativa also talks about her mixedness in relation to her hair (extract above), describing other’s positive reaction to it as ‘too much’. Here, aspects of Sativa’s mixedness are celebrated in a way that is experienced as negative. Through her hair, Sativa’s mixedness becomes a spectacle of her mixedness, as opposed to a part of who she is. Sativa’s statement of this being ‘too much’ could be seen as a way of trying to break free from the constructions of her and her mixedness, or alternatively, a reflection of others being unsettled by her ‘otherness’.

#### Sativa: Expectations and Understandings of Mixed Families.

|  |
| --- |
| *‘also as well because you know as a mixed race kid you always think like, my parents are the only ones that are still together’ (235-236)*  *‘I don’t know like that many mixed race kids tha- like [pause] mixed race kids whose parents are together. Like I think- are your parents still together?’ (253-255)* |

Sativa explores the idea of mixed relationships as challenging. Sativa’s journey into mixed relationships is particularly pertinent and personal to her, which is reflected in her dialogue. Her exploration demonstrates confusion in moving from a seemingly widely held view or construction of mixed relationships as challenging, to the personal reality of being part of a two-parent, mixed family as a child, whilst being set against the backdrop of her parents’ divorce during Sativa’s adolescence. I felt as though Sativa wanted to in some way uphold the ideology of ‘mixed families as challenging’, whilst also proving that she and her family somehow exist outside of this. Her dialogue moves between acceptance of the dominant construction, until she considers it on a more personal level. Such dialogue demonstrates potential difficulties in navigating a world filled with core constructions and lived realities, and relationships with these on a personal level.

**Reflective Box:**

I found it particularly interesting that Sativa chose to ask about my own parents’ relationship. At the time, it felt as if she was attempting to position me as part of the common ‘mixed race families’ dialogue, in order to validate her own experiences, and perhaps ‘prove’ her thinking on mixed families.

#### Tunde: Mixedness as Challenge for Others.

|  |
| --- |
| *‘a lot of people have just, they don’t really understand about what mixed race is.’ (52-53)* |

Tunde explores mixedness from the perspective of his self-identity, and the challenges his self-identity presents to the world around him. Tunde focuses on others ‘not understanding’ mixedness, as if ‘mixed race’ is something clearly definable.

|  |
| --- |
| *‘Sometimes, like the, people, people do look at me and like, they don’t understand me’ (86-87)* |

Tunde presents his mixedness as the barrier to people understanding him, as if the very act of being mixed presents as a challenge to others. His experiences also suggest a view of understanding others as based on how they are defined; rather than who they are. Thus; Tunde’s mixedness is a challenge due to an interest in ‘what’ he is as opposed to ‘who’ he is.

#### Emmy: Identity as Dictated through Society.

|  |
| --- |
| *‘but I don’t like it, when you’re, on the tick forms, and it asks you to put your ethnicity, and you have to put, White and Black British.’ (404-406)* |

Emmy also explores mixedness in relation to her identity. She highlights mixedness as something owned by dominant society, rather than those personally identifying with it. She highlights society’s control over mixedness through bureaucracy and use of language, and appears powerless to determining others’, and society’s’, understanding of her personal identity as mixed.

|  |
| --- |
| *‘I used to call myself quarter caste as well, but then [pause] now, people don’t like that word so [sigh] (406-408)* |

Her dialogue presents a gulf between lived experiences of mixedness and official representations of it. For instance, she discusses the language she would personally use to define herself, and the constraints she sees placed on this by others. Through this, it seems as though an aspect of Emmy’s mixedness is controlled by society.

|  |
| --- |
| *‘every, Black person that I know [pause] uses that word, so I think, people getting upset o- the only people I know that get upset about that word, is, White people.’ (430-432)* |

Emmy also relates this relationship to White people, suggesting that she sees her mixed identity as controlled through a White society, not just a society. Thus, Emmy’s mixedness becomes the property of the Whiteness that she is a part of, and her non-Whiteness becomes owned by White people, presenting Emmy as powerless.

**Reflective Box:**

I felt quite uncomfortable with the term ‘quarter caste’ as used by Emmy when she said it.

When I reflected on her comment about how other people feel about it rather than how it feels for herself, I was struck by how this is currently happening with the term ‘mixed race’. I was brought up using the term ‘mixed race’, and have always felt comfortable with saying it and identifying others in this way. However, I have also become aware that there is now some resistance to this term, with people often stating that the correct term is now ‘dual heritage’ or ‘mixed heritage’.

I noted that the feelings and interpretations that Emmy describe reflect on the way I feel about the term ‘mixed race’ and its current usage, highlighting the personal meaning that terms can have for those who identify with them as opposed to those who may be using them ‘from a distance’ so to speak.

#### Henry: Mixedness as a Problem.

|  |
| --- |
| *‘erm there’s that element of like, fear like maybe they don’t know who I am like, maybe this guy might scare me’ (699-701)*  *‘Like they don’t quite get why I’m not with them all the time’ (833-834)* |

Henry talks about his mixedness throughout the interview. Of particular interest was his exploration of mixedness in the eyes of others. Henry explored mixedness as something ‘other’, and perhaps more flexible and changeable, in comparison to the experiences of those around him. This created the sense that Henry’s mixedness encapsulated a unique lived experience. His exploration of mixedness suggests its construction moves into unknown conceptual territories beyond current racialisations.

### Higher Order Theme 3A: The Significance of Intersectionality.

The intersection between race and gender played a role in a majority of participants’ explorations. Of particular interest was the potential wide-reaching nature of the subject; suggesting that navigating the intersections between race and gender presents an ongoing issue to contend with, both through individual experiences, and the narratives of others.

#### Sativa: Intersectionality of Race and Gender.

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| --- |
| *‘Mixed race things as well, these two Black girls, three Black girls, but it was like they, they would say things like about my hair and they would just kind of leave me out and stuff.’ (383-385)*  *‘I think it was like that mixed race hair thing, like I had like long hair’ (389-390)*  *‘I don’t want to say it was jealousy either because I think I remember one of them being quite light skinned as well’ (845-846)* |

Sativa introduces the topic of intersectionality through a discussion of her hair and skin colour. This in itself is of interest, as these features have arguably the most obvious correspondence to race as a tangible object. She describes the length of her hair and her skin tone as relating to others’ perceptions of her, in particular Black girls’ perceptions of her as a child. In her discussion, Sativa becomes an object of femininity through her longer hair and lighter skin colour, in direct opposition to her Black female peers.

Interestingly, Sativa notes that one of the girls also had light skin. Her comment suggests that an element of her was being questioned because of her mixedness, rather than the product of her mixedness (her lighter skin). This presents interesting questions related to the relationships between Black and mixed peers, presenting them as at odds with each other within this gendered relationship, suggestive of a hierarchical relationship between the girls, based on notions of Whiteness.

Sativa also describes ‘that mixed race hair thing’, which positioned me as a knowing participant within ‘that mixed race hair thing’. Such use of language suggests that Sativa sees the relationships between race and femininity as established and well known aspect of non-White femininity.

**Reflective Box:**

I found it disconcerting to be placed within Sativa’s dialogue on ‘that mixed race hair thing’. I found it difficult to feign a lack of knowledge of the phenomena which she was describing, but also wanted to be able to explore the issue without drawing on my own understandings of it.

The situation highlighted the power of the discourse. I also found that Sativa’s inclusion of me within her experience of the phenomena made me feel ‘mixed race’, and belonging to part of a homogenous ‘mixed race’ group and experience. Interestingly, this feeling also made me feel at odds with being Black as a ‘Black person’ or part of ‘Black’ culture. It felt as though the differences of being mixed which had been highlighted through hair had led to a separation between myself and a sense of being Black.

On reflection, this positioning as at odds with ‘Black’ has connections with notions of Whiteness. In some ways, being explicitly placed as ‘not Black’ leads to a positioning of closer to Whiteness. However, this only feels correct when the measure is ‘Black’. Thus, being placed as mixed gave me a sense of ‘special’ non-Blackness, without actually feeling White; being non-Black did not automatically make me White. It is as if there is a boundary on Whiteness that cannot be crossed. This could link to the idea of the sanctified ‘purity’ of Whiteness, which non-White people cannot gain access to. This non-Whiteness does not only encompass ‘Black’, but all facets of ‘Blackness’ from a purely political positionality.

#### Tunde: The Inter-relationship between Blackness and Gender.

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| *‘Like I, like, the disrespect that I’ve seen* my *friends have towards girls, and I just like, knowing it’s wrong, but and like [pause] I guess like, different cultures treat women in different ways’ (784-786)*  *‘the way that the Black and mixed race guys are with women there [pause] erm, like, I don’t necessarily see it like ah like, they, they’re doing it right’ (791-793)* |

Tunde focuses on intersectionality through his experiences of gender relationships and interactions. He highlights experiences of non-White male interactions with females, through a largely negative portrayal. He is also clearly positioning himself as outside of this interactional style; as an onlooker looking in. This is one of the few times when Tunde appears outside of the non-White narrative. This in itself denotes the complexity of his relationship with Whiteness and non-Whiteness; as both a part of it, and at times, a spectator to it.

**Reflective Box:**

Supervision has highlighted that some of the experiences and interpretations that I have had of Tunde’s discussion at this point may also reflect on the relationship between myself as a female researcher, and Tunde as a male participant.

Perhaps some of Tunde’s positioning as outside of the interactional style he discusses reflects his wish to portray himself in this light to me as a female. It is interesting to consider this position, and reflect on the role that the intersection of gender and mixedness may have had on our own interactions.

Thinking about it in this way makes me question whether Tunde may have taken a different stance should I have been a male researcher, and what differences this may have led to should I have been a White, Black, mixed, or other male researcher. Similarly, how could our interaction on this subject have differed should I have been a White, Black, or other female researcher?

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| *‘certain groups of girls where [pause] they would, purposefully just go for like Black and mixed race...my Black friends laugh about it and they take advantage’ (810-814)*  *’it’s so bad but like it’s true it’s, it’s all over, it’s like a fetish.’ (815-816)*  *‘I remember them saying like, ah yeah but like, like talking about a guy when he was like, he was proper like not a nice guy but they was like ah yeah yeah but he’s a Black guy he’s real’ (820-823)*  *‘it was like a cool, thing, to be with like, someone Black, or mixed race’ (824-825)*  *‘I almost felt like with some of the girls once they knew I was mixed race they were like, kind of like, trying it a bit more [laughter] it’s weird (829-831)*  *‘they purposefully were going for like, like Black guys, and it was almost like a taboo in their life (850-851)* |

Tunde’s comments further highlight the complexity between race and gender as he discusses female choices in Black relationships. Black maleness is presented as something desirable and negative in tandem; it appears as though the very negativity associated with Black maleness is what makes it so desirable. Tunde also highlights his own and his peers’ awareness of this as teenagers, and at times their desire to use it to their advantage. Some of Tunde’s choice of language (for example ‘fetish’ and ‘taboo’) suggest an attraction to non-White maleness as sexual deviance. Thus, Tunde and his peers are at the same time subjected to a highly negative construction of their own gender and sexuality, whilst being celebrated because of it, and using this for their own gain.

#### Emmy: Gender and Race as Problematic for Others.

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| *‘like, when kids make jokes about Black men and stuff I just don’t like it because, that’s my dad…just joking around, to the girls and stuff like, ooh, you’ll get fucked by a big Black cock and stuff and it’s like…I don’t understand why, a Black willy is any funnier than a White one.’ (240-252)* |

Emmy highlights the juxtaposition between Black maleness as a normality, and Black maleness as a stereotype. She discusses how jokes about male sexuality relate directly to her experiences of being raised by a Black man, as part of a mixed family. The impact of jokes and stereotype on Emmy as a person within the lived experience are clear through her discussion. Emmy’s normality becomes a target of abuse and ridicule, calling into question her experiences as normal, creating them as somehow deviant or comedic.

Like Tunde’s experiences, Emmy demonstrates the clear objectification of Black maleness, this time through her father rather than through personal experience. However, whilst the stereotype is not directed at Emmy *per se*, the impact of it on her understanding of Blackness appears to be significant.

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| *‘You can’t do make up with your White friends and they don’t, erm, understand about, curly hair but, yeah.’ (156-157)*  *‘the boys that I went to school with they just didn’t find me, pretty, and I don’t know whether that’s because, whether race does play a part in that, because, I was one of the only, Black girls in school [pause] or I, I don’t know. Because, I guess, every teenage girl just wants a boyfriend, but, no, I didn’t have one’ (267-272)* |

Emmy also discusses intersectionality through seemingly mundane and ordinary ‘girl’ experiences. Emmy creates an image of herself as outside of the White ‘normality’ in which she exists. Her femininity is called into question by virtue of her mixedness, and the apparent effect this has on her ability to be a part of and experience ‘girl’ experiences. Thus, Emmy’s non-Whiteness acts as a barrier to her ability to become and ‘be’ the female ideal that she aspires to.

### Higher Order Theme 4A: Blackness as Problematic.

Analysis proposed that two participants explored the subject of Blackness as problematic in relation to experiences of race and culture, either for themselves, or for those around them. Of interest was the different ways in which participants appeared to have internalised or rejected Blackness as problematic. This could perhaps relate to the experiences of mixedness as within, and outside, of racialised Black constructs.

#### Sativa: Race as a Difficult Subject.

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| *‘they’ll always talk about kind of [different voice] Black men, like Caribbean men and like their, whatever their issues are’ (290-292)*  *‘Black male generation sometimes feel like they’ve been demonised. And they have been, but they can really cling on to it.’ (302-303)* |

Sativa discusses the subject of Blackness, in particular Black maleness, as something negative on a number of occasions. She exhibits a degree of contradiction as she describes the way others talk about Black men in a negative way, at first seemingly suggesting that this view is held by others, but not her. However, she then goes on to suggest that Black men may be unable to ‘let go’ of past negative portrayals. In doing so, Sativa develops a further layer of negative connotation associated with Blackness.

**Reflective Box:**

I wondered whether Sativa’s exploration of Blackness could relate to her experiences with her father, with whom she had experienced a difficult relationship with in her teenage years. It seemed as if her dialogue was highly personal, and whilst she talked in general terms, I felt a link with discussions she had about her father.

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| *‘my aunty the other day she goes [different voice] it’s proper curly at the front but at the back it like proper negro hair [laughter] (392-394)*  *‘you talk about like, oh yeah she had light skin or [different voice] oh yeah she was proper dark, like African dark, or like, your hair is so thick and difficult to look after’ (442-444)*  *‘my family never really spoke about race until really, like now like my Gran will say something about my hair about like you didn’t get any like White in your hair did you’ (457-459)* |

Sativa goes on to discuss how those around her talk about race and Blackness. Sativa is placed as the object of Blackness twice within her dialogue; she becomes an embodiment of Blackness, and the embodiment of a Black person, during these interactions. Furthermore, reading and listening to the excerpts leads to the conclusion that Blackness was not being celebrated; it seemed as if other people talked about Blackness in a negative manner. It seems reasonable to question how being positioned as Black may affect Sativa when she appears to have some difficulty with aspects of Blackness. Sativa may be positioned as Black by others, but does she want to be?

#### Henry: Blackness as a Problem.

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| *‘they see a team and it’s just full of Black lads they think ah, the, people just instantly think like ah we’re going to, create a fight and cause trouble’ (337-339)* |

Henry’s approach to Blackness appears to come from a different angle in comparison to Sativa. He explores the negativity expressed by others towards Blackness from within and outside of the Black community. Henry’s dialogue suggests a level of identification and ‘within-ness’ which Sativa’s dialogue does not. He positions himself as a part of the group he is talking about- in the cases of the excerpts below; his football team. In doing so, Henry not only sees Blackness as a problem to others, but he is forced to see himself as part of the ‘Black problem’, for example ‘*we’re* going to, create a fight …’ (italics added).

### Higher Order Theme 5A: Mixedness as an Identity.

Participants also explored and brought to the forefront the idea of mixedness as a strong stand alone identity; outside of the constructs of Blackness and Whiteness. The participants’ individual experiences of race and culture provide an insight into a counter-culture or identity which arguably subverts constructions of race. Their experiences highlight experiential, contextual, historical and social factors as imperative in ideas of race and culture today. Participants appear to be existing within their own mixed worlds, which through dialogue, appears to exist as a homogenous group who self-identify; and identify others as belonging to the group.

#### Emmy: Mixedness as a Stand-alone Identity.

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| *‘because mixed race people do have their own history like coming, about, English people, having mixed babies and I th- I think, a lot more should be done, instead of just, pushing, one history’ (766-769)*  *‘So, my dad’s dad came, over from Jamaica when, he was eighteen to work on the railway, and then ,met my mumma who’s, White English’ (50-51)*  *‘all my cousins on my dad’s side, are mixed race’ (141-142)* |

Emmy discusses her mixedness from a personal, and political social-historical position. Her dialogue places mixedness as firmly within the racial and cultural experiences of recent history, which gives mixedness a sense of belonging within the narratives around race and culture today. Emmy’s discussion gave mixedness a sense of context within modern society, as part of real life, every day experience.

**Reflective Box:**

I found Emmy’s discussion enlightening, and in some ways as a mixed individual, emancipatory. Her dialogue had the ability to create a sense of mixedness as a normal and well-established part of society within me, which I only noted the absence of during my interview with Emmy.

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| *‘I think I’m quite, comfortable with being mixed race’ (336-337)*  *‘I’m so proud now that I am mixed, I think it’s great’(761-763)* |

Emmy also goes on to discuss her feelings towards being a mixed individual. Her language creates ‘mixed race’ as a group or community of people, as opposed to just a label. This gives the sense of mixedness as its own identity. Emmy also talks about being ‘mixed race’ in a positive way. This contrasts quite markedly to many other aspects of her interview, where she discusses some troubling and emotional subjects related to her experiences as a mixed individual.

Emmy’s increased positivity towards ‘being mixed race’ may have related to the construct of ‘mixed race’ as a group identity, rather than Emmy’s own individual experiences. Thus, Emmy connotes the positivity connected to a group identity as ‘mixed race’. She creates a whole or sum of mixed race experiences across individuals, which becomes more than just her own, less positive experiences.

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| *‘so they push for the Black to show people that, they accept Black people, but [pause] not everyone is White and Black’ (477-478)*  *‘I think because, mixed people aren’t, represented, as much in society you don’t realise how much, you are affected’ (756-758)* |

Emmy’s dialogue does suggest, however, that a group ‘mixed race’ identity may exist for her only within those who are mixed, as opposed to a part of mainstream society. She highlights ‘mixed race’ as under-represented, and hints at a subsuming of her group identity within more dominant racial and cultural constructions. Emmy’s dialogue creates an image of the ‘mixed race’ group identity as an alternative, underground culture, serving a group of people with a sense of shared identification, whilst being unable to bring this group sense of self into mainstream society’s view.

#### Henry: Non-Whiteness as Unifying.

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| *[White peers] ‘they didn’t quite understand certain things that me and my brother were coming from. Erm, obviously because it’s a different culture sort of, it’s a different way of life’ (30-32)*  *‘it’s for people of ethnic minority, and it’s for people who have disabilities, and it’s so, for sort of ethnic minorities or disabilities. And I ticked both’ (73-75)*  *[ethnic minorities] ‘I can get along with them because they understand about certain things I understand’ (301-302)*  *‘we hovered towards [laughter] the ethnic sort of group but I don’t know we just always used to feel comfortable with each other.’ (633-635)* |

Henry’s dialogue also highlights a sense of a shared alternative identity, through the form of non-Whiteness. Henry places Whiteness as within the norm, creating a sense of ‘other’ as a whole group, shared experience. This encompasses a wide array of ‘other’, demonstrated through his use of the term ‘ethnic minority’ as opposed to Black or mixed. Thus, Henry creates an image of a considerable counter-culture to Whiteness, with the unifying factor within this large group being a dis-identification with Whiteness.

In this case, I feel that Henry’s dis-identification with Whiteness reflects an identification with Blackness in the sense described in table 1.1, whereby Blackness represents a racialised state of political and experiential kinship of oppression in history (Mirza, 1992). In this sense, Henry’s identification is not necessarily unified with Black *people* in the descriptive sense, but non-White people and Blackness in a social, historical, and political sense. The othering of Blackness, and Henry’s link to it here, goes beyond Black people, and encompasses the array of individuals and communities who cannot identify, or are excluded from identifying, with Whiteness.

#### Henry: Mixedness as Tangible.

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| *‘there’s a lot of mixed race people, but [pause] do we know who we are, do we know where we’re coming from’ (115-116)*  *‘and being mixed race like’ (382)*  *‘being mixed race like I just walk, like, down the street and I think to myself I know who I am.’ (434-435)*  *‘she was mixed race like me’ (455)*  *‘I’d be like yeah I’m mixed race.’ (685)* |

Whilst Henry creates a strong sense of non-White ‘otherness’ as unifying, he also talks about ‘mixed race’ frequently, identifying himself and others as within this group. His language use creates the imagery of ‘mixed race’ as a tangible, definable phenomena, encompassing a set of criteria which ‘mixed race’ people possess. Henry reflects an image of him as part of the ‘mixed race’ group. His dialogue creates a sense that he understands the criteria for being mixed race, as would other ‘mixed race’ people.

**Reflective Box:**

Perhaps Henry’s dialogue also reflects the fact that he identified myself as a researcher as a part of this group. This gives rise to questions about self and other-identification for ‘mixed race’ group membership, understandings of what constitutes ‘mixed race’, and how this reflects the complexities of individual mixed experiences.

I certainly felt that throughout this part of our conversation, I was included within Henry’s ‘mixed race’ group. My feelings of identification may also have had an impact on the way Henry spoke about the subject as a whole.

## Research Question B) ‘How do mixed young people interpret their experiences of childhood and education?’

This section of analysis focuses on participants’ interpretations of their experiences of childhood and education. The analysis focuses on distinct aspects of participants’ childhood and educational experiences, and attempts to make sense of their interpretations in order to explore mixedness as a phenomena. Table 4.2 below demonstrates the higher order superordinate themes and each participants’ corresponding superordinate themes for research question B. Participants’ superordinate themes will be discussed through the use of higher order themes, as a contextual backdrop to the analysis, providing the reader with embedded examples of the higher order themes in action.

##### Table 4.2 RQ-B higher order themes and corresponding participant superordinate themes.

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| **Research Question B: How do mixed young people interpret their experiences of childhood and education?** | |
| **Higher order superordinate theme** | **Participant subordinate theme** |
| *Isolation and Belonging* | Sativa: The Significance of Isolation and Belonging. |
| Tunde: The Significance of Father for Tunde’s Identity  Tunde’s Childhood as part of Black Culture |
| Emmy: The Isolation of Childhood and Growing Up  Emmy as Inherently ‘Different’  Shared Identification as Shared Support |
| Henry: Henry as a Product of his Environment  Football as Defining and Containing  Experience as Creating Understanding |
| *Racialised Perceptions in the Development of Self-Identity* | Sativa: Perception and Self-Identity |
| Tunde: Self-identity as Challenged by Others  The Intersectional Perceptions of Tunde |
| Emmy: Emmy as her Racialised Appearance |
| Henry: Mixed maleness as Currency  Racialised Perceptions of Henry |
| *The Power of Educational Experiences* | Tunde: University Experience as a Challenge |
| Emmy: University as Mirroring School Experience |
| Henry: Primary School as Defining  University as Alien |

### Higher Order Theme 1B: Isolation and Belonging.

Isolation and belonging were prominent themes across all participants. Varied levels of isolation and belonging were expressed, and interestingly, most (but not all) participants related some of their experiences of isolation and belonging with aspects of their mixed experiences. As such, this section attempts to analyse experiences of isolation and belonging in relation to its meanings for each participants’ constructs and ideas about mixedness.

#### Sativa: The Significance of Isolation and Belonging.

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| *‘Only child! That used to [pause] I, I, I wanted brothers and sisters before’ (38-39)*  *‘on the estate like I had friends when I was a kid like a couple of the neighbour’s kids, but I was never really allowed to play like on the estate’ (52-53)* |

Sativa probably discussed feelings of isolation and belonging with the least reference to herself as a mixed person. I felt this related to her interpretation of her experiences in general. Compared to other participants, Sativa seemed much more interested in separating herself from constructions and racialisations. She begins discussing topics of isolation through early childhood experiences. Sativa’s experiences suggest being isolated by others; largely her parents. Her dialogue paints a picture of her as separate and out of the loop from some childhood experiences; it seems as if parts of her childhood are missing through this. It was interesting that Sativa spoke of this in relation to her parents. She presented herself as being isolated by them, rather than in isolating circumstances.

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| *‘it would have been nice to have someone present, like when my parents were getting divorced’ (42-43)*  *‘So they were a lot more open with me when I was a kid, and when they stopped being so open with each other they star- I think they started to become like [pause] distance in my relationship to them.’ (158-161)*  *‘We used to do like loads of stuff together like we used to go to the museums a lot, used to go to the park a lot, we go, went, to film, the cinema, we had like a, it was like [pause] family thing. And then when I got older it became [pause] less like that [pause] and I think we all kind of went into, went into our own spaces a little bit’ (205-210)*  *‘then my dad would not, like [pause] I can’t remember he started going but I just wouldn’t see him’ (228-229)* |

Sativa continues with the theme of isolation through her parents when discussing their difficult relationship and subsequent divorce. Her experiences present a jarring picture of familial isolation through break up, and the effects that this can have on an individual. At this point, Sativa still paints a clear picture of being isolated *by* others; making her passive within interactional relationships.

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| *‘Well I was a bit of a loner at primary school, I don’t really, I had friends but I wasn’t like a [pause] I preferred to just read, to be honest’ (325-327)*  *‘I think some people had more of an awareness than others. Like I did and I think that’s why I didn’t hang out with people so much.’ (343-345)*  *‘you had to write this long poem about and then god grew the wheat and then the farmer picked the wheat, and I refused to do it’ (367-369)* |

As Sativa continues to discuss her childhood experiences, she moves from being isolated, to isolating herself. She seems to place herself outside of, or even ‘above’, some typical experiences associated with childhood, such as primary friendships and school work. She paints herself as knowing, and perhaps more cognitively able than her peers. Through this, Sativa shows a clear sense of herself as ‘different’. Perhaps this reflects an attempt at gaining control of her difference and her isolation, rather than being a passive receiver of them.

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| *‘I think [school name] was one of the most diverse schools in London in, in terms of it, it wasn’t very cliquey like everyone hung out with each other’ (786-788)*  *‘if you’ve got supportive friends, and you’re not [pause] you know you help them and don’t reject their help [pause] I think that means you’ve got like, quite a good life. (1024-1026)* |

It is not until much later in Sativa’s childhood that she appears a part of something; feeling a sense of belonging. Some of her enjoyment of belonging appears to be on the basis of the diversity of the group. Her school group appears more flexible in dynamics than her previous experiences of belonging, potentially allowing her to remain more in control of herself within the group.

#### Tunde: The Significance of Father for Identity.

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| *‘..we all because of things like how my dad like, the way he brought us up in a way’ (15-16)*  *‘..using like, like the ‘n’ word. And like I remember my Black friends saying like you can say it. And I was thinking my dad just always used to say you should never say that word.’ (76-79)*  *[talking about mixedness] ‘my dad always said it’s the best of both [laughter] (866-867)* |

Tunde shared a strong sense of self and belonging through the role of his father. Tunde uses his father as a reference point throughout his childhood for providing him with a sense of self. Often, this was linked directly to Tunde’s understanding of himself as a mixed person.

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| ‘like my dad always said like make sure, like you always, you always know that you’re mixed race’ (38-40) |

Tunde is able to find a sense of belonging through a father who represents mixedness. Tunde’s father has also given him a group identification, identifying him as ‘mixed race’, ensuring a sense of belonging in Tunde to a wider group.

#### Tunde’s Childhood as part of Black Culture.

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| *‘A discussion on like, using like, like the ‘n’ word. And like I remember my Black friends saying like you can say it’ (76-77)*  *‘.. and that’s how it was, and everyone around me that’s how it was as well.’ (569-570)* |

Tunde also demonstrates a strong sense of belonging within Black culture; this denotes who he is. Tunde is both given and assumes a sense of belonging within this group, suggesting a reciprocal and interactional relationship.

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| *‘I* know *what I’m talking about because I’m a part of it, whereas I’m not saying like oh like those people.’ (305-306)* |

Tunde’s belongingness appears to have given him a sense of responsibility to his group, and a need to represent and protect it. Tunde appears to want to show others what his group is, and what it means to be a part of his group. Tunde has a strong ownership of Blackness through his sense of belonging.

#### Emmy: The Isolation of Childhood and Growing Up.

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| *[talking about mixed children]‘when I went to school because I was only, me and my sister and then there was a couple of others’ (77-78)*  *‘and, I remember as well I went through a whole summer where I had no friends’ (179-180)*  *‘I haven’t got, any lasting memories, of being, friends with people in school and doing stuff with people in school. (279-280)*  *[talking about being able to discuss racism in school with parents] ‘I think I did [pause] withdraw into myself, a lot, I think that’s why I probably didn’t have many friends in school because I did withdraw into myself because, I didn’t want to talk about it because, no one wants to talk about it.’ (395-397)* |

Emmy presents a picture of isolation as a child; at school and through familial experiences. She interprets her isolation as a product of her mixedness and experiences associated with her mixedness, and through this highlights the complexity of exploring and managing racialised interpretations of belonging, particularly in children. Her experiences show the reciprocal relationship of isolation across two contexts. Emmy experiences isolation at school, which she is emotionally isolated from talking about at home. This leads to greater levels of isolation and withdrawal from school. Thus, Emmy’s experiences become cyclical in nature.

#### Emmy as Inherently ‘Different’.

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| *‘I kind of always knew I was different’ (148-149)*  *‘Erm [pause] I mean, I think it played a part [pause] in, me [pause] not liking people, erm [pause] because I was so different’ (237-239)*  *‘that is your life you know it’s normal, but then, going to school and hearing people say, making out that you’re different, calling you a, a monkey and, you do realise that, you’re not the same as everyone else.’ (374-376)* |

Emmy’s feelings of isolation link closely with her feelings of ‘differentness’ from others, which she explores in her interview. Her exploration of differentness reflects herself as a mixed person, highlighting the potential impact of racial difference on developing a sense of belonging. Emmy’s dialogue gives insight into a process of the internalisation of messages from others. She talks about others telling her she is different, and she suggests that she *is* in some way inherently different. Her dialogue demonstrates how experiences can embed within a person.

#### Emmy: Shared Identification as Shared Support.

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| *‘because, you haven’t got, anyone else, who is Black who, could understand, you kind of just brush it off because [pause] my, my friends wouldn’t really, understand why that would be so upsetting for me. (318-320)*  *‘you could see yourself in, other people, so that’s nice.’ (521-522)* |

Emmy also explores how a sense of belonging to a group can be beneficial. She points towards the importance of shared experience in the creation of belongingness. Emmy talks about this from the perspective of being isolated, then experiencing a sense of belonging. She first discusses the ways in which her racialised isolation impacted on her ability to manage negative emotions associated with her mixedness. Later, this changes; she feels a sense of identification and belonging with other non-White people. Emmy’s social and emotional wellbeing in relation to her mixedness is directly impacted on by her sense of belonging to a non-White group.

#### Henry: Football as Defining and Containing.

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| *‘football was a massive thing in my life, and er, me and my friend used to call it like our second home.’ (42-43)*  *‘But it all brought us together to play football, even if we couldn’t speak to each other, we still understood’ (47-49)*  *‘feeling accepted and a part of something growing up’ (783-784)* |

Football features hugely in Henry’s life. His engagement in football has influenced his development through childhood and young adulthood. Henry describes football as his ‘second home’; denoting the significance of the game for him, and its ability to provide an alternative safe base for him.

Of interest is the uniting factor that football plays in Henry’s life. This relates specifically to Henry’s non-White experiences; through multi-cultural football games. His experiences suggest belonging to the sport developed opportunities to forge multi-cultural relationships. Henry talks of an understanding between players and himself beyond verbal communication, connoting football as an alternative means of social connection.

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| *‘I was light, but they didn’t acknowledge that they were like yo Henry’s like us man it’s, like they acknowledged it but I felt accepted, I felt part of it and that was a massive like confidence boost for me like feeling part of something, growing up.’ (780-784)* |

Henry also discusses his experiences of belonging within a largely Black football team as a mixed individual. Henry’s dialogue suggests the potential isolation from Black peers based on his skin colour. However, it is clear that this is not the case for Henry; he identifies as within the Black group, and this identification is reciprocated. This suggests non-Whiteness as an identity as based on more than just skin colour.

**Reflective Box:**

Henry’s discussion about football made me wonder whether there was an alternative version of this type of community for females. Whilst football is obviously not a male-only sport, playing sport in this way is still very often dominated by boys.

I felt that there was something very special about Henry’s relationship with football. I felt that aspects of this may have been hard to capture in female equivalents of this kind of community, particularly in relation to Emmy’s focus on ‘girly’ activities like hair and make-up, prompting me to consider what effect this may have on feelings of belongingness.

#### Henry: Experience as Creating Understanding.

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| *‘yeah I forgot to say I went to Barbados twice. Er, a very very lucky guy. Privileged, in fact because yeah, that just made me realise who I was and I’m so proud, and, meeting my dad’s family and, I think it’s a rite of passage for any sort of child whose got something in them …’ (475-479)*  *‘just seeing different plants, different things, different people different cars different, everything was just like bang bang bang like, triggering things in my brain’ (500-503)* |

Henry highlights the power of lived experience in creating understanding of difference in his childhood. Henry links his experiences in Barbados with his learning and understanding of himself and the world around him. He demonstrates how new experiences in his ancestral home develop a further sense of belonging to and understanding of Blackness through his dialogue.

I felt that this sense of belongingness differed in its identification to Black culture, as opposed to Blackness, as described in Henry’s discussion on feeling an identification to Blackness (research question A: ‘non-Whiteness as unifying). Here, I feel Henry interprets a belonging to Black people as opposed to Blackness. An identification with Black people may incorporate the positioning and ideology of Blackness at its core, but it also brings forth a Black culture, which may not be shared between all forms of Blackness as a socio-political experience of oppression, marginalisation and non-Whiteness.

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| *‘And he used to tell me about Pakistan a lot and his family. Erm, what he used to do there and how, what it was like and I know about Eid and Ramadan, loads of stuff, so it was really, like, we just used to share stories and stuff really.’ (543-547)* |

Experience is also influential in Henry’s understanding of cultures outside of his own. He uses the example of shared storytelling with a Pakistani friend as a means of gaining understanding and appreciation of difference. This shared experience appears to go beyond textbook learning, and boosts his sense of belonging to non-Whiteness as a wider identification.

In relation to Henry’s interview as a whole, his lived experiences have created a sense of understanding and kinship with other groups of people classed as ‘other’ to the norm. The variation of experience that Henry talks about mirrors his association and linked identity with multiculturalism and non-Whiteness.

### Higher Order Theme 2B: Racialised Perceptions in the Development of Self-identity.

Participants discussed a number of experiences whereby they interpreted themselves as racially perceived by others. Perceptions appeared to vary in terms of the racialisations that each participant felt they had been aligned with. At times, the participants’ interpretations of racialised perceptions also seemed to intersect along gender lines.

The variation of the experiences for the participants gives an insight into the complex nature of understanding of mixedness, particularly in relation to other racialised or cultural ideologies. The effects of racialised perceptions on participants’ sense of self, relationships and interactions with others are also demonstrated through their experiences.

#### Sativa: Perception and Self-Identity.

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| *‘but now I actually feel like, people see me more as Black. Because when my hair grows like a proper afro, and when I tan especially my skin goes really dark’ (429-431)*  *‘But it’s funny how people view you actually, just from little things like that. Or when you relax your hair people see you differently.’ (431-433)* |

Sativa’s first discussion focuses on her experiences as being seen as Black by others based on aspects of her appearance. Sativa reasons that people see her more as Black because of the colour of her skin and the texture of her hair, suggesting that phenotypical features impact on racialised perceptions. Her experiences highlight the relationship that exists between appearances and what it means to ‘be’ a racialised ideology.

Her comments about chemically straightening (‘relaxing’) her hair point towards the depth of relationship between physical characteristics. Sativa associates a seemingly small change in appearance with others perceiving her in a different way; or as within a different racialised category. Sativa’s recognition of this may also say something about her own understanding of racialised ideologies, and what the perceived difference between afro and ‘relaxed’ hair means to her.

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| *‘because you do feel like you slip into a different way of being when you’re with different both sides of the family.’ (465-466)*  *‘I would s- I, always say mixed, and I always say, it’s like if I’m talking to friends sometimes I’ll call myself Black, but I never call myself White like I think I only call myself Black when I know that other people see me, or know like, I think somebody sees me as Black.’ (614-618)*  *‘I usually only say it when I’m with White people as well, when I call myself Black’ (631-632)* |

Of interest is Sativa in response to how she feels she is being perceived. She uses her interpretations of others’ perceptions to inform how she presents herself. Thus, her racialised performance becomes dictated by her interpretation of her racialised self to others.

Sativa’s sense of self becomes a product of her contextual situation and her perception of others. She talks about her Black self as if disengaged from it, suggesting that her Blackness reflects a performance, based on the perceived wants and needs of others, as opposed to a true sense of self. Sativa becomes a product of her environment through the power of perception and the dominant discourses and understandings associated with this. This seems to work at the level of others, but also on the level of Sativa as an individual. Her own sense of self is heavily dictated by how she believes others racially perceive her.

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| *‘I became more myself in secondary school. Because, there was no like, pretending to be something you thought that’s h- what it meant to be Black, or that’s what it means to be White or Asian’ (795-798)* |

Sativa refers to becoming more ‘herself’ at secondary school. Her dialogue hints at the racialised ideologies that she is both subject to and a part of when thinking about and understanding herself. It seems that whilst she wants to define herself as beyond the racialisations that are given to her, she is also unable to define herself without reference to these racialisations.

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| *‘I can see it in people’s eyes when like they think I’m going to be a certain way [pause] and then, and and then I’m not, and, so I guess that is sort of almost racism.*  *Interviewer: What do you think they think, you’re going to be like?*  *I think they, I think they, they think I’m going to be a lot more aggressive than I am.’ (1110-1116)* |

Sativa’s final comment further exemplifies the interactional relationship of the racialised perceptions she is subjected to. She presents a situation where she knows how she will be perceived, and can do nothing about this. Sativa is powerless to the dominant discourses of Black or mixedness, and becomes a subjugated subject through this relationship.

**Reflective Box:**

Sativa’s discussion of how she feels she is perceived felt quite disheartening to me on a personal level. I found her reference to seeing others perceiving her particularly painful, and feel her dialogue highlights the potential emotional impact of feeling perceived in a particular, negative way.

#### Tunde: Self-identity as Challenged by Others.

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| *[Tunde’s mixed heritage] ‘yeah it has been challenged by a few people in my life. Just because of like, the way I look.’ (41-43)*  *‘it’s almost like, I felt at one point, that, like, ah these people, well they think that I’m attempting to be something I’m not.’ (61-63)* |

Tunde’s position presents as different from Sativa’s, and in many ways highlights modern issues of mixedness. His experiences demonstrate a different relationship between racialised perceptions and his sense of self. His identity is that of mixed or non-White, and yet his belongingness to this group, and the associated characteristics, are frequently questioned.

As a light skinned mixed individual, Tunde’s appearance appears not to ‘fit’ with the perceived image of Black or mixedness. In many ways, Tunde’s visual appearance aligns him with Whiteness. Tunde’s version of himself as part of Black culture is treated as a ‘performance’ based on his features. He is perceived as if performing his chosen mixed identity based on his features, and the disconnect that they present to visual representations of mixedness. Tunde’s experiences highlight the powerful link our understandings of who people are and what they look like.

**Reflective Box:**

Tunde’s points highlighted the power of appearance in perception.

His experiences highlight the focus that much of society still has on ‘what’ as opposed to ‘who’ we are.

#### Tunde: The Intersectional Perceptions of Tunde.

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| *‘And each one of them said like when they looked through my Facebook pictures they just thought I was going to be like [laughter] like a scally or like, like a hostile guy.’ (545-547)* |

Tunde’s experiences also move beyond racialised physical characteristics. He discusses the views he feels others have taken of him based on his choice of clothes and accessories, presenting them as linked to negative connotations. In particular, he links his style of dress with associations of aggression.

He speaks about his clothes as a reflection of the clothes worn in his community. His clothes reflect a group identity, which as Tunde describes, reflect a multicultural working class community. Thus, Tunde interprets others’ perceptions of him as negative based not only on his racialised self, but also on his presentation as aligned to a certain socioeconomic status or class. Here, it is possible to see the layers of ideology, embedded in notions of Whiteness that move beyond racialisations and into notions of class, combining to introduce the potential for layered levels of ideological oppression.

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| *‘some girls I can see it when they look at me, like, in that judgement of like, in my head I’m just thinking oh no like [laughter] (580-581)* |

Tunde also reflects on his interpretation of others perceiving him, much like Sativa. His experiences bring to mind the idea of a mixed person as an object, understood through fixed constructions, before they become an individual. Interestingly, this experience appears to relate to gendered relationships, suggesting that Tunde’s characteristics may be perceived by others in a gendered manner. It is possible that this relates to both Tunde’s mixedness and his class status as denoted by his choice of clothing.

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| *‘and I remember the terminology that they were using as well, saying like feral, and like, like feral, like kids and, and the way they were talking about it it was just like, only Black and mixed race faces that were like on the TV’ (678-681)* |

Tunde also highlights a level of racialised perception at a societal level, through his exploration of media portrayals of non-White young people. Mixed and Black young people are associated with animals in Tunde’s recollection of experiences.

Tunde talks of a system whereby individual Black or mixed CYP are the focus of negative perceptions at a multi-systemic level. Each system feeds into the other through individual constructions. These are in turn fed into the messages portrayed through institutions and society as a whole, leading to a cyclical relationship.

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| *‘just walking the streets with my older brother and the police stopped and, came up to him [Tunde’s brother] and he literally just stopped him and was like you’re a drug dealer aren’t you’ (743-745)* |

The relationship between societal and individual level racialised perception is explored further through Tunde’s experiences with his older brother and an interaction with a police officer. The police officer is both himself as an individual and a symbol of a societal institution. Tunde’s identification with his brother as a symbol of mixedness means that he is forced to become a powerless witness to highly negative constructions of his group identity as a mixed person. It is Tunde’s identification to this group, and the negative racialised perception that he has witnessed in response to this group, which are most significant in this experience, regardless of whether Tunde himself was also perceived as part of the mixed group or otherwise.

Tunde is also placed in a position of lived and theoretical subjugation through his experience; as an individual he lacks the means to question the police officer’s assertions, and at a theoretical level, he is unable to move beyond constructions of his mixed identity as negative.

#### Emmy: Emmy as her Racialised Appearance.

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| *‘my mum, she used to not know how to do Black hair so she used to brush out my hair, and then it, so it was like a frizzy thing at the back of my head, and like, kids at school used to put pencils in it’ (90-94)*  *‘one, one boy, calling me a nigger, and another boy, calling me, a monkey with a moustache, and nothing really happened, so.’ (312-314)* |

Emmy’s experiences highlight the mechanisms of racialised perception in action. In Emmy’s experiences, her racialised self is the key factor in how she is perceived by others. She is her racialised self though her appearance, which leads to perceptions of her as a sub-human Black person based on ideologies of Blackness. Her experiences demonstrate the multi-layered nature of the process of racialised perception in relation to dominant ideologies. It is something that is recognised in an individual and placed upon an individual. Emmy has no control over her racialised appearance, and based on this, she has no control over the negative racialisations of herself which are shaped through ideology.

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| *‘because my hair was different, so I started straightening my hair’ (204-205)*  *I just wasn’t comfortable, with my hair. I think it was because that was, the target, of a lot of, what people used to say about me.’ (343-345)* |

Emmy attempts to separate herself from her racialised self, and most likely her experiences of being racially perceived. She associates aspects of her racialised self as negative based wholly on the interactions it led to with others, arguably based on their construction of her as a ‘Black’ person and a part of Blackness. She attempts to present herself as a figure who does not invoke the perceptions she has experienced previously, by minimising aspects of her appearance that she feels has been key to her experiences- her hair.

#### Henry: Mixed Maleness as Currency.

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| *‘He knows he can threaten people as well you know like who aren’t like, who are a bit scared of him because he’s Black or. Do you know what I mean like, he uses it.’ (427-430)* |

Henry gives an interesting take on ways in which racialised perception, and the awareness of this, have influenced his experiences. Henry reflects on other mixed individual’s use of their ‘Black’ perception in order to assert a position of power.

Henry’s subject uses his ‘Blackness’ as a means of aggression and power. Henry talks of his subject ‘using’ his Blackness, suggesting that dominant ideologies of Blackness have been internalised by Henry’s subject. This complex relationship demonstrates how, through asserting a form of power in the individual sense (i.e., dominating others through ‘Black’ aggressiveness), Henry’s subject simultaneously demonstrates his and Blackness’s powerlessness to racialised perceptions which continue to oppress.

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| *‘we used that as well, at times ... We used to often make a joke about it because I play for [local area team], so I used to just say yo I play for [local area team] and people would just go quiet and like, ah do you and like, then they’d want to be your friend or like [laughter] (654-659)* |

Henry places himself within a similar power dynamic as he continues. However, Henry’s reflection of himself within this relationship also reflects on the relationship between racialisation and sociocultural categorisation in interpellation.

He talks about others’ perceptions of him based on his mixed status within the football team of his local area. Henry sees his area as multicultural and working class. Thus; the use of his football team may reflect more than perceived racial perception. Henry sees himself not only as perceived along racial lines, but also social and class lines. This creates a categorisation of ‘other’ as an amalgamation of various non-White ‘others’, not just a racialised category.

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| *‘Like when you’re meeting people dating and so on, they’re like ah erm, are you mixed race, and they want to know straight away and I think that’s like you aren’t, you’re only looking at me because maybe I’ve got like, green eyes or, because I’ve got curly hair.’ (729-733)*  *‘I probably got a bit used at school to be honest, like [laughter] I didn’t realise at the time but [pause] yeah they probably just looked at me, and thought ah yeah’ (741-744)*  *‘But I think being mixed race it was like, you kind of, knew that you could get girls, again, again that weird sort of [pause] using, sort of that weird [pause] when you’re young, when you’re like young you realise you can and it was a bit, a bit odd.*  *Interviewer: Can you tell me more about that?*  *It was just, I didn’t really like it, it was just like, er [pause] just kind of knowing that like, you could [pause] erm [pause] because of the way you looked, you could attract certain people…*  *Interviewer: What, what kind of people do you think that you, could attract?*  *Like the typical White person...*  *Interviewer: What do you mean when you say the typical White person?*  *Erm typical White person, like someone whose been brought up in, er, sort of White family. I say it and, I don’t like to say it because it sounds a bit rude but, someone who’s brought up, erm [pause] in that sort of [pause] just White culture. Haven’t really experienced anything else’ (891-911)* |

Henry’s racially perceived self as a mixed person also becomes social or sexual currency. His experiences of being recognised as mixed have led to his view of himself as a sexually attractive or desirable individual; without concern for his actual individuality. Henry’s mixedness *per se* is deemed attractive.

He explains a sense of distinct aspects of his mixedness that have made him an attractive option for girls as he has grown up. These characteristics could arguably be seen as aesthetically separating Blackness from mixedness, in that the occurrence of green eyes and curly hair is rare in Blackness, and more common in mixedness.

#### Henry: Racialised Perceptions of Henry.

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| *‘often people used to question it, because I’m quite light, so that was, that was a big thing I had to get over and realise that, people aren’t always going to think what you think you’re going to be like’ (666-669)* |

Another side to Henry’s experiences of racialised perception can also be seen. Henry’s experiences are of particular interest based on his racialised appearance. Unlike Sativa and Emmy, Henry does not share the dark skin and afro or tightly curly hair frequently associated with Blackness. Whilst Sativa and Emmy’s experiences almost always relate to perceptions of Blackness, Henry also experiences this through his sometimes-perceived Whiteness.

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| *‘a girl came up to me and was like you ain’t, you ain’t Black, you ain’t Black you ain’t mixed race, like I’m mixed race. And I was like what just because you’re a little bit darker than me, and it was just like I don’t know that made me feel like, what the hell like [pause] you should understand [laughter]* |

Henry’s racialised perception as a White or non-Black person comes from within the group that he identifies with- other Black or mixed individuals. His status as a mixed person is questioned and rejected. He does not constitute a Black or mixed person; he becomes ‘White’, and a racialised ideology of Whiteness in the eyes of others.

It is interesting that Henry’s perceived Whiteness evokes such an aggressive response from another person identifying as mixed. This suggests that racialised perceptions hold powerful meaning in relation to both Whiteness and Blackness, and that Whiteness may have its own clearly defined boundaries. There may be aspects of Blackness, and perhaps mixedness, which also seek to define such boundaries, thus excluding some individuals from this identification.

Much like Tunde’s discussion, this highlights an often uniquely mixed phenomena, whereby inclusion and exclusion from racialised perceptions, and in turn the racialised ideologies which exist in tandem with these, can be changeable based on context.

### Higher Order Theme 3B: The Power of Educational Experiences.

Unsurprisingly given the research questions, all participants discussed aspects of their educational experiences. However, some participants appeared to focus on exploring their educational experiences at a greater depth than others. These explorations highlighted positive and negative aspects of educational experience in relation to participants’ formative development. Education, in these instances, appeared to act as a tool by which participants defined themselves. At times, this relationship has been demonstrated to positive effect. At others, education creates a sense of alienation and rejection in participants.

#### Tunde: University Experience as a Challenge.

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| *‘instantly like I felt like, I proper struggled to fit in. And I had I had that problem throughout all of University.’ (210-212)*  *‘Because there was there was points where I thought ah I just want to leave like I can’t be arsed with this.’ (525-526)* |

Tunde begins by discussing the challenges of ‘fitting in’ and being a part of university. He discusses this as if it were a continual experience whilst at University; at no point did he find this became easier. He also discusses the level of impact of this on his experiences. He suggests that at times, he was close to leaving his University. Tunde’s experiences show him as an outsider to his University experience, and suggest that the culture of University as a whole was something that he was not a part of.

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| *‘Because I remember doing lectures about that again where like I was like, coming from like, a different perspective to people in my lecture.’ (620-622)* |

Tunde’s exploration of his views in relation to University peers offers some insight into the nature of the challenges he experienced. He describes himself as if fundamentally different, through his world views and life experiences, than his peers.

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| *‘someone put their hand up and said like, well don’t you think you’re talking to the wrong crowd because we’re all middle class here. And I instantly like just like [laughter] I shouted out was like, that’s bullshit and I was like, you can’t say that you can’t talk for all of us.’ (249-253)*  *‘Because she was saying like, ah, we’re all middle class here because we’re at University. It proper like pissed me off.’ (266-268)* |

Tunde’s perceived differences are stark as he talks about a memory of a lecture, where a fellow student made the assumption that all students came from a middle class background. For Tunde, this serves as a catalyst for anger and frustration towards his peers. Tunde has been placed within a group that he feels no identification with. Not only does this forcefully place him within the ‘middle class’, it arguably also denotes a lack of value with regards to the cultural class that he identifies with.

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| *‘I remember having to adapt like change my voice’ (535-536)* |

Tunde explores the impact of entering into his University peer group by his description of changing his voice to more closely reflect that of his peers. Institutional discrimination of the ‘non-White’, arguably ‘working class’, is played out through these experiences. Tunde’s sense of self appears to feel so far removed from the dominant culture at University, that in order to survive, he feels the need to adapt aspects of himself which relate to his background.

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| *‘because I never spoke up in lectures it wasn’t something that I wanted to do.’ (230-232)*  *‘I ended up like, not going to some of her lectures as well, and I remember emailing her at one point as well ... But she was asking like where I was, and I was just saying I just said ah I didn’t really get on with some of the lecturers and some of the, like, the discussions that were happening. And she said she was like oh I’m glad you’re saying this but you need to get in part of the discussion as well. I just, I guess I just didn’t have the confidence to get involved. Which I do regret.’ (309-317)*  *‘the discussion where I’d try to get involved, and, they, they, they would always like, come on a defensive.’ (346-347)* |

Tunde talks about lacking confidence in expressing his opinions in learning environments, and the impact of his alternative perspectives on his peers when he did manage to express himself. Tunde’s experiences show him as powerless and voiceless as part of his University, through the very act of having different experiences. His views are seen as a threat by others. This creates an image of University as a part of institutionalised society, which maintains control through domination over difference.

#### Emmy: University as Mirroring School Experience.

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| *‘[crying] erm [pause] I’m not really, I think [pause] [sigh] I don’t know, erm [pause] I mean I, I dropped out of university I don’t know whether, my [pause] experiences of school made it [pause] so I didn’t, try as hard (330-333)*  *‘so I guess in a way, when I went to University, it was like being back [pause] during, that period of time at school, and [pause] I don’t know whether that contributed to me dropping out of University, all I know is, I wasn’t happy, and I, I actually got diagnosed with depressive anxiety disorder’ (610-615)*  *‘talking about it now it actually was, quite a lot like school, no one wanted to hang out with me, I didn’t have any friends so, I was quite, sad. (626-628)* |

Emmy discusses her University experiences as linked to school experiences. They also follow a similar pattern to her negative experiences of school. She explores the possibility of the contributory factor of her school experiences on her ability to manage at University.

#### Emmy: University as Alien.

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| *‘Yeah, I was in halls. Erm, they were all [pause] quite [pause] from, wealthier backgrounds and quite, lived quite sheltered lives.’ (642-644)* |

Emmy also explores the differences that she felt between herself and her University experience. She sees her peers as different from her on experiential and cultural levels. Interestingly, as with Tunde, the focus here is on a sense of socioeconomic or class difference, as opposed to racial difference. Thus, the University experience can be seen as one which struggles to represent and support students who fall outside of a particular set of mainstream experiences.

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| *‘I think, they probably thought [pause] a version of me that isn’t t, true they probably saw someone like, sad, and, that’s not, who I really was.’ (730-732)*  *‘they, probably saw me as someone they didn’t want to be friends with.’ (736-737)* |

Emmy also positions herself as alien to her University through the perceptions of others. This, coupled with her experiences of University as alien to her, show exclusion as an interactional relationship between the excluder and the excluded. This creates a rejection from both parties, creating a stalemate situation where finding common ground becomes more challenging.

#### Henry: Primary School as Defining.

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| *‘Primary school was brilliant fantastic, erm, loved it, I won an award ... it was for someone who’s like caring, thoughtful erm [pause] just genuinely really nice person ... and I felt really privileged to get that award.’ (96-101)* |

Henry is the only participant who reflects on his educational experiences in a positive light. It is interesting to note that Henry’s positive experiences focus on his primary school. Henry reflects on his University experiences in a more negative way; similar to both Tunde and Emmy.

However, Henry’s primary experiences show education as potentially formative in forging a positive sense of self. He recalls an award he received at primary school, and discusses the qualities that the award celebrated. His use of words are positive, suggesting that events like this supported him to view himself with a positive outlook. Henry’s ability to recall the award in such detail suggests the level of emotional significance associated with the experience.

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| *‘Well that school, they let us obviously go at the time ... they told us to like make a scrap book because it was during term time. Make a scrap book, come back and then do a presentation so we did that like we were working without even knowing.’ (530-533)* |

Henry’s primary school experiences also play an important role in fostering his sense of self as a mixed or non-White person. He describes his primary schools approach to his trip to Barbados during term time. Henry talks about himself and his brother ‘working’ without realising, and discusses the scrap book he made and shared with peers. Such an approach makes it possible for Henry to see the value of his alternative heritage and identity as part of his, and others, educational experience. The act enables Henry to view heritage as important, and worthwhile as a subject to learn about.

#### Henry: University as Alien.

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| *‘again it’s another environment which is [pause] not what I’m kind of used to’ (249-250)* |

Henry’s University experiences show a more negative side to the power of educational experiences; reflecting the experiences of both Tunde and Emmy. He reflects on his experiences as if he has entered into the unknown. Much like Emmy, University presents an alien culture to Henry, which he finds different from his own.

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| *‘Er [pause] the types of people, like the majority of people that are from university are from like, sort of very kind of middle class backgrounds’ (252-254)* |

Interestingly, Henry also refers to differences along cultural and class lines; like Tunde and Emmy. Like both participants, Henry’s experiences suggest a view of ‘otherness’ which is wide reaching, taking in any and all groups which do not fit the White middle class norm of University culture.

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| *‘just being at university you realise you’ve got to, you’ve got to adapt otherwise you, you won’t be able to fit in’ (259-261)* |

Henry also reflects on the power of his University experience on his sense of self. Like Tunde, Henry describes having to change himself in order to ‘fit in’’.

This suggests an element of University education as a performance; based on the perceptions associated with being a University student.

**Reflective Box:**

I was incredibly struck by how alienated participants felt by their University experiences, and also felt a strong sense of identification.

I felt that in various ways, whether they completed University or not, participants had been failed by their Universities, but had also failed to fully gain from their University experiences.

To me, this felt pertinent, in that part of the issue with many of the experiences discussed was the lack of connection with University. This strikes me as an important issue for exploration, in terms of not only academic outcomes, but the potential for gaining a greater sense of self through University experiences. As a juncture between childhood and adulthood, University strikes me as an important time for young people to gain these types of experiences. I feel that the alienation felt by so many participants is likely to make this hard for them to experience.

## Conclusion.

This chapter has focused on analysing participants’ interpretations of their experiences of race and culture, and childhood and education. Analysis has demonstrated that a number of themes are important for participants understanding of the topics. With regards to race and culture, the themes of culture and heritage, mixedness as challenging constructions, intersectionality, Blackness as problematic, and mixedness as an identity were discussed. In terms of participants’ experiences of childhood and education, the themes of isolation and belonging, interpellation, and the power of educational experiences were discussed. Whilst participants experienced each of these themes in differing, and at times oppositional ways; analysis has explored the elements of the themes which bring them together to form a shared sense of meaning.

# Chapter Five: Discussion.

## Introduction.

This chapter aims to discuss the findings of the research, in relation to the research questions, and the higher order themes associated with them. The experiences of individual participants are discussed with regard to relevant literature and theory, through reference to higher order themes, which describe their experiences. They are discussed on an individual basis specifically in order to highlight a specific point, or provide additional clarity, where appropriate.

Discussion of relevant literature and theory will take place research question by research question; theme by theme. However, based on the nature of the research, it is important to acknowledge that an ‘overlapping’ of themes and theory is evident between research questions and themes. The discussion aims to present the distinctness and interconnectedness of literature and theoretical positions across research questions and themes, reflecting the research process as non-linear and fluid.

As presented earlier (see Chapter Two: Literature Review), the research takes on board a psychological position whereby the social and psychological worlds of individuals are intertwined and inseparable. The social world becomes the psychological world (see Butler, 1995; Kovel, 1995; Fanon, 2004; 1967). Based on this, psychology will search for the links between the inner and outer worlds of individual participants, through reference to social and psychoanalytic themes. This method compliments the social constructionist standpoint adopted throughout the research, and adds to the positioning within CRT dialogues.

## Research Question A: What are mixed young people’s experiences of race and culture?

This section of the discussion focuses on the first research question detailed above. An exploration of participants’ interpretations of race and culture has the potential to give an insight into the aspects of racialisation, which are placed into stark relief when Black and White are subverted through mixed experiences. The aim of this section is to gain an understanding of mixed experiences as a part of the dominant understandings of race that are currently held.

### Higher Order Theme 1A: The Significance of Culture/ Heritage.

The theme of culture and/or heritage presented as significant for all participants in a variety of ways. Often, culture or heritage served as an ‘object’ (e.g. Laplanche and Pontalis, 1980) which participants used to define themselves against. At times, for example with Henry, culture served as the embodiment of his sense of self. At others, for example with Sativa, culture and heritage served as something to reject in light of an independent sense of self. Interestingly, racialised elements of culture and heritage were commonplace. The participants’ experiences of this aspect of race and culture move from strong identification to strong dis-identification. Regardless of the pattern of dis- or identification, the significance of culture and heritage appear to be formative for many.

The participants’ discussions highlight the social constructions that have influenced their thinking and understanding about culture and its meaning. Fanon (2004; 1967) and Kovel (1995) talk about the power of social and institutional structures in influencing individual psychologies around the construction of race. It is possible to see the pushes and pulls of this psychology on participants as they navigate their way through understanding culture; often from racialised positionalities.

For example, three participants demonstrate an identification or dis-identification with Black culture, or in some cases non-White or multicultural culture. This identification seems to be linked closely to participants’ individually held ideologies of Whiteness and Blackness, thus demonstrating the complex, interlinking relationship between the constructs; their constructions of Blackness and Whiteness feed directly into their identification or dis-identification with Black-*ness,* non-White- *ness,* and multicultural- *ness*.

Thus, a dis-identification with Whiteness could be seen as an identification with Blackness in its socio-political form, and/or an identification with Black culture or people. This places Blackness, multi-culturalism, and Black culture or people as outside of Whiteness, *and* separate from White people. The positionality that participants identify with seems to reflect this. Whatever their identification or dis-identification, every participant demonstrates a strong idea of what Black/ non-White/ multicultural and White cultures are, thus closely connecting these constructions with racialised ideologies of Whiteness and Blackness.

Moss (2006) uses the idea of ‘racial object maps’ to define the unconscious schema that individual’s hold in relation to what ‘being’ a certain race means. The author argues that whilst experience creates nuance in individual racial object maps, given the nature of many common experiences within society, culture, and history (Gaztambide, 2014); oftentimes there is a recognisable ‘constellation’ of characteristics which create levels of closeness and distance along the lines of culture, race, and ethnicity. This ‘racial object mapping’ could then be seen as part of the psychological mechanisms associated with the creations of Whiteness and Blackness.

Participants can be seen to be using their own ‘racial object maps’, shaped by their experiences, as a means of placing themselves and others as at some point within the constellation of what it means to be Black, White, or other (for example, in this case, mixed). Simultaneously, placing themselves and others along these lines draws on and reinforces participants’ racialised ideologies of Blackness, Whiteness, and non-Whiteness. Interestingly, whilst there seems to be some interrelationship between the constellations of Black and Blackness, mixed (in this case at least, although this could also relate to other ‘others’, such as Asian etc.) and non-Whiteness and multicultural, there is no such interlinking with Whiteness; it is always talked about as the ‘other’ by participants, as demonstrated in figure 5.1 below.

##### Figure 5.1 The Constellation of Black/Blackness, Mixed/Non-Whiteness, Multi-Culturalism in relation to White/Whiteness.

This presents a racial object mapping whereby both being White, and Whiteness in and of itself are standalone. From a Fanonian and CRT perspective, this could relate to the structures of society which have built, and continue to build, a representation of Whiteness and White people as something ‘pure’ in the face of all other non-White ‘races’ (Fanon, 2004, 1967, Gillborn, 2008, Leonardo, 2011). Thus, the participants’ racial object mapping reflects this ‘special othering’ of Whiteness, which places it not only as outside of, but also above, participants’ ‘non-White’ racial object maps.

Nicotera (1999) argues that this process can lead to a ‘duality’, whereby labels of ‘other’ are continually used as a descriptor; against which Whiteness as an ideology, and being White (which includes Whiteness as an ideology) is the norm. Whiteness as an ideology thus comes to represent ‘common sense’ and is no longer recognised as an ideological construction (Abercrombie *et al*, 2012).

Nicotera (1999) suggests that such relationships can contribute to the continuation of cultural spaces where marginalisation and cultural constriction win out. This is reinforced through a process whereby the ‘other’, and those who fit into Whiteness (White people), recognise and see themselves as such groups; much like the racial object mapping described above. In Nicotera’s argument, the process of racial object mapping experienced by participants, as influenced through their experiences of race and culture as being ‘othered’, maintains this system of being White as special both sociologically and psychologically.

Arguably, this is in action even when participants recognise a wish to move beyond this. For example, Sativa displays a distinct ambivalence towards cultural or racialised explanations of herself or others. However, at the same time, she speaks largely within the terms of Blackness and Whiteness, and finds it difficult to move beyond these. It is as if Sativa is developing a conscious awareness of her own racial object maps, and is attempting to move beyond these, but in so doing, is falling into them in unknown ways.

However, whilst Nicotera’s (1999) assertion certainly holds some truths, not every participant experiences their sense of non-White culture as something negative in the face of Whiteness. In fact, most seem comforted by the racialised aspects of the culture in which they see themselves a part of. Thus, whilst racial object mapping may come into play and create a sense of ‘other’, it must be kept in mind that this does not always necessarily lead to a sense of negativity in this identification.

**Reflective Box:**

Through supervision, and reading and re-reading my research, it has been noted that there is a lack of Whiteness in the research.

That is to say, it feels as though the White parentage of participants seems to have got ‘lost’ somewhere, and is commented on infrequently.

This strikes me as particularly interesting, as it is one of the aspects of the phenomena of mixedness that I have been most interested in and motivated by.

Reading participants’ transcriptions, I feel like this process starts there, with their discussions. This is not to ‘blame’ them, but to suggest that their talk reflects the society in which they live, where the White aspects of their parentage are disavowed in favour of dominant ideologies.

As a part of this as a researcher, I have continued this into my own interpretations of their experiences. Thus, the power of current ideologies is clear at every stage of this research process.

How this is dealt with and managed in future, I am unsure. However, perhaps the first and most important point is to begin to recognise this relationship in any further work and exploration of mixedness, and in day to day practice.

### Higher Order Theme 2A: Mixedness as Challenging Constructions.

Mixedness was a prominent feature of many of the participants’ understandings of race and culture. They talked about it in varying degrees throughout their interviews. Participants moved from expressing positive and day-to-day experiences and understandings of mixedness, to talking about the phenomena as challenging to live with and make sense of. Zadie Smith (2008a; 2008b) talks about this paradox between the day-to-day normality, and the remarkable difficulty of mixedness- as a phenomenon with which our monoracial constructions of race cannot make sense of or fully comprehend- in her lecture and subsequent essay ‘Speaking in Tongues’. It is this paradox that stands at the forefront of the theme ‘mixedness as challenging constructions’.

Participants such as Sativa present mixedness as a construction as problematic for themselves at times; presenting them with an obstacle of thought which they cannot move beyond. For others, the obstacle of understanding mixedness relates to the understandings of others, experienced by participants through the projection of such understandings onto the lived, day-to-day experiences of being mixed.

Rousseau-Anderson (2014) discusses this through the idea of ‘structural determinism’; ‘the idea that our system, by reason of its structure and vocabulary, cannot redress certain types of wrong’ (pp. 26). The author’s model suggests that structural determinism creates a framework through which the thought processes and understandings of individuals are filtered. In this case, mixedness presents a problem due to the constructions of race as discrete, Black and White, and either-or, based on historical social processes such as colonialism (Roussea-Anderson, 2014; Fanon, 1961; 1967).

In the participants’ experiences for this research, this process of structural determinism works at two levels; through the thought processes of the participants themselves, and through their recognition of the language used by others to discuss race, in particular *mixed* race. Thus, in recognising the constraints that the available language places on discussions of mixedness, participants (and other people more generally), take in and take on this difficulty as a reflection of mixedness in and of itself. This is seen through a need to be Black *or* White, and a perspective on mixedness as something inherently problematic for those who partake in said mixing.

Mixedness presents such a level of problem because its existence disturbs the structural determinism not only of society, but of the inner worlds of the participants and those they interact with. To reflect back to Smith’s (2008a; 2008b) paradox, whilst participants’ existence as mixed is simply ‘normal’ in the lived sense, their very mixedness can also be incompatible with their inner racialised world, where individuals exist as Black or White.

It is nearly the conscious reflection on mixedness in light of current racialised ideologies that brings about this feeling, rather than the mixedness itself. Participants’ interaction with the world around them embeds current racialised structures, through the limited capacity of our racialised language, in such a way that mixedness as a phenomena becomes problematised and a problem for current racial ideologies at societal and individual levels.

In such a way, whilst Roussea-Anderson (2014) discussed structural determinism as an external, societal force; we also see it here as part of an internalised structure which the participants and others in their world may at times find hard to move beyond.

### Higher Order Theme 3A: The Significance of Intersectionality.

Intersectionality refers to the intersection between various states of being or experiences (Crenshaw, 1993). In the case of the participants’ experiences, much of their talk gives an insight into the intersections between racialised experiences and gendered experiences. Oftentimes, the participants expressed their experiences of race and gender through reflections of masculinity and femininity. This frequently related to sexualised relationships or representations of themselves and of others.

The current study demonstrates aspects of intersectionality in both the male and female participants of the research. Femininity is both fetishised and called into question through the experiences of female participants Sativa and Emmy. Neither participants’ experience seem to have led to a positive sense of femininity.

Indeed, both female participants’ femininity appears to be either called into question or fetishised as a direct comparison to monoracial female peers across both Black and White groups. Tate (2007) argues that when Black beauty standards include both Black and mixed females, mixedness can be viewed as an ‘inauthenticity’ of female Blackness; mixedness and its potential appearance become an outward signal of a rejection of Blackness and its meanings.

The author argues that this begins a process of shame and melancholia; taken from the theorising of Butler (1997), who argues that gender as performative comes about through the ‘acting out of unavowed and unresolved grief’ (Tate, 2007 pp 309). In Tate’s (2007) conception of shame and melancholia, melancholia in the form of mixed feminine beauty ‘becomes the inability to grieve for the loss of the right to be a Black subject.’ (pp. 309).

Sativa’s experiences bring this idea to the fore eloquently, as she discusses ‘that mixed race hair thing’ (389-390), and the difficult relationships she perceived to have with Black girls in her primary school. Her comments highlight the problem with her mixedness as opposed to just the lighter colour of her skin, suggesting that elements of her mixedness *per se* create this difficulty.

Tate (2007) argues that this problem with elements of beauty in mixedness stems from the ‘lost and ungrievable Black origin’ (Bell, 1999) which mixedness and its appearance embody. The participants experience shame in relation to their mixedness as a state of the unthinkable-ness of mixing Black and White, and the exclusive beauty ideals which they both entail. If interpreted from a Fanonian perspective, this unthinklable-ness may also relate to mixedness as an outward symbol of colonialism and the violent subjugation of Black people. Thus, mixed beauty, and mixed femininity, becomes an internalised process of shame in which the very existence of mixed femininity as its own is difficult for those living with it to feel comfortable with.

Whilst Tate (2007) relates this experience directly to the mixed-Black relationships of gender and beauty, a similar pattern of exchange and understandings of the nature of mixedness could arguably be seen in mixed-White relationships of femininity and beauty. Emmy, for example, discusses aspects of her femininity in relation to her White peers. Whilst the mourning of Black beauty may not be an appropriate way to frame the nature of the relationship, elements of the ‘unthinkable’ of mixedness relate to both Black and White groups from a historical and political position (Fanon, 1961; 1967; Gillborn, 2008; Leonardo, 2011; Hall, 2010). In relation to her White female peers, and from a colonial perspective, Emmy’s mixed femininity and the potential beauty in it are unthinkable.

The relationship between race and gender in male participants is also interesting, and potentially leads to a differing set of questions and explorations on the subject. Of particular interest is the difference in the way that Tunde frames his racialised gender in relation to those around him. Whilst both female participants discuss their racialised gender in relation to their female peers, Tunde discusses male-female interactions.

Frosh, Phoenix and Pattman (2002) discuss the role that male positionality in relation to females takes in forming young masculinities in teenage boys. They suggest that an essential element of the masculine identity comes from the dis-identification that is placed on the female. This dis-identification is suggested to be initiated and maintained through the interactions and relationships that boys and girls perform with each other. Thus, masculinity exists as an identity through its performed ‘otherness’ to femininity.

Sewell (1997) goes on to argue that Black masculinities become separate and distinct from White and other racialised gendered identities through the differing positionalities that boys take. Sewell (1997) suggests that Black masculinities are positioned in a ‘phallocentric framework’; superior to White and Asian masculinities through increased levels of sexual attractiveness, style and ‘hardness’.

Whilst this may offer some level of insight into the constructions that are leading to the formation of Black identities, it has been criticised for the narrow characterisation of Black male identity (Howard, Flennaugh, and Terry, 2012). Howard, Flennaugh and Terry (2012) suggest that Black male identities may often be seen in this way by others as a result of the need to maintain an image of Black maleness for the benefit of Whiteness. In this sense, the construction of black maleness becomes a form of epistemological oppression (Sewell, 2016).

Related to this, the relationship between mixedness and masculinity cannot be answered alone through constructions of Black maleness. The experiences of Tunde and Henry give some insight into the complex layers of mixed masculinity and the internal and external mechanisms which play into this.

Tunde discusses the formation of masculinity from an interesting position. As commented on in the analysis section, he places himself as outside of the male-female interactions of Black and mixed boys in a way that he does not during other parts of his interview.

This could be seen as an element of Fanon’s (1967) and Du Bois’ (1994) theory of being ‘doubled’ or ‘double consciousness’, whereby an individual is placed within two places at once; Tunde sees that he is recognised as part of the behaviours of other Black boys, and so in some ways responds accordingly, but he personally places himself as outside of this group for this behaviour. This highlights some of the complexities of racialised masculinities, whereby racialised ideas of masculinity can become a constrictive performance.

Racialised masculinities present further examples of the ‘doubled self’ where Tunde describes the attractiveness of his mixedness to other girls. He describes this attraction to mixedness, as opposed to him, as ‘like a fetish’ (815-816). Here, Tunde again experiences a ‘doubling’ of self as a racialised male, whereby the perception of mixedness is attractive in and of itself.

Attraction to mixed maleness as fetish-like also suggests that there is a level of sexual deviance associated with mixed-male attraction. This could be seen as linked to Fanonian arguments, whereby in order to justify and maintain the continued oppression of Blackness, and maintain the position of power of Whiteness, Blackness and individuals who are positioned within this category are created as outside of humanity, in many cases animalised (Fanon, 1967). Tunde’s interpretation of how his mixed maleness is perceived by others could be seen as the continued remnants of this ideology, whereby there is something inherently ‘wrong’ with the attraction based on the animalistic ideologies surrounding Blackness.

Whereas before, Tunde turns away from the perception of his mixedness, here he turns to it and uses it through his performance of mixed masculinity, embracing the doubling. Howard, Flenaugh and Terry (2012) argue that this embracing of a racialised masculinity relates to the disempowerment felt my minoritised males, and an attempt to reclaim some power over the constructions of maleness that have been created for them. This disempowerment is further created through Tunde’s embracing of his perception, as a means by which currently dominant ideologies of Blackness are maintained through his performance, and thus acceptance, of the meaning of Blackness. This could be seen as relating to Fanon’s assertion of ‘Black skin, White masks’, whereby power remains wholly within dominant White ideology by non-White minorities through practice. Abdi (2015) summarises this eloquently when she states

*‘The White masks they wear are not representative of the performance of Whiteness in order to be ‘accepted’ but rather the performance of Blackness, in order to reflect back what Whiteness expects to see.’* (pp. 63)

Here, mixed masculinity reflects Blackness in the sense that it is non-White. Thus mixed masculinity becomes a hegemonic representation of Black masculinity which Tunde is both party to and the object of.

### Higher Order Theme 4A: Blackness as Problematic.

In the fourth theme, participants speak about Blackness in ways which draw on stereotypical notions of what ‘being’ Black means, thus demonstrating dominant ideologies which exist in relation to Blackness.

In Sativa’s discussion of Black maleness, her recognition of the demonisation of Black men, coupled with her assertion that they ‘cling on to it’ (line 303), demonstrates a position whereby she recognises and becomes a part of the continued construction of Blackness as problematic. Sativa’s interpretation of Blackness could be seen as exemplifying power relationships and the effect on the internal psyche of individuals, thus recreating and maintaining ideologies, as discussed by Butler (1997), Fanon (1967), and Althusser (1971), and much like Kovel’s (1995) model of the psychology of racism.

Butler (1997) argues that acts of power (on this occasion the constructed meanings of Blackness and Black people) become a part of an individual’s psychology through the ways in which they are transmitted as ‘truths’. In Sativa’s case, Blackness as problematic has become a truth for her, and thus entered into her construction of Blackness and what being Black means. In so doing, Sativa’s positionality also works at maintaining these ideologies as truth.

Taking Sativa’s positionality in relation to Blackness into account, it is interesting to examine the way she is positioned as Black by people in her family. Fanon (1967) suggests that the construction of Blackness and Black people through the power of Whiteness inflicts trauma, by producing mechanisms where individuals come to recognise and internalise notions of themselves as inferior non-White people. In Sativa’s case however, she does not recognise herself as a part of this Blackness, but is placed within this category by her family.

Whether mechanisms of trauma can produce the same actions when the subject themselves does not identify with the category they have been placed is one of interest. A possible way of interpreting Sativa’s positionality could be informed by Butler’s (1997) model of dis-identification, whereby an individual simultaneously sees the categorisation that others make of them in relation to an ideology, and fails to see themselves as within this category. As a mixed person, Sativa may be placed within this positionality in relation to Blackness.

Vargas (2013) argues that the process of dis-identification may contribute to a further disavowal of the object of identification (in Sativa’s case, Blackness). In Sativa’s case, this could be exemplified through the positionality she takes on Black men as ‘clinging on to’ the demonisation she recognises them as having experienced.

Henry’s position could be seen as the opposite of Sativa’s, thus exemplifying the potentially unique position of mixedness; able to experience the identification with, and categorisation as a part of, the otherwise largely binary constructions of race which currently exist. Unlike Sativa, Henry positions himself and identifies as within Blackness; for example, his use of the language ‘*we’re* going to, create a fight …’ [italics added].

In this case, Henry perceives the constructions of Blackness imposed upon his Black peers with which he identifies. This differs from Sativa in his positioning as a part of Blackness. Furthermore, Henry appears to go against this ideology of Blackness, again in opposition to Sativa’s positionality. Perhaps part of the difference in Henry’s response to the constructions he perceives come from his identification with Blackness. However, from a Fanonian perspective, this could lead to the position where Henry maintains the dominant ideology through his performance of it. In Fanon’s (1967) model, racial ideologies are internalised and maintained through ‘performance’ by those who are placed within the categorisations. In this case, Henry’s refuting of the ideology suggests that this is not the case.

A possible mechanism for making sense of Henry’s position comes from Harding’s (1991) Standpoint Theory. Standpoint Theory posits that those in lesser positions of power may be in a better position to take an alternative epistemological position. Henry’s positioning as a mixed person, who experiences categorisation within both White and Black groups, and who identifies as Black, may be uniquely well placed to allow him to avoid the acts of power that Fanon (1967) describes.

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| **Reflective Box:**  Of interest was the way I often felt positioned as within the experience of mixedness by my participants. They appeared to place me as sharing their mixed identity almost automatically, and I felt as if I reciprocated this in my interactions with them. Whilst I had an awareness of this, I also had the sense of being unable to remove myself from it, either through my actions towards them or them towards me.  The impact that this could potentially have had on the nature of the research; in particular the double hermeneutic cycle, is something worth considering. From my own standpoint, I feel that my ‘within-ness’ on the subject of mixedness, for this theme in particular, could potentially add a further level of insight into the mechanisms at work in creating a mixed identity.  Feeling in some ways a part of it could give the chance to express and pick up on ideas which may not be accessible to those who do not find themselves within this group. Conversely, my position may also lead to a lack of criticality on the subject, and an inability to see beyond my own experiences to ‘pick apart’ those of the participants. |

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### Higher Order Theme 5A: Mixedness as an Identity.

As stated previously, participants often talked about mixedness, and the meaning of mixedness to them. Whilst there were at times some challenging aspects to this (for example, higher order theme 2A), there was also a strong sense in many of the participants that mixedness provided them with a strong sense of identity on its own, creating an identity that moved beyond monoracial constructions.

Butler’s (1997) theory around refused identification could provide a structure for thinking about the mixed identity presented by participants. In Butler’s model, refused identification posits disavowed grief for the ‘unthinkable’, based on dominant ideologies. In Butler’s original model, the ‘unthinkable’ refers to homosexual love through parent to infant (e.g daughter to mother love, son to father love), as something outside of dominant constructions of gender. Male and female genders are thus created through the melancholia of rejecting this homosexual love; male and female genders are constructed on the basis of opposite sex love. In the current case, the ‘unthinkable’ represents the participants’ mixedness, as described by Tate (2007) when discussing Black beauty from a mixed perspective.

By using Butler’s (1997) model, the loss associated with not being Black *and/or* not being White, from the perspective of the highly racialised notions of being Black and being White associated with Blackness and Whiteness, leads to a sense of grief. Being unable to *be* Black, or *be* White, in the delineated, racially ideologically driven perspective, creates a grief which cannot be consciously acknowledged in those that have the lived experience of mixedness. Through this process of grief, the mixed identity begins to be formed.

**Reflective Box:**

From a personal perspective, this model can give some insight into the sense of common experience that was felt between myself and the participants around the identity of mixedness. Whilst participants and myself hailed from differing backgrounds and no doubt had different experiences, this unconscious sense of grief for an idea of what is lost in mixedness could lead to a sense of shared emotional togetherness between the group.

Thus, this perspective gives some insight into the nature of mixed identity with distinct reference to the inter-relationships between myself as a mixed person, and the participants. I say this, as many of the participants have demonstrated at other times a strong affiliation with being a part of Black culture, Black people, and Blackness.

Consequently, it is not possible to suggest that participants have fully ‘lost’ their mono-racial selves. Instead, it seems that in the presence of another or others who they identify as part of mixedness, in this case myself, participants partake, albeit unconsciously, in this process. Perhaps my own feelings of being placed firmly within the mixed identity by participants is a product of this phenomena.

Gaztambide (2014) argues for a Lacanian model whereby the act of recognising the ‘unthinkable-ness’ of mixedness brings into focus the real nature of race, as an imaginary and shifting object. Through the joint recognition of this between mixed persons, the mixed identity creates emotional containment for the emotions experienced as part of the ‘unthinkable’; fostering the positive sense of the mixed identity. Gaztambide (2014) argues that such experience ‘paves the way for a unique kind of freedom’ (pp. 95) from the constructions of Whiteness and Blackness. Thus, mixed experience and identity becomes an emotionally containing and identity-freeing experience for those who place themselves as within it.

With reference to the reflective box above, perhaps in this situation, such a relationship is only possible under certain contextual circumstance. Bringing to the fore my own experiences within this dynamic with participants again, the common sense of being understood and recognised as mixed, on an unconscious level, served as a positive experience for myself as a mixed person. Indeed, a number of participants commented on this themselves. Perhaps part of the contextual circumstance which allows for this to happen is a sense of recognition, which may not be as possible when faced with monoracial peers. Thus, a sense of mixed identity is shaped by environment.

Fisher *et al* (2014) have suggested that a lack of affirmation to Blackness or Whiteness can lead to negative experiences in mixed individuals. In the authors’ model, a lack of affirmation within a group contributes to difficulties in forming a sense of identity, in particular a positive sense of identity (Fisher *et al*, 2014). The discussion above highlights the potential strengths and difficulties with theories such as Fisher *et al*’s.

Most notably, the authors’ theory is created from only the perspective of monoraciality; mixedness is a problem because mixed people cannot affirm to being ‘purely’ ‘Black’ or ‘White’. However, the participants’ experiences above suggest that affirmation is not constricted to Blackness and Whiteness; it can move beyond this in varying ways, if given the opportunity and potentially, the right contextual environment. Consequently, the potential role for Fisher *et al*’s model of affirmation is clear, but the epistemological constraints they place on constructions of Blackness and Whiteness limit the strength of the theory in exploring the ever more varied experiences of mixed individuals.

This is particularly important to keep in mind, as it highlights how epistemological oppression in the construction of racialised Blackness and Whiteness can misrepresent, misunderstand, and problematise mixedness and other identities which move beyond Black and White.

## Research Question B: How do mixed young people interpret their experiences of childhood and education?

This section of the discussion focuses on the second research question detailed above. Childhood and education are formative periods of an individual’s life. With this in mind, a focus on the childhood and educational experiences of the participants’ attempts to explore their experiences, and draw upon psychological perspectives which explore the meaning of these experiences for participants as mixed.

### Higher Order Theme 1B: The Significance of Isolation and Belonging.

Participants’ experiences and interpretations of the theme isolation and belonging in relation to their mixedness were interesting. The title of the theme ‘isolation and belonging’ gives a clear insight into the level of difference which has been experienced between participants in relation to them feeling a part of something. Whilst the terms ‘isolation’ and ‘belonging’ provide useful descriptors of the experiences, they do not give great insight into the processes that maintain a sense of isolation and belonging.

One theory which may provide a useful point of reference when interpreting participants’ experiences is that of ‘mirroring’, introduced by Winnicot (1967), and further discussed by Fonagy *et al* (2007) and Target (2007). In Winnicot’s (1967) model, the ability to recognise and control our own affect develops through a process of interpersonal interaction with caregivers. In this model,

*‘our experience of our feelings is based on internalisations of our mother’s expressions as she reacts to our emotional expressions, mainly by mirroring them.’* (Target, 2007 pp.520)

This leads on to a process of mentalisation, whereby through a caregivers ‘markedness’ (recognising the infants emotions and portraying it back to them in a ‘pretend’ way) or ‘motherese’ (‘the special, empathic and playful way of talking to babies’, Target, 2007 pp.521), the inner and outer reality of the child can be seen as linked, but also separate.

Fonagy *et al* (2007) go on to suggest that emotional expressions which are not reflected or mirrored by the caregiver will undermine appropriate labelling of internal states, which may lead to confusing, ‘unsymbolised and hard to regulate emotions’, where the ‘inner and outer reality of such states are confused’ (Target, 2007 pp.521).

Target (2007) discusses that some states of being in infants and children may be experienced as difficult for the caregiver to mirror, leading to incongruence in their mirroring towards a child’s emotions. A caregiver’s response may lack ‘markedness’ (Target, 2007 pp. 520), making the emotions they are attempting to mirror seem as though their own to the child, thus overwhelming the child. Conversely, they may behave in an exaggeratedly marked manner, thus distancing themselves from the child’s emotional state, and leaving them bereft of emotional containment of the emotions they are experiencing (Target, 2007).

Target (2007) suggests that when such events occur, the child’s self-coherence in relation to the emotion, and the object of the emotion that they are experiencing, can become ‘alien’ to themselves. Conversely, the emotion may become overwhelming in its capacity. Winnicot (1967) indicates that when emotional experiences fail to be contained through the mirroring capacity of the caregiver, a child can find it difficult to relate to the objects that have led to the particular emotional experiences of the child.

Through the stories of participants, it is possible to see how aspects of this theory could relate to their feelings of isolation and belonging in different domains. Examples of a lack of markedness in relation to emotions associated with mixedness can be seen through Emmy’s discussion. She experiences significant levels of isolation from her parents and her school life. Her experiences of isolation are highly racialised.

*‘when I went to school ... I was only, me and my sister’ [were mixed] (77-78), [in response to racism based on her mixedness] ‘I did withdraw into myself because ... no one wants to talk about it’ (395-397).*

Emmy’s childhood mixed experiences, and the emotions she feels in response to these, are turned away from by adults around her; she does not experience the emotional containment of mirroring in relation to feelings that develop relative to her mixedness; her differentiation from the group that she understands as being related to her mixedness. Thus, Emmy’s experiences of a lack of mirroring of emotions associated with her mixedness are experienced as a sense of emotional isolation from those closest to her.

In contrast, Henry’s childhood presents as filled with experiences of ‘good enough’ emotional containment of his emotions associated with his mixedness, in the sense that no parenting can be perfect, and it is this necessary imperfection that also supports the emotional development of a child (Winnicot, 1967). This is encompassed through the mirroring of feelings associated with his mixedness from his family life (e.g [talking about mixedness] ‘my dad always said it’s the best of both [laughter] lines 866-867), and in his school life (in relation to non-White cultures- ‘we just used to share stories and stuff really’ line 547), to his extra-curricular activities (‘feeling accepted and a part of something growing up’ lines 783-784). In so doing, his mixedness, and the feelings he associates with this, can experience containment; fostering a positive sense of belonging in him.

### Higher Order Theme 2B: Racialised Perceptions in the Development of Self-identity.

Childhood and education are formative in the development of a sense of self-identity (Target, 2007). Fisher *et al* (2014) have argued that mixed CYP face greater difficulties in forming a sense of identity than their one-race peers of minority and majority backgrounds because of their ‘lack of fit’ with one race or culture, meaning they are unable to experience a positive affirmation within one racial or cultural group.

Alternative perspectives suggest that difficulties in the ‘mixed identity’ stem from the constraints that current racialised ideologies place on individuals of mixed backgrounds (Song and Aspinall, 2012). In this argument, ideology contributes to the continued reproduction of the necessary states for maintaining current power relations (Althusser, 1971). In respect of racialised ideology, this would relate to the maintenance of Blackness as subjugated by Whiteness.

In the current research, participants demonstrate various racialised perceptions of themselves by others, across their development from childhood through to young adulthood. Often, whether participants are perceived and positioned as Black, White or mixed appears to be dependent on obvious phenotypical features (for example, hair texture and skin tone) in relation to that of whom they are being perceived and positioned by. Arguably, this places participants’ mixed self-identity formation across childhood as something uniquely flexible across otherwise relatively fixed racialised categories; participants experience themselves as continually ‘othered’ by monoracial groups.

For example, Sativa discusses being positioned as Black by others. This is influenced by the colour of her skin, her afro hair texture, and her relationships with Black peers. Interestingly, she notes how this differs when she wears her hair in straight styles, known as ‘relaxing’. She goes on to discuss how her behaviour differs depending on who she is with and how she feels they are racially positioning her.

This experience reflects the notion of ‘doubling’, first introduced by DuBois in 1903 (DuBois, 1994), and later expanded upon by Fanon (1967) ‘in which an individual sees himself through the eyes of others and as such behaves the way others expect’ (Abdi, 2015 pp.63). Dubois (1994) and Fanon (1967) use this idea specifically in relation to power relations in which the self-understanding of Black people is limited through their performance of the negative ideology of Blackness.

*‘I am overdetermined from without. I am the slave, not of the idea that others have of me, but of my own appearance.* (Fanon, 1967 pp. 116).

In Sativa’s experience of doubling as a mixed individual, she ‘doubles’ herself in contexts where she is perceived in different racialised forms. Thus, she ‘performs’ at an identity which differs in its racialised ideology dependent on the racialised group with which she feels she needs to perform to. In such a way, Sativa’s mixedness serves only to maintain various dominant racialised ideologies in which her mixedness is always viewed as ‘other’.

Tunde and Henry discuss similar experiences throughout their childhood, which are again based on their appearance in relation to others. When they are Whiter than others, they are positioned as White; when they are *different* from White and Black groups (for example, Henry’s green eyes and curly hair), they are positioned as mixed.

Gaztambide (2014) argues that these experiences of varied positioning relate to assertions of power and ownership over the individual being positioned. The author states

*‘depending on the context and content of the discussion, all that does not fit neatly into a very specific category of what is ‘White’ or what is ‘Black’ is simply exchanged and lumped together on the other side.’* (Gaztambide, 2014 pp. 93).

Thus, the current participants can be viewed as in a state of exchange between dominant racialised groups, as a means of defining what is and is not Black and White, based on context.

Gaztambide (2014) maintains that experiences of such positioning can create in those who experience it a fractured sense of racial identity, whereby an individual experiences limited affirmation of their sense of racialised self. This can be seen in Tunde’s discussion, where he talks about feeling perceived as ‘pretending’ to be Black or mixed when he is perceived and positioned as White.

However, Gaztambide (2014) reasons that such experiences may not always be negative. He argues that this position, which gives rise to a fractured sense of racial identity, is actually a state that others with less racial ambiguity take time to understand, or never do. The author contends that ambiguous, or in this case mixed experiences of racialised perception and positioning can be seen as contributing towards a more flexible sense of racial identity. This in itself allows for a greater appreciation of the self without the confines of racialisation, and the contextual nature of the process of racialisation (Gaztambide, 2014).

Thus, from Gaztambide’s perspective, the childhood experiences of participants may well have served to develop within them a fractured sense of racialised identity. Importantly, however, such a racialised identity should not be viewed in a negative manner. Instead, according to Gaztambide (2014), this reflects race as a wholly idealistic construction created based on the needs of society, as opposed to an epistemological truth which should hold true meaning as to who a person is. Participants could be seen as in a position of greater individual freedom through their development of a non-binary racialised identity, which has been, rather ironically, shaped through the highly racialised ideologies which they have been party to from various contextual angles.

This could also relate to Standpoint Theory in epistemological oppression, whereby the oppressed experience the opportunity to view phenomena without the lens of the maintenance of domination to skew them (Harding, 1991). The childhood experiences of the participants from varying positionalities may mean that they are able to appraise elements of Blackness and Whiteness which are more difficult to see from within. In so doing, the sense of racialised freedom which Gaztambide (2014) references could be easier to achieve from a position of mixedness, highlighting the constructed nature of race.

**Reflective Box:**

From a personal perspective, this theme struck me as incredibly important in considering mixedness, and links back to my original motivations for the research (the experiences with a tutor) - mixedness is always at the hands of dominant racialised ideologies, but its position gives it the ability to move dependent on who is perceiving it.

The pushes and pulls of mixedness, always in relation to others’ dominant racialisations, seem to me to highlight the ‘problem’ of mixedness as opposed to any element of mixedness itself.

### Higher Order Theme 3B: The Power of Educational Experience.

Educational experiences were a common topic of discussion for a majority of participants. For most, ‘fitting in’ and feeling happy featured prominently in discussions relating to education. Thus, education appeared to relate to the formation of a positive or negative sense of who each participant was. Oftentimes, education also appeared to relate to participants’ experiences of being the ‘other’. Interestingly, and more markedly so than in other themes discussed by participants, experiences of being ‘othered’ often appeared along both racialised and class lines.

Education appeared to act as a means through which participants’ feelings of being ‘other’ could be normalised and celebrated, or otherwise. Worth commenting on is the fact that, throughout and across the educational experiences of participants, they were often being ‘othered’. At no point did participants seem to have experiences which were not ‘other’ or different from a ‘norm’. In this instance then, education seems to play a role in forming a sense of non-Whiteness in participants.

Althusser (1971) discusses the idea of the ‘Ideological State Apparatuses’; a set of institutions, moving from the church to the family, and including education, which serve to reproduce the necessary relations of production (e.g. economic wealth and power) for that which is in power (e.g. Whiteness). Althusser’s (1971) model can be seen as a useful starting point from which to view the role of education in forming participants’ sense of non-Whiteness, particularly when used alongside Kovel’s (1995) model and the works of Fanon (1967, 1961).

Kovel (1995) suggests that institutionalised ideologies become a part of individual psyches, which are then acted upon. Participants’ experiences in the instances they describe could be viewed as them at the receiving end of the institutionalised ideologies which have become a part of the psychology of those around them. Those around them act upon these ideologies, thus demonstrating to participants in a variety of ways that they are recognised and positioned as ‘non-White’.

Fanon (1961) suggests that over time, such acts also become an imbedded part of the psyche of those who are racially positioned as non-White, as a ‘psychoexistential complex’ (Fanon, 1967 pp.5). Fanon (1961) suggests that this can have a significant impact on the feelings of self-worth of those who are racialised as non-White; impacting on their feelings and behaviour in relation to the world around them, often leading to them behaving in ways which reinforce racialised ideologies of non-Whiteness. This is seen in action, for example as ‘non-Whiteness as not academic’, as commented on by Howard, Flennaugh, and Terry (2012); produced through Tunde when he comments ‘Because there was there was points where I thought ah I just want to leave like I can’t be arsed with this’ (lines 525-526) and his subsequent disengagement from his lectures.

Fanon (1967) posits that education as an institution acts as a form of colonialism, whereby the dominant position of Whiteness is reinforced as a ‘truth’, much like Althusser’s (1971) argument that power, and thus educational institutions, need to find ways of reproducing in people a submission to the rules of the established order. The participants’ experiences from a mixed perspective seem interesting with regards to this. The participants are exposed to as much of this colonisation as any other ‘non-White’ group. It seems that in the case of the educational institution, a distinction is made in terms of Blackness and Whiteness, as opposed to Black and White. Thus, as outside of Whiteness, participants are subject to powerful messages and positions whereby achieving success within education appears to relate to the adoption of a homogenous version of ‘the university student’.

*‘The colonised is elevated above its jungle status in proportion to his adoption of the mother country’s cultural standards’* (Fanon, 1967 pp. 18)

The power of this message is demonstrated through Tunde and Henry’s experiences of trying to adapt to university (lines 535-536 and 259-261), and the negative feelings that Tunde, Emmy, and Henry discuss feeling towards themselves and their university experience. Each participant demonstrates an internalisation of Whiteness, and an internalisation of themselves as lesser to Whiteness demonstrated through the difficulties they face in trying to adopt the outward signs of it.

At this point, class also seems to be a significant barrier to participants’ ability to become a valued member of their university experience. Not only are participants denied value along colour lines, but they experience their lack of ‘middle class’ background as a further barrier to becoming a valued member of their university experience.

Gaztambide (2014) suggests that the boundaries of Whiteness exist as a means to uphold particular facets of Whiteness in relation to context, and what is at stake in different contexts. Participants’ experiences suggest that such a phenomena may be in action here, as the boundaries of Whiteness are moved to exclude certain class elements, which in another context, may well include White people.

Althusser (1971) suggests that education has a particular stake in maintaining its position as a means of continuing economic production. For example, by excluding the working classes from active engagement in education, their continued servitude to working class jobs (thus reproducing existing economic power) is maintained. Participants’ experiences of exclusion along class as well as racialised lines could be seen as an example of this in action.

Participants’ university experiences also demonstrate the power of the university institution in maintaining epistemological oppression. Each participant showcases experiences whereby the homogeneity of the university student is presumed, adopted, or forcibly pressed upon them.

Each participant seems disabled from contributing fully to the university systems which they are in, meaning that their contribution to constructing the knowledge and experience of university is denied. Such experiences lead participants to feel alienated and powerless to the individuals who embody this system and the system itself. Frighteningly, the power of such oppression leads to the disengagement of many of the participants. The experiences of participants here could provide a useful point for reflection with regards to the phenomena documented by the HEFCE, which demonstrates lower levels of attainment, and higher levels of non-continuation in BAME student populations (HEFCE, 2015., 2013).

Once more, this experience seems to go beyond non-Whiteness in racialised terms, and includes those outside of a certain form of ‘middle’ class. This ‘middle’ class appears to be situated within those with significant amounts of disposable income, but moreso, seemingly with a certain type of historical relationship with education and an assumption that education is in some way *for* them, in that university as a culture appears to be natural and normal to individuals from this background. Tunde’s comment ‘someone put their hand up and said like, well don’t you think you’re talking to the wrong crowd here because we’re all middle class here ...’ (line 249-250) exemplifies this level of assumption in one of his peers.

Accordingly, in this situation, education serves as a tool to maintain current constructions of a ‘middle-class’ Whiteness most forcibly, by denying and excluding all other forms of non-Whiteness. These experiences could again relate to Gaztambide’s (2014) position that when more is at stake, Whiteness will enforce stricter limits on what constitutes Whiteness.

However, education is also presented as important from a positive perspective by Henry. Interestingly, Henry is the only participant who presents a positive picture of an educational experience. This also relates to a primary school, as opposed to a secondary school or university experience. Interestingly, Henry discusses ways in which he felt valued as an individual, and a mixed individual, in his discussion of positive primary school experiences. This seems in direct contrast to his own and other participants’ comments about university, where homogeneity of a particular ideological construction of ‘the university student’ appears to be the most powerful driving force. Perhaps this level of individuality which appears to be fostered through Henry’s primary experiences relates to the significant differences presented between university and primary experiences for the participants.

## Conclusion.

This chapter has focused on discussing the analysis of participants’ experiences of race and culture and childhood and education, from a mixed perspective, in relation to relevant literature covering topics on racialisation and racism. The discussion draws on theories of the psychology of colonialism, and psychoanalytic theories reflecting on power, to explore the themes presented through the experiences of participants, presenting a positionality on mixedness from a CRT perspective. The discussion has highlighted the possible link between mixed experiences, and the level of power and domination that colonial racialised ideologies hold on the thinking, understanding, and psychologies of individuals; mixed and otherwise, who are a part of and subject to current society.

# Chapter Six: Implications for Educational Psychology Practice.

## Introduction.

### How can Educational Psychology practice develop through these accounts?

As discussed in Chapter 2, mixed CYP are likely to experience under-achievement in school, and lower levels of attainment and completion in HE; the mechanisms behind which are as yet unclear. With this in mind, consideration of the practice of Educational Psychology in relation to mixed CYP is likely to be of importance. Educational Psychologists (EPs) are well placed in their work with educational institutions, individuals, and their families to have an impact on the outcomes of CYPs’ educational experiences. Based on this, the chapter focuses on the practice of Educational Psychology in relation to the analysis, and related discussion, of the experiences of mixed participants for the current research, hoping to inform ways in which Educational Psychology in practice may support mixed CYP.

The chapter uses the ‘Standards for Educational Psychology Training’ (BPS, 2015) ‘diversity and cultural difference’ standard competencies as a guide for shaping a brief exploration of the implications of the current research on Educational Psychology practice. Table 2.1 in Chapter Two illustrates all of the standards related to ‘diversity and cultural difference’. A rationale for the selection of competencies can be found in Chapter Two, alongside table 2.1. For the purpose of this chapter, a smaller number of specific competencies are used as discussion points to highlight key practice issues, seen in table 6.1 below.

##### Table 6.1 Implications for Educational Psychology Practice in Relation to Standards for Educational Psychology Training.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Standard Description/ Number | Relationship to implications for EP Practice |
| *Standard 3.1: ‘Demonstrate appreciation of diversity in society and the experiences and contributions of different ethnic, socio-cultural and faith groups.’* | In an increasingly ‘mixed’ world, it is likely that EPs will have greater opportunities to work with both mixed CYP and their families, directly and indirectly. It is hoped that some of the issues presented by participants, and through interpretative phenomenological analysis, will open up a dialogue around understandings and constructions of diversity within the field, with a particular focus on the meanings and understandings of Blackness and Whiteness that professionals hold, and the impact this might have on individuals who place themselves both within and outside of these narrow constructions.  An area for consideration which practicing EPs may find useful is the continued construction of the participants within this study as Black or mixed. This highlights the lack of consideration for the part of them that *is* White- they all have a White parent. This highlights an issue of diversity in which Whiteness is excluded from it. EPs may wish to consider that an element of mixed CYPs diversity may feature Whiteness, and that this is a reflection of their lived experiences.  In this way, the current study opens up a potential dialogue on the role of epistemological oppression in the practice of Educational Psychology. Readers of the current research are given an opportunity to explore potentially differing epistemological positions to their own, and explore first-hand accounts which shed light on the level of power that epistemological oppression holds on the lived experiences of mixed people, who at times at least have experienced race and culture, and childhood and education, outside of dominant epistemological constructions of race.  Part of the role of EPs should be to co-construct meaning to a given phenomenon with those they are working with (Billington, 2000). EPs are well placed to work alongside CYP, their families, and professionals to co-construct new meanings and understandings of diversity which reflect the ever more varied experiences of British communities. It is hoped that the current study has given practicing professionals some insight into ways in which a lack of understanding of diversity beyond the ‘Black’ and ‘White’ can serve as limiting to CYP who identify as outside of these categories, and a means by which to begin thinking about ways they can work to move beyond these.  From a social constructionist perspective, the role of language in shaping constructions of how we see the world is key. This idea relates closely to ideas of epistemological oppression, particularly within the role of the EP. Billington (2000) notes the role that EPs play in constructing narratives of individual CYP through their use of both oral (e.g when working with a CYP, when in consultation with other adults and professionals involved in supporting a CYP), and written (e.g. through the reports and consultation records written about CYP) language. Consequently, the language we as professionals use can be seen as directly shaping the constructions, and therefore the outcomes, of CYP (Billington, 2000).  Taking this perspective on board, consideration of the language used when working with and for mixed CYP is of particular importance. Practicing EPs should consider their own professional role in shaping the language used when working with mixed CYP in order to develop new ways to construct their identities and beings in ways which reflect their experiences as mixed CYP, rather than only the racial ideologies in which we currently exist. |
| *Standard 3.3: ‘Take appropriate professional action to redress power imbalances and to embed principles of anti-discriminatory and anti-oppressive practice in all professional actions.’* | Issues of power are explored in detail as part of the current research. In particular, the continued power of Whiteness in producing and maintaining racialised ideologies, and the potentially constricting nature of these ideologies is highlighted through the experiences of participants in this research.  The current research is able to give an insight into how the participants’ experiences of mixedness have been shaped through dominant ideologies. By demonstrating this process in action through the experiences of the participants, and using psychological theory to further potential understandings of this in action, it is hoped that the still very real power of Whiteness is made clear to to practicing Educational Psychologists. In so doing, it is hoped that those within the field will feel more able and willing to see, explore and confront this potential power imbalances in day to day practice.  From the position of mixedness in particular, the demonstration of how the current participants’ experiences have been pushed and pulled on individual and institutional levels as a means of maintaining the current positions of power gives practicing EPs the chance to reflect on their own experiences and practice, and what role they could and should play in disrupting similar experiences for CYP who may find themselves in the middle of this phenomena in the future.  Of particular importance is the role of educational institutions in shaping CYP’s experiences. Participants’ experiences in the current study have demonstrated the potentially subjugating role that educational institutions may have on individuals. EPs are well placed in schools, and with the new SEN Code of Practice (2014), also in colleges and universities, to explore power imbalances and embedded oppressive practices within institutions (Sewell, 2016).  Frehill and Dunsmuir (2015) suggest that increasing feelings of belonging to school settings can be important in supporting school engagement for BAME pupils. Through practice which highlights the role of listening to and valuing alternative voices across educational institutions, EPs could contribute to the development of educational communities which foster a sense of belonging across varying groups of CYP; in the process supporting the redress of current power imbalances (Frehill and Dunsmuir, 2015).  It is also hoped that, through hearing the voices of current participants, practitioners will be able to reflect more deeply on the potential role they play in maintaining current power imbalances within educational institutions. An ability to reflect on this is likely to be the first point in redressing such imbalances (Sewell, 2016).  For example, it may be useful to reflect on practitioners’ own racialised ideologies, and the impact they have on the formation of racialised assumptions, or assumptive curiosity, when interacting with mixed CYP. Such racialised assumptions may further subjugate mixed CYP, thus reflection on ways that these assumptions are impacting on practice is likely to be important in constructing meaningful ways of working with mixed CYP. |
| *Standard 3.5: ‘Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of different cultural, faith and ethnic groups, and how to work with individuals from these backgrounds in professional practice.’* | This standard is important for practice on two points, which converge and diverge. The experiences of the current participants create a picture whereby mixedness moves beyond its racialised constructions based on colonial and subjugating narratives of Blackness and Whiteness. Instead, we see that the lived experience reflects normal, individual experiences of everyday life.  At the same time, however, the fact that society is so racialised also means that participants have a number of common experiences of being the subject of society’s racialisation of Whiteness and Blackness. Thus, in another way, the phenomena of mixedness for these participants also presents many shared experiences which come to have a common meaning for mixedness. This is reflective of the paradox discussed by Smith (2008a; 2008b) discussed in earlier in this chapter.  This position is important for the practice of Educational Psychology, and related to this standard in particular, in that it demonstrates that having ‘knowledge and understanding of different cultural, faith and ethnic groups’ is in and of itself a paradoxical position, as ‘knowing’ how to work with a racial or cultural group is only as good as ‘knowing’ how to work with an individual.  The current research has highlighted that what may be more important for this ‘knowing’ to take place, is for professionals to spend time and explore the ways in which the world around individuals from different cultural, ethnic, or other backgrounds they live in, is shaping their lived experience within this culture/ethnicity/faith etc.  By coming from this perspective, ‘knowns’ become related to history, society, politics and context, and the individual, as opposed to features of the group; in this case the mixed group. Hopefully, by using such a technique, practicing EPs will be able to gain a sense of what mixedness means to each individual, rather than uncritically imposing ideological constructions of mixedness (or other racial/ethnic etc. groups) onto an individual.  In so doing, practicing EPs may also begin to reflect a part of the system around mixed children whereby their mixedness is no longer problematised, shied away from, or over-emphasised, as discussed in the Winnicotian mirror stage (Winnicot, 1967). Such an approach could then give rise to the recognition and subsequent emotional containment of mixed experiences for individuals who identify this way, giving their mixedness value and acceptance, and a place of its own, within societal constructions.  This standard could and should also be addressed from an academic perspective. Many EPs engage in some form of research aspect within their role. Furthermore, as a social science, Educational Psychology is often lauded for its approaches being based on ‘evidence based practice’.  The literature review for the current study has highlighted how little research into the field of mixedness, and race in general, has recently and is currently taking place in the field of Educational Psychology. Given that ‘evidence’ can range from both quantitative and qualitative research designs, and offer different, but valuable ‘evidence’ to inform practice, it seems to be imperative that the field of Educational Psychology prioritises race and mixedness in its academic endeavours. Without this, it seems unlikely that practicing professionals will be given the opportunity to reflect on their practice in relation to mixedness and race in general. |
| *Standard 3.6:*  *‘Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of gender and sexuality and the impact of stigmatising beliefs.’ (3.6)* | The current research has demonstrated how experiences of racialisation and gender have intersected to create unique experiences for the participants. The participants present experiences which have been interpreted as unique to the mixed experience, but also relate specifically to constructions of Blackness and Whiteness.  The importance of stigmatising beliefs may also be a topic for consideration for practicing EPs. One of the most noticeable points throughout the current study is the continued construction of the participants as mixed or Black. What is rarely touched upon is the participants’ connection and belongingness to Whiteness- one of their parents is White.  With regards to the role of gender, sexuality, and stigmatising beliefs, it is important to recognise that many gendered constructions of participants, which have led to negative constructions of the participants (and thus demonstrate stigmatising beliefs), come from the disavowal of their White-ness in favour of their non-Whiteness. Their non-White gendered identities are racially ideologised into often problematising and stigmatising constructions of what it means to be a non-White male or female.  An understanding an appreciation of this facet of mixedness is likely to be important for EPs when considering gender with regards to the racialisations of mixed CYP. In particular, consideration of society’s ability and capacity for thinking about mixed gender from varying racial positions, reflective of the individual as opposed to dominant racialised ideologies, is important. An initial starting point for EPs may be simply to keep in mind that mixed CYP are both Black and White, but that this is limited by the ideologies in which we exist. |

## Conclusion.

This chapter has focused on the implications of the current research on Educational Psychology in practice. The aim of this chapter was to provide a framework through which the reader could begin to critically reflect on their practice within a racialised world. The chapter highlights how aspects of current training standards on culture, ethnicity, and diversity, are addressed through the experiences of participants and interpretations of their experiences in the research. It has provided key points for reflection, with a focus on the nature of diversity, and the role of immediate and socio-political context on understandings and constructions of mixedness, with particular reference to the dynamics of power and subjugation that exist in the current racialised world.

# Chapter Seven: Strengths and limitations of the current research.

## Introduction.

A discussion of the implication for EP practice lends itself to consideration of the strengths and limitations of the current research. Chapter 3b of this text considers and discusses a number of potential strengths and limitations of the current method, as presented by Yardley (2000) and Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009). In the interest of brevity, these aspects will not be re-examined during this chapter. Instead, the reader should attend to chapter 3b for more information on these.

This chapter instead focuses on some strengths and limitations of the current research in light of the specific topic covered. Potential implications for future areas of research are also discussed in relation to these. Table 7.1 below describes some of these:

##### Table 7.1 Strengths and limitations of the current research and implications for future research.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Strength/ limitation | Implication for future research |
| A literature review of the topic indicates that mixed Black-White CYP have not been explored through research in the field of Educational Psychology up until this point. | The current research offers only a tentative, initial insight into the phenomena of mixedness. Further research to explore the topic in relation to the field of Educational Psychology is likely to be important in building an appreciation and understanding of the topic and its implications for practice. |
| The current research utilises clearly rationalised, specific theoretical frameworks, based on power and racialisation, to explore the topic. | The current research utilises specific theoretical models, suggesting that exploration using other models may also prove a useful way of extending an appreciation of the topic. Furthermore, further research may also lead to the opportunity to extend existing theoretical models, or begin to explore new models in relation to this topic. |
| The current research involved YP as opposed to children to explore the topic. This could mean that the YP were more removed from the actual lived experiences; influencing their interpretations and thus the research. It may also mean that the current study’s analysis and discussion of the topic is removed from current children’s lived experiences. | Further exploration of the topic including children may prove informative in relation to exploring experiences of current mixed childhood. |
| The current research explored only the experiences of YP who identified as being mixed Black and White. | Further research taking into account other variations of mixedness is likely to be useful in exploring a greater breadth and depth of the topic and contributing to greater levels of appreciation of mixedness today. |
| The current study explores how EP practice can be influenced by the current research through a focus on reflection and reflexivity in practice. It offers minimal discussion on practical methods of actioning anti-oppressive practice, or an exploration of attempts to action anti-oppressive practice. | Future research may wish to explore the role of Educational Psychology in practice in supporting anti-oppressive practice in educational institutions from a racialised perspective. |

## Conclusion.

This section has attempted to highlight key areas of strengths and limitations in the current research which have not been discussed in the methodology chapter. The chapter highlights both strengths and weaknesses of the current study and relates to potential areas for further research in relation to the topic.

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# Appendix A: Original Proposal.

MR CYP Educational Experiences and Academic Attainment.

Introduction.

This proposal aims to provide a working guide for my upcoming Doctoral Research Thesis. The following proposal aims to provide readers and myself with a clear rationale for the proposed research, with practical and theoretical issues which may affect the research taken into account. In order to cover all relevant aspects of the research, the proposal will be divided into subheadings offering points for consideration. These will relate to the background and rationale, research questions, design and methodology, analysis, time management and logistics, and finally dissemination of results.

Background and Rationale.

Children from ethnic minorities are often identified as over- represented in a number of vulnerable groups within the British education system. In particular, children from ethnic minority groups have frequently been identified as under- achieving at school level. Consideration of why such groups under achieve has become increasingly high on governmental agendas. The way that such under achievement is understood can be argued to draw upon different discourses around ‘race’, and the effect that this has on educational experience and further, educational attainment.

Groups of ‘mixed race’ (MR) CYP have become increasingly recognised over the past decade or so. Potentially, the growth in MR populations offers challenges to the current discourses that exist with regards to race. The assumptions around the idea of ‘race’ in such discourses could arguably be posed with a problem when CYP with parents from differing racial backgrounds are taken into account. Where such CYP fit with regards to constructions of ‘race’ may make it difficult for the current discourses to create meaning through the observed phenomena.

At present, there seems to exist a number of discourses which problematise discussions around educational experience and its effect on attainment for MR CYP. Arguably, the dominant discourses and understandings of race as a static, immovable and definitive entity seem to play into this.

For example, much current policy on ethnic minority CYP focuses on ‘Black’, ‘Asian’ or ‘Chinese’ CYP (Sims, 2007), failing to take into account that other variations on such racial labels may exist. Understandings of race which are constructed around the idea of discrete racial groups may make it more difficult for CYP with more than one racial background to ‘fit’ with our current knowledge state. Society could be argued to problematise ‘mixedness’ even when MR is identified, for example in the currently available academic research, MR is often constructed along the lines of ‘broken homes’ and ‘identity crisis’ (Britton, 2013., Caballero, 2007).

The discourses available around ‘race’ and what it means to fit into a certain racial group arguably have the potential to inform how CYP think about themselves. Critical Race Theory argues that discourses around black culture portray ‘blackness’ in particular, often negative ways. For example, Howard, Flennaugh and Terry (2012) argue that black masculinity is often portrayed as devaluing education and academic success. From a social constructionist perspective, such imageries are likely to shape individual’s understandings of themselves, suggesting that such imageries could have a negative educational impact on those identifying as black.

How such imageries affect MR CYP is a potential area of interest. I would argue that as a society, we struggle with ‘mixedness’ and prefer to be able to place people in one racial category. If this is the case, children and young people of mixed origins may also be influenced by the discourses that surround them. Of interest is how such discourses are navigated by CYP who potentially find themselves as part of different ‘groups’ for different people? Does their ‘mixedness’ affect how they have experienced education and the choices they have made with regard to educational achievement?

In particular, this research is interested in how CYP from black and white British parentage are affected by racial discourses. This is influenced by a number of factors. Firstly, as an individual with a black and a white parent, the research topic is of personal significance to me. Secondly, CYP with a black and a white parent form the largest group of MR CYP in the UK (Owen, 2007). This number also continues to grow, suggesting that as a society and a profession, we need to work towards extending our knowledge in this area. Finally, I feel discourses around blackness have a long social and political history within this country. I feel the long standing history of these discourses has the potential to be particularly influential to those who may feel defined by them. Understanding how these discourses affect CYP who potentially create difficulties for our understanding of them stands out as a useful way of challenging ourselves and our society with regards to what we understand by ‘race’.

As an individual who identifies themselves as MR, I feel that the dominant discourses around race and MR offer a limited understanding of MR CYP largely from the perspective of those without close first-hand experience of MR whose own racial position places them in a more powerful position. I feel that some of the ‘problems’ of ‘mixedess’ come from being part of a society where race is seen as something clear cut and discrete. How such discourses influence how MR CYP understand themselves in relation to educational and academic attainment may help to give an insight into how mixedness is experienced for those who are it.

Based on this standpoint, the current research aims to explore the discourses available in relation to MR CYP, through exploration of their educational experience and attainment. The research aims to explore the discourses drawn upon when discussing education and attainment for MR CYP, from the perspective of CYP themselves and at a broader level. Seeking discourses at differing levels aims to explore how MR is constructed at different levels of society and from different positions of power.

From the perspective of the Educational Psychologist, such research gives professionals working with MR CYP the opportunity to gain a perspective on the discourses which are pertinent to individuals themselves, against the backdrop of the dominant discourses available in the educational policy which can act as a powerful factor within our roles. By gaining the voices of those less heard, as an Educational Psychologist I hope to be able to keep in mind such discourses in order to provide a sensitive service which aims to work with a CYP’s best interests. Having had the opportunity to hear the voices of a small number of CYP may support my ability to work with others in a more sensitive manner. Further, through an understanding of the dominant discourses in use, as Educational Psychologists we may be in a better position to avoid inadvertently perpetuating negative discourses whilst supporting others to think beyond the dominant discourses which are available, instead taking into account the discourses important to those less heard.

Research Questions.

At present, my research questions are as follows:

* What discourses are drawn upon when constructing understandings about educational experience and attainment in children and young people labelled as ‘mixed race’?
  + How is educational experience and attainment in young people labelled as ‘mixed race’ constructed by school staff?
  + How is educational experience and attainment in young people labelled as ‘mixed race’ constructed by their parents?
  + How do young people labelled as ‘mixed race’ construct their educational experience and attainment?
  + How are children and young people labelled as ‘mixed race’ positioned by themselves and others in relation to their educational experience and attainment.

In order for the research questions to clearly guide the thinking and understanding of the research itself, it is important to define what is meant by the term ‘mixed race’, and to qualify the use of this term of phrase as opposed to other, potentially more modern terms which are in use today.

For the purpose of this research, I use the term ‘mixed race’ to talk specifically about children who come from a background with one black Caribbean/ African/ British parent and one white British parent. To justify this decision, I think it is important to acknowledge that at present, children with one black and one white parent make up the largest MR subgroup in Britain. Furthermore, children from black and white parentage also experience gaps in attainment similar to black children in the UK (Bhattacharyya, Ison, and Blair, 2003). This reflects one of the largest gaps in educational attainment across the education system. Children of other racial mixes, such as Chinese and white British and Indian and white British do not experience such large gaps in attainment.

On a practical level, then, I feel that a focus on a group who are potentially more easily accessible will be to my benefit as a researcher with a finite amount of time to produce my research. From the perspective of an Educational Psychologist, I also feel that work which seeks to support children who experience lower level of educational success offers a more relevant path of research.

On a more personal level, I also feel the strongest affinity to labels of ‘mixed race’ where the individual has a black and a white parent, as I would consider myself to come from this background. As a researcher I feel this gives my proposed topic personal meaning and potentially a level of identification with the topic that would not be possible without my own personal connection.

Qualifying my use of the term ‘mixed race’ also seems an important point to cover, given the fact that oftentimes, ‘mixed race’ is no longer the language of choice when discussing the identified group of people. For example, current guidance often promotes the use of the term ‘dual heritage’ (Owen, 2007). I think it is important to recognise then, that different individuals may prefer the use of different terms, and the meaning of these terms may be different. From my own perspective, I choose to use the term ‘mixed race’ for a number of reasons. Firstly, this reflects the language that I grew up with and which I feel defines a part of myself as an individual. I want my research to reflect a part of me and my values, so I feel this is one way of achieving this.

My choice of language is also influenced by the social constructionist standpoint from which I am undertaking this research. The social constructionist perspective argues that ‘reality’ is created by the experiences and the world we live in, and that what we know is one version of reality as opposed to the version. With this in mind, I feel the term ‘mixed race’ offers fits most closely with how I see our current understanding of race. For example, ‘race’ in a genetic sense has been disproven (Owen, 2007). However, I would argue that society’s idea of race exists today just as strongly as in the past, due to our understanding of race along phenotypic lines such as skin colour and hair texture.

Thus, whilst theoretically, ‘race’ does not exist, I would argue that individuals are still often placed in ‘racial categories’ based on their phenotype. For this reason, I feel the term ‘mixed race’ most accurately represents our understanding of individuals with parents of differing ‘racial’ phenotypes. Language such as ‘dual heritage’, for myself, fails to capture society’s emphasis on phenotypical features and therefore does not encompass my understanding of mixture in parenting.

Design and Methodology.

*Design.*

The research aims to explore what discourses influence how people construct ideas of educational experience and attainment in MR CYP. The research will utilise a Foucauldian/Critical discourse analysis to analyse semi-structured interviews of a member of school staff with experience of working with MR CYP, a parent(s) of MR CYP(s), and two young people identified as ‘mixed race’. This would create a total of four to five participants and four semi structured interview transcriptions.

The research takes a social constructionist perspective, critical realist perspective, which argues that our own knowledge and reality is shaped by our experiences at an individual level and at social, political and historical levels. This perspective argues that one reality does not exist, but also posits that the experience of ‘reality’ is true to those experiencing it. Taking this perspective into account, the current research aims to explore how different understandings of a phenomena influence a particular area of ‘knowledge’- being ‘mixed race’ in a UK school, and the influence of this on educational attainment. The research aims to explore the nature of different understandings, and how they impact upon a small number of young people who form part of the group in question.

The research also takes the perspective that due to the social, political and historical nature of our understandings, we are often shaped by dominant discourses which enforce and maintain power dynamics of the most powerful. In the case of this research, dominant discourses around race arguably maintain the marginalisation of ‘non-white’ individuals, and reinforce this through an understanding of ‘race’ as categorical and mutually exclusive. Gaining the discourses from those who do ‘fit’ with the dominant discourses gives the opportunity to explore alternative understandings of the subject of race, and aims to empower and give voice to more marginalised sections of our society.

In order for the research questions to be answered, the individual questions will be mapped on to the participant group. The research question regarding positioning will serve as a backdrop to all three participant groups, in order to provide the means to explore the social, political and historical contexts within which their discourses lie.

In analysis, the research aims to answer the broader research question ‘What discourses are drawn upon when constructing understandings about educational experience and attainment in children and young people labelled as ‘mixed race’?’ through exploration of each research sub-question individually, leading to a synthesised exploration which integrates key themes across all of the research questions/participants.

This approach aims to create a body of argument which is able to reflect upon the differences in discourses, but can also highlight where discourses seem to be of particular importance across groups. It is hoped that this approach will allow for discussions which take into account how dominant discourses influence people’s understandings in different ways depending on their own position in terms of power.

*Sample.*

The sample will involve identifying three different groups of participants. This will include a parent(s), a member of school staff and two young people. All participant groups will be interviewed by the researcher using semi- structured techniques.

The parent participant group will need some consideration, and will also depend upon the available sample. For example, consideration needs to be taken as to whether one parent could act as a voice for the whole parent body, particularly when the parents will likely by definition come from differing racial backgrounds, which could potentially affect their understanding of their child’s status. If parents were to be interviewed together, the potential for more difficult and conflicting conversations needs to be considered. The ability of the researcher to navigate this will be of importance. Furthermore, the effect of sharing personal views with another person present will need to be considered, and the effect on the quality of the data gathered may need to be thought about.

An alternative solution to this would be to interview parents separately, or interview a single parent. The difficulty with interviewing parents separately would be greatest in terms of the practicalities of data gathering, transcription and interpretation. It is unlikely that in the given time scale, so much data could be utilised.

Interviewing a single parent could also have the potential to change the context of the interview and be more focused on the ‘single’ nature of the parenting situation than the mixedness itself. Managing this would be potentially difficult for the researcher.

The school participant would likely comprise of an opportunity sample of someone willing to partake in the research. The participant would ideally be a member of teaching staff. Again, a semi-structured interview technique will be used. The reasoning behind this is based on the assumption that teaching staff will likely have had the highest level of training in terms of their understanding of education and attainment. Given that this serves as a focus for the research questions, I think it will be of use to access a member of school staff who is most able and most confident to reflect on the research question with education and attainment in mind. Furthermore, I feel that, given that teachers in schools are largely in charge of planning curriculum materials and delivering lessons, their insight into how this relates to mixed race and race will be the most relevant to the research topic.

I feel that it may be useful to access a member of teaching staff who teaches at compulsory schooling age, i.e. from foundation to year eleven. I feel that this is most in keeping with my research questions, and whilst it puts some distance between the age of my young people and the experiences of the teachers, it offers more of an insight into the area that I am interested in.

Consideration will need to be taken with regards to how approach and how I interview teaching staff. The nature of the subject and the fact that I myself am ‘mixed race’ may make staff feel threatened by my research question. I will need to work hard to make sure that the questions appear exploratory and non- threatening, and that I am transparent in my aims with regards to the research.

In order to access some of the discourses used by CYP who are identified as mixed race, semi-structured interviews will be conducted on an individual basis with two young people. The young people will be of college age, having finished their GCSEs and now be attending at further education. The hope with targeting such a sample is that, in being of a slightly older age range and having been through their core schooling experience, young people will be in a better position to reflect on an educational experience. The hope with this age range is that through no longer being in school, the young people will be able to reflect on ‘childhood’ experiences, as opposed to the ‘young adulthood’ they may potentially feel they have now entered. The slight distance between being in school and being in a college or sixth form aims to allow participants to think about an experience which could be seen as an earlier phase of their life than the one they are now in, which may make it easier for them to share their thoughts and feelings on the subject. Furthermore, this age range may also be able to give a greater level of informed consent for the topic in hand.

It may be worth considering the gender of the participants, and whether both male, both female, or a mix of participants would be most beneficial to the study. Current research exploring the idea of identity formation in black young people in the USA would suggest that often, racial and gender discourses run both separately and as part of racial understandings (Jones Thomas, Hacker, and Hoxha, 2011). Given that the research aims to explore how discourses shape educational experience and attainment, consideration of the differences between males and females in this area may be of some interest. However, if a male and a female participant were to be used, it would be important to keep in mind that the research was not aimed at becoming comparative, or about gender per se. However, due to the potential difficulty in gaining a sample, it may be that an opportunity sample is used which includes a male and a female for ease as opposed to relating to the research aims itself. If this was to be the case, careful consideration of the effect that discourses around gender may be having on the interview will need to be considered.

*Pilot Study.*

In order to inform my research, I aim to complete pilot work in the form of a semi-structured interview with a young person identified as ‘mixed race’ and an adult, preferably an adult in a school setting. The pilot work will make use of a set of questions which I have planned, which I will be able to draw upon whilst conducting the semi-structured interview to prompt and open up discussion.

I feel that the most important role of the pilot work will be to give myself as a researcher the opportunity to think carefully about the types of questions and the language I use to form discussions. Given that I aim to use a semi-structured interview style, I think it will be important to frame a set of potential questions which communicate the research topic in a way that highlights key themes of the topic, particularly the emphasis on educational experience and attainment.

The pilot stands out as a useful time to assess how my language impacts on the way that participants communicate with me. For example, I am aware that as an individual who may be identified as ‘mixed race’ by others, that being interviewed on the subject by myself may feel difficult for some people. I think there is the potential for this difficulty particularly when considering the teacher group, as they may have the least personal and most professional links with the theme. This could make it more challenging to present a set of questions which lead to a non-judgement, exploratory and balanced interview process.

Based on this argument, I feel that conducting my pilot work on the teacher adult participants will be more important than running pilot work with parents. I feel that working with teachers poses the largest challenge to my research, and making sure that I have time to reflect on both the questions that I use, and the way that I respond to the communication of others through the interview, in terms of verbal responses, body language etc, will be important to giving me space to reflect on my approach as a researcher.

I also feel that it would be useful to complete pilot work with a young person if possible, for many of the same reasons as working with teachers. Moreso, I feel that working with young people will require consideration of issues such as informed consent. I need to make sure that I am able to communicate the topic of my research and the nature of the questions I will be asking in a way that is accessible to young people. Furthermore, consideration of the potential power imbalance may be useful to think about when completing pilot work with young people, such as ways that I can make them feel comfortable and able to speak freely and easily in my company. Finally, I hope that pilot work with young people will also give me the opportunity to gain some level of insight into how talking about a subject, which may be quite personal to some, is experienced by the young participants. Having an awareness of this will be useful in terms of making sure that my participants are treated with respect and no psychological harm can be done to them.

*Method, Data Collection and Analysis.*

I will be collecting data from the transcriptions of four semi-structured interviews. Some time needs to be put on considering the approach used to transcription and coding. Whilst there is no one set way of transcribing, coding and analysis for Foucauldian/ Critical Discourse Analysis, I feel it would be beneficial for myself as a first- time qualitative researcher to follow a method developed by others. For example, Potter and Wetherall (1987) describe methods for conducting discourse analytic research and analysing discourse. I aim to use a method outlined in one of these texts, making small changes to suit my own research if appropriate, in order to have access to some level of defined process.

As a general overview, the chronology of the research will run as follows. Firstly, interviews will be conducted and recorded using a Dictaphone or electronic recording device. For security, I think it will be useful to record on more than one device. It may also be worth considering the placement of multiple recording devices in the space used in order to make sure that the interviews can be clearly heard.

Interviews will then be transcribed, which can be argued to use a degree of interpretation, particularly in terms of transcription for discourse analytic approaches, which require transcriptions of pauses, intakes of breath, coughing etc. The transcriptions will then be read and listened to simultaneously, to ensure that transcription is as accurate as it can be, and in order to get an initial feel for the data. After this point, initial coding will be performed to interpret emerging themes. A full analysis of the text based on Foucauldian/ Critical Discourse Analysis will then take place which will hopefully present a number of levels of discussion.

The method employed will entail a lengthy process, particularly given the amount of interviews I wish to conduct. Simply the process of transcribing the data is likely to take a great amount of time. Because of this, making sure that I am able to collect my data at an early stage will be important. Ideally, I would like to be able to collect data through interviews in the summer term, allowing the month of August for transcription, and early autumn for analysis.

Time Management and Logistics.

Time management will be of the greatest importance for the success of my research. This relates particularly to the interview, transcription and analysis process. Making sure that I gain ethical approval without any setbacks will hopefully mean that I am able to begin pilot work in April/May time. Using this time frame, this would allow me June and July (before summer term finishes) to complete the interviews themselves. The greatest hurdle here is likely to be my access to participants. If I am able to find willing participants, organising a slot of a morning or afternoon to complete the interviews will probably be of limited impact. However, if I struggle to find willing participants, the whole research schedule is likely to become significantly slowed.

Because of this, I think it would be beneficial to spend some preliminary time during the early stages of my research networking amongst colleagues and schools through conversations, in order to assess whether anyone knows of potential participants. Whilst nothing can be committed to writing before the ethical application has been accepted, I feel if I am able to begin conversations around the topic at an early stage I am more likely to gain an adequate number of potential participants.

I also need to consider the possibility that I find it difficult to gain access to one of the groups of participants in particular. In this instance, I feel this would have the least impact if a parent(s) participant was difficult to recruit, or I only managed to gain access to one young person. However, I feel that the key topic of my research needs to have access to at least one young person and an adult from an educational/school background. Whilst ideally, I would have access to teachers, if this became particularly difficult, I feel the research aims would still be met if I were to use another member of staff in a school, for example a Teaching Assistant. With regards to the young people themselves, I am hopeful that at least one young person will be willing to discuss the topic with me.

I feel it may also be useful to plan for the event that I am unable to gain all my interview data during the summer. In this case, it would most likely be useful to utilise my time in the summer to organise another area of my research, such as the methodology. This would still mean that I would have little time for data collection and analysis in the autumn, but at least some of my time would have been freed up by having already completed my methodology.

Dissemination of Results.

For the debriefing process, I think it will be necessary to consider the ways in which participants may be affected by the interview and discussions. I would like to be able to give participants the chance to ask any questions about the interview process to me in person and also through other sources of communication, such as email or telephone. Particularly for the young people I wish to work with, being able to point them in the direction of additional support with regards to the subject may be useful and help to avoid situations where they may feel challenged or sensitised to the subject. Some research around agencies which are available to young people may be necessary to look into in order to facilitate this.

The chosen methodology of my research tends to avoid an active contribution of participants in the interpretive phase of the research. This is largely because of the interpretive nature of the methodology, and the assumptions it makes with regards to how aware, or unaware, participants may be in terms of reflecting on the discourses that they are utilising. With this in mind, I do not plan on involving participants in this stage of the research. This also needs to be considered in terms of dissemination of my findings. Some of the topics the research covers may be difficult, challenging or sensitive to the participants. However, I also feel like part of the research process is based on the idea of giving voice to the more marginalised, and I believe this should include my own research. Based on this, I would like my participants to have access to my findings should they wish. For this to work practically, I think it will be important to make sure that I have fully communicated the nature of the methodology I have chosen to use, and how this methodology manifests in terms of the dissemination of findings.

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# Appendix B: IPA Proposal.

Exploring experiences of school from a ‘mixed’ perspective.

*Introduction.*

This proposal aims to provide a working guide for my upcoming Doctoral Research Thesis. The following proposal aims to provide readers and myself with a clear rationale for the proposed research, with practical and theoretical issues which may affect the research taken into account. In order to cover all relevant aspects of the research, the proposal will be divided into subheadings offering points for consideration. These will relate to the background and rationale, research questions, design and methodology, analysis, time management and logistics, and finally dissemination of results.

*Background and Rationale.*

Children from ethnic minorities are often identified as over- represented in a number of vulnerable groups within the British education system. In particular, research has demonstrated that Black Caribbean and Black African children and young people under-perform in comparison to their white peers at school (Bhattacharyya, Ison and Blair 2003). Figures from the Department of Education (DfE) demonstrate this relationship at GCSE examination level (DfE, 2013; 2014).

Attempts to understand the nature of the relationship between Black ethnic minorities, under achievement and disadvantage in education come from varying perspectives and positions. For example, arguments have been made for the inherently lower intelligence levels in minority, particularly Black groups (Pilkington, 2003). Others argue that Black culture does not place value on education and thus deemphasises the need for success in this area (Howard, Flennaugh, & Terry, 2012).

More critical perspectives argue that such arguments form the surface of an issue that runs much deeper. For example, Critical Race Theorists such as Picower (2009), Reid (2013) and Pilkington (2012) argue that inequalities are political and social, shaped by our institutional practices and stereotypes which deliver negative images and expectations of ‘blackness’, which impact black children and young people at varying levels across education and their experiences of childhood.

At present, the literature available in relation to black children and young people, education and childhood provides extensive discussions with varying perspectives. However, in the United Kingdom, children with one Black parent and one White parent are now the fastest growing group of children, with more children under five having Black and White parentage than only Black parentage (Owen, 2007).

Furthermore, available information on the childhood and education experiences of children from this background indicates that they also present as a disadvantaged group. For example, DfE results demonstrate that children from White and Black Caribbean parentage perform significantly below national levels (DfE, 2014), similar to that of their Black peers. Furthermore, children of Black and White mixed parentage have been shown to be over-represented in care population (Fusco & Rautkis, 2012) and experience higher levels of poverty (Bratter & Kimbro, 2013).

The relationship between childhood, education, and children with a Black and a White parent, however, is less explored, but provides an interesting and relevant topic for Educational Psychologists as professionals who often work with disadvantaged and under achieving children and young people. For example, the extent to which the current arguments relating to children with two Black parents are also relevant to children with one Black and one White parent is one of interest. Arguably, oftentimes assumptions regarding the ‘sameness’ of children with ‘a’ Black parent, whether one or two, are made. For example, 2001 demonstrated the first time a ‘mixed’ category was available in the UK census (Owen, 2007). Further, current policies and procedures relating to the support of ethnic minority children and young people group the support of children with one Black and one White parent with that of their peers with two Black parents (e.g. Jackson & Samuels, 2011).

Arguably, such an approach comes from the social construction that race is static and immovable; one can either be one race or another, not both. I would argue that the societal and historical context in which we live has created and continues to create this idea of race, and that as individuals our own understandings are influenced by this. For example, Critical Race Theorist Thompson (2011) argues that historically, categorising individuals as either Black or White had social and economic benefits, whereby the privileges associated with whiteness were maintained through the idea of a ‘pure’ race, where whiteness could only be preserved through no mixing between colours. This can be exemplified in the American ‘one drop’ rule. Whilst this rule was not named in British society, arguably our association with colonisation and slavery made this an unspoken rule which affected, and affects, our own ideas around racial categorisation.

At present, there is very limited research available on children and young people with a Black and a White parent. The research that does exist tends to focus on the challenges that come with being the result of a mixed racial relationship. For example, it has been argued that children and young people with mixed racial origins face greater difficulties in forming a sense of identity than their peers of majority and minority groups. Identity development theories suggest that in order to achieve a positive sense of identity, children need to have the opportunity to develop a sense of positive affirmation with their own race and culture. It has been argued that children of mixed racial background face difficulties with this as it can be difficult for them to affirm with one race or culture, as they are often part of more than one (Sycarah, L, Wei-Wen, Jessica, & Kenneth, 2014).

Further, it has been argued that children with different racial parentage often come from families which are inherently steeped in difficulties, largely argued to stem from the fact that parents come from two different racial backgrounds. For example, research from the 1960s identified a number of mixed race families where the Black fathers were seen to maintain transient or non-existent contact with their children (Edwards, Caballero, & Puthussery, 2009). It has been argued that a lack of access to the minority side of a child or young person’s developmental experience can leave them feeling alienated and without a space in which they can identify (Sycarah et al., 2014).

I would argue that a large amount of research available on children and young people with one Black and one White parent takes a problematising approach, whereby the childhood and educational experiences of children and young people with differing racial parentage is seen from the perspective of those who fit into one racial category, thus the ‘problem’ with mixed parentage is within the ‘mixedness’ itself.

As an individual with a Black and a White parent, I feel that this perspective can be limiting and for some individuals, fails to acknowledge an alternative perspective and experience on ‘race’ as a construct. I would argue that society’s construction of children and young people with one Black and one White parent may not fit with the views and experiences of the children and young people themselves. For example, Aspinall & Song (2013) and Song & Aspinall (2012) found that young people with various mixed parentage chose to identify themselves in various different ways, and put varying emphases on the idea of ‘race’.

The above research provides support for my own viewpoint that the experience of having one White parent but being perceived as ‘not white’ or Black, or the experience of being constructed as problematic and ‘confused’ may have an impact on how such children and young people make sense of their experiences and the world around them, and these may not fit with the dominant ideas that most research into the topic proclaims. My own experiences of growing up as part of this phenomena have often led me to feel that the ‘problem’ of my mixedness is not within myself, but with the difficulties that society has in perceiving and understanding outside of fixed racial categories.

With this in mind, the current study aims to approach the phenomena of having parents from Black and White backgrounds from the perspective of those who share this experience, as opposed to from the perspective of those who experience life through a ‘monoracial’ lens. As a researcher, I take a social constructionist perspective. My viewpoint is further supported through the adoption of the arguments of Critical Race Theorists, whereby the societal and historical context in which individuals operate, in this case where ‘White’ views and experiences represent the dominant majority perspective, creates disadvantage at societal, institutional and individual levels for those outside of the dominant groups.

Through the adoption of a Critical Race Theory perspective, I aim to explore the phenomena of mixed Black and White racial origins. Of interest is how young people with a Black and a White parent navigate and make sense of cultural and ethnic experiences, with a particular emphasis on their interpretation of school experiences. My hope is that through drawing on the perspectives of Critical Race Theory, I will be able to interpret experiences in a way that has meaning both at an individual and a societal level.

I would argue that this research is particularly pertinent to the developing role of Educational Psychology. On an immediate level, Educational Psychologists work to support children, young people and their families who may be vulnerable in terms of their childhood development and access to social, emotional and academic education. Children with a Black and a White parent are demonstrated to form part of some of these more vulnerable groups (Gargi, Liz, & Maud, 2003). Further, core competencies for the role of a practicing and fully qualified Educational Psychologist include those related to diversity.

Whilst Educational Psychologists are in a position to explore issues relating to ethnic minority individuals such as Black, Pakistani and Bangladeshi populations through available research, and apply this to their practice with such groups, the relative dearth of available literature on children with a Black and a White parent may arguably make working with such children and young people more challenging. For example, Aspinall & Song (2013) and Song & Aspinall's (2012) research suggests that the views of those who are part of the phenomena of mixed parentage may differ from the research problems discussed in other research. Educational Psychology research that gives voice to those within the phenomena utilising a critical approach may allow for more sensitive and reflective practice in Educational Psychology.

*Research Questions.*

In order to explore the phenomena discussed above, the following research questions will be explored:

* How do ‘mixed race’ young adults interpret their experiences of school?
  + How do racial and gender categories intersect in the accounts ‘mixed race’ young adults give of their school experience?

How can an analysis of these accounts inform Educational Psychology practice?

For the purpose of the research questions, I am choosing to use the term ‘mixed race’ to define children and young people with mixed Black and White parentage. I aim for the research questions to clearly guide the thinking and rationale behind the study. Thus, it is important to define what is meant by the term ‘mixed race’, and to qualify the use of this term of phrase as opposed to other, potentially more modern terms which are in use today.

In the context of this research, I use the term ‘mixed race’ to talk specifically about children who come from a background with one black Caribbean/ African/ British parent and one white British parent. To justify this decision, I think it is important to acknowledge that at present, children with one black and one white parent make up the largest mixed parentage subgroup in Britain. Furthermore, in the United Kingdom children from Black and White parentage also experience gaps in attainment similar to Black children (Gargi et al., 2003). This reflects one of the largest gaps in educational attainment across the education system. Children of other racial mixes, such as Chinese and white British and Indian and White British do not experience such large gaps in attainment. For example, DfE statistics from 2013/14 demonstrate that whilst 67.2% of ‘white and asian’ children achieve 5 or more GCSEs at grade C or above, only 49.0% of ‘white and black Caribbean’ children achieve this level, compared to the 56.6% national average. At present children from other ethnic groups and White British make up very small percentages of the British population.

On a practical level then, I feel that a focus on a group who are potentially more easily accessible will be to my benefit as a researcher with a finite amount of time to produce my research. From the perspective of an Educational Psychologist, I also feel that work which seeks to support children who represent some of the more socially disadvantaged and educationally deprived groups offers the most relevant path of research.

On a more personal level, I also feel the strongest affinity to labels of ‘mixed race’ where an individual has a black and a white parent, as I come from this background. As a researcher I feel this gives my proposed topic personal meaning and potentially a level of identification with the topic that would not be possible without my own personal connection. I would like to be able to utilise and reflect on this position within the research process, with the view of being as aware and explicit as possible with regards to how this has influenced the research.

Qualifying my use of the term ‘mixed race’ also seems an important point to cover, given the fact that oftentimes, ‘mixed race’ is no longer the language of choice when discussing this group of people. For example, current guidance often promotes the use of the term ‘dual heritage’ (Owen, 2007). From my own perspective, I choose to use the term ‘mixed race’ for a number of reasons. Firstly, this reflects the language that I grew up with and which I feel defines a part of myself as an individual. I want my research to reflect a part of me and my values, so I feel this is one way of achieving this.

My choice of language is also influenced by the social constructionist standpoint from which I am undertaking this research. The social constructionist perspective argues that ‘reality’ is created by the experiences and the world we live in, and that what we know is one version of reality as opposed to the version. With this in mind, I feel the term ‘mixed race’ fits most closely with how I see our current understanding of race. For example, I would argue that society’s idea of race exists today just as strongly as in the past, due to our understanding of race along phenotypic lines such as skin colour and hair texture.

Thus, whilst theoretically, ‘race’ does not exist, I would argue that individuals are still often placed in ‘racial categories’ based on the way we look and our ethnic history. For this reason, I feel the term ‘mixed race’ most accurately represents our understanding of individuals with parents of differing ‘racial’ phenotypes. Language such as ‘dual heritage’, for myself, fails to capture society’s emphasis on phenotypical features and therefore does not encompass my understanding of mixture in parenting.

*Design and Methodology.*

The research aims to explore the phenomena of ‘mixed race’, with a focus on the experiences of school from the perspective of those who have lived the experience. In order to explore the topic at a deeper level, the research also aims to explore the intersection between racial and gender categories in the accounts given by ‘mixed race’ young people. This aims to explicitly acknowledge the potential for intersection, particularly from a CRT perspective, from the outset of the study.

The research will utilise Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) to analyse semi-structured interviews with four young people with one Black and one White parent. This would create a total of four participants and four semi structured interview transcriptions.

The research takes a social constructionist perspective, which argues that our own knowledge and reality is shaped by our experiences at an individual level and at social, political and historical levels. This perspective argues that one reality does not exist, but also posits that the experience of ‘reality’ is true to those experiencing it.

Furthering this, I am taking a Critical Race Theory perspective. This argues that at a societal and historical level, positions of power and dominance have afforded privilege to ‘whiteness at the expense of non- whiteness. This has led and continues to contribute to a system at institutional and individual levels whereby non-whiteness remains in a less powerful, less dominant and less successful position. Arguably, these practices and belief systems are at such an ingrained level that often, we are unaware of them and take them as truths. I feel that this position adds a contextual framework to my stance as a social constructionist and allows for a clear interpretative standpoint at the point of analysis.

From the position of a social constructionist and a Critical Race theorist, I aim for the research to explore how experiences of school, and potentially racial and gender categories, are understood and interpreted by a group of people who represent a phenomena which does not wholly fit with society’s current understanding of race and racial categories. Arguably, the ‘mixing’ of races leads to questions around what it is to be black and what it is to be white, and of course what it is not. Groups of young people who have experienced a Black and a White parent may arguably reflect on their experiences and understandings of this in a unique way.

In order for the research questions to be answered, the individual questions will be mapped on to the participant group. Smith, Flowers & Larkin (2009) suggest that research questions should be primary and secondary in nature. Primary research questions aim to be open and grounded in the epistemological position of the research, in this case a social constructionist standpoint. My overarching research question ‘how do ‘mixed race’ young adults interpret their experiences of school’ aims to explore the phenomena of ‘mixedness’ at a general level in relation to the field of educational psychology.

My secondary, or sub-research questions, aim to follow Smith, Flowers and Larkin’s (2009) suggestion of following a more distinct theoretical position. In this case, the question relating to the intersection between racial and gender categories aims to explicitly acknowledge the potential for differing interpretations within a backdrop of CRT.

Finally, to ensure my interpretation remains relevant to my professional field, my final secondary research question aims to ground the interview in the practice of Educational Psychologists.

This approach aims to open up discussions at a general level, with the hope of focusing on distinct themes which allow for the interpretation of interviews reflecting on Critical Race Theory perspectives, hopefully allowing for a discussion of how this position applies to a different ‘racial’ group.

*Sample.*

Semi-structured interviews will be conducted on an individual basis with a minimum of four young people. The methodology I have chosen (IPA) suggests that should the researcher feel that greater exploration of the subject is required, additional participants can be recruited until ‘saturation’, whereby no new themes emerge from the analysis of further data, takes place. With this in mind, should I interview four participants and more are available, I will consider further interviews if I feel it would benefit the interpretation of my data.

The young people will be undergraduate age (18-25) and in attendance at a Higher Education Institution. The hope with targeting such a sample is that, in being of a slightly older age range and having been through their core schooling experience, young people will be in a better position to reflect on an educational experience. Further, at a slightly older age, it is hoped that the young people participating will be more comfortable in their own identities and thus find the interview process less challenging. The hope with this age range is that through no longer being in school, the young people will be able to reflect on ‘childhood’ experiences, as opposed to the ‘young adulthood’ they may potentially feel they have now entered. The slight distance from school serves to allow participants to think about an experience which could be seen as an earlier phase of their life than the one they are now in, which may make it easier for them to share their thoughts and feelings on the subject. Furthermore, this age range may also be able to give a greater level of informed consent for the topic in hand.

Consideration of the gender of my participants and the affect this may have on their accounts of their experiences is being taken into account. Current research exploring the idea of identity formation in black young people in the USA would suggest that often, race and gender run at intersections to one another (Allen, 2012; Bulmer & Solomos, 2009; Gillborn, Rollock, Vincent, & Ball, 2012; Howard & Flennaugh, 2011; Howard et al., 2012). Given that the research aims to explore experiences, consideration of the differences between males and females in this area may be of some interest. However, if male and female participants were to be used, it would be important to keep in mind that the research was not aimed at becoming comparative, or about gender per se. Thus a discussion of the intersectionality between race and gender would most likely become an important part of the research, but not a defining feature of it.

*Pilot Study.*

In order to inform my research, I aim to complete pilot work in the form of a semi-structured interview with a young person identified as having one Black and one White parent. The pilot work will make use of a set of questions which I have planned, which I will be able to draw upon whilst conducting the semi-structured interview to prompt and open up discussion.

I feel that the most important role of the pilot work will be to give myself as a researcher the opportunity to think carefully about the types of questions and the language I use to form discussions. Given that I aim to use a semi-structured interview style, I think it will be important to frame a set of potential questions which tap into the participants’ views and experience of culture and ethnicity, and more specifically on being ‘mixed race’. I hope that the pilot study will give me the opportunity to assess the ability of the questions to elucidate responses which relate to the phenomena defined in the research questions and allow enough space for the participants to draw on and elaborate.

The pilot also stands out as a useful time to assess how my language impacts on the way that participants communicate with me. For example, I am aware that as an individual who may be identified as ‘mixed race’ by others, being interviewed about the phenomena may influence the way that people respond. I hope that my status will make it easier for discussions to be honest and openly reflective, but it is also worth keeping in mind that this may not happen. For example, my status may create feelings of tension or worry in terms of views expressed, and participants may feel that they need to fit their discussion into my own perspective. Ensuring that the position of my research is made clear without overtly positioning my personal opinions of subjects may be useful in combatting this potential issue. I also feel it will be important

*Method, Data Collection and Analysis.*

I will be collecting data from the transcriptions of four semi-structured interviews, and analyse the transcriptions from these using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). I will utilise the method described in the text ‘Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis. Theory, Method and Research’ (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009). The basic outline of the process is as follows:

* Semi-structured interviews with participants. These will be recorded via a Dictaphone or other electronic recording device. I may use more than one device in order to ensure I pick up all of the interview.
* Listening to and transcribing the interviews. Because the aim of analysis in IPA is mainly to interpret the meaning of the content of what the participant discusses, transcription does not need to use a very detailed process including prosodic elements (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009).
* Analysis using the process outlined in Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009) from a Critical Race Theory perspective.

Analysis takes the following steps, taken from Smith, Flowers & Larkin (2009):

* Closed line-by-line analysis of individual transcripts.
* Identification of emergent patterns, firstly for one participant, and later across multiple participants. This stage looks more towards the participants’ interpretations.
* Development of the researchers’ interpretation of what the participants’ interpretation might relate to. In this study, a Critical Race Theory perspective will be taken as a structure for this interpretative stage.
* The development of a structure or frame which demonstrates the relationship between themes.
* The development of a full account which utilises evidence from the data sets to take the reader through the interpretations, normally in a theme-by-theme approach.
* Reflection on the perceptions and processes of the researcher.

*Time Management and Logistics.*

Time management will be of the greatest importance for the success of my research. This relates particularly to the interview, transcription and analysis process. Making sure that I gain ethical approval without any setbacks will hopefully mean that I am able to begin pilot work in April/May time. Using this time frame, this would allow me June and July and potentially August (if participants are available and willing) to complete the interviews themselves. The greatest hurdle here is likely to be my access to participants. If I am able to find willing participants, organising a slot of a morning or afternoon to complete the interviews will probably be of limited impact. However, if I struggle to find willing participants, the whole research schedule is likely to become significantly slowed.

Because of this, I think it would be beneficial to spend some preliminary time during the early stages of my research networking amongst colleagues, contacts and other professional groups through conversations, in order to assess whether anyone knows of potential participants. Whilst nothing can be committed to writing before the ethical application has been accepted, I feel if I am able to begin conversations around the topic at an early stage I am more likely to gain an adequate number of potential participants.

I feel it may also be useful to plan for the event that I am unable to gain all my interview data during the summer. In this case, it would most likely be useful to utilise my time in the summer to organise another area of my research, such as the methodology. It is also possible that I am able to do a majority of my interviews during the summer, which would allow me to work on the analyses of these and any other areas of the project with the knowledge that I had one or two interviews to return to in the Autumn. I feel as long as I am aware of this and plan a schedule for this, I will be able to manage my time effectively. This would still mean that I would have less time for data collection and analysis in the autumn, but at least some of my time would have been freed up by having already completed my methodology.

*Dissemination of Results.*

For the debriefing process, I think it will be necessary to consider the ways in which participants may be affected by the interview and discussions. I would like to be able to give participants the chance to ask any questions about the interview process to me in person and also through other sources of communication, such as email or telephone. Particularly for the young people I wish to work with, being able to point them in the direction of additional support with regards to the subject may be useful and help to avoid situations where they may feel challenged or sensitised to the subject. This may also be useful if any of the participants feel uncomfortable in talking to me about any concerns. Some research around agencies which are available to young people may be necessary to look into in order to facilitate this.

The chosen methodology of my research tends to avoid an active contribution of participants in the interpretive phase of the research, instead employing double hermeneutics. This means that it is unlikely that my participants will be involved in the interpretive stages of the research beyond their own initial interpretations. I think that the methodology strikes a balance between this by allowing the participants’ voices to be heard through their own interpretations.

Some of the topics the research covers may be difficult, challenging or sensitive to the participants. However, I also feel like part of the research process is based on the idea of giving voice to the more marginalised, and I believe this should include my own research. Based on this, I would like my participants to have access to my findings should they wish. For this to work practically, I think it will be important to make sure that I have fully communicated the nature of the methodology I have chosen to use, and make particular reference to the and how this methodology manifests in terms of the dissemination of findings.

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# Appendix C: Discussion of Alternative Methodologies.

Whilst IPA was the final choice of methodology, during initial planning phases, Discourse Analysis (DA) was explored as an approach. CRT perspectives around power and subjugation were a key interest, and it was proposed that using DA as a methodology would provide a critical means of exploring aspects of power in relation to mixed individuals. The original research proposal suggested using DA to explore the way mixedness was talked about by those who identified as such. For more details on the original proposal, please see Appendix A for details.

Through supervision, the applicability of DA as an approach for the research aims was questioned. It was noted that whilst an exploration of how mixedness was talked about was suggested, the proposal consistently referred to the ‘experiences’ of participants. This point is of particular importance to the change of methodology, as DA would not allow the exploration of individual experiences and voices. Examination of DA led to concerns that the methodology could ‘reduce’ the experiences of participants to only the language used, thus losing the essence of their experiences.

Thus, based on the theoretical challenges presented by using DA, and personal preference for exploring and interpreting participants’ experiences, IPA appeared an appropriate alternative. Particular elements of DA have been kept in mind which felt pertinent in the early stages of research, in order to reflect valued aspects of the methodology. In particular, explicitly frame the research using theoretical stances on the psychology of power, marginalisation and subjugation have been adopted based on DA as a methodology. The current research has also attempted to remain engaged in participants’ use of language as IPA allows (please see chapter 3b for details).

# Appendix D: Details of Search Terms used and Methods Employed in Literature Review.

* Searches used the University of Sheffield online library system to search for articles, and ‘google scholar’ to search for relevant books.
* Searches aimed to move from general to specific. Initial searches focused more generally on ethnic minority groups, theory relating to ethnic minority groups, and ‘Black’ studies.
* Initial searches into ethnic minority groups included ‘ethnic minority’ ‘black and ethnic minority (BAME)’ ‘Black’. These terms were coupled with search terms including ‘education’ ‘attainment’ ‘childhood’ ‘children’ ‘parenting’ ‘teaching’ ‘educational psychology’ ‘psychology’ ‘identity’.
* Initial searches into theory were led through supervision sessions. Through supervision, over- arching theoretical positions, such as Critical Race Theory, ‘Whiteness studies’, Fanonian Theory, and Psychoanalytic theories of racism and power were discussed. Key texts were shared through supervision. Key texts were used as a point of further reference to explore theories in more detail. For example, references cited in key texts were searched for, and articles citing key texts were also searched for, using the ‘snowball’ method. This led to the use of other key ideas such as intersectionality, and psychoanalytic theories of mixedness (e.g Tate, 2007).
* The Sheffield University ethesis service was also used to search for postgraduate thesis in Educational Psychology with a focus on ‘race’. Although no theses explored mixedness directly, a small number of theses from Sheffield University and other University courses were used to uncover relevant articles in relation to ‘race’.
* Mixedness as a concept was also searched for independently. Keywords used in both search engines (Sheffield University and google scholar) included ‘mixed race’ dual heritage’ ‘mixed heritage’ ‘mixed’ ‘black and white parentage’ ‘mixed parentage’. These terms were coupled with search terms including ‘education’ ‘attainment’ ‘childhood’ ‘children’ ‘parenting’ ‘teaching’ ‘educational psychology’ ‘psychology’ ‘identity’. A small number of books relating to mixedness (not focusing on education or psychology) were uncovered (for example Olumide, 2012). These were used to search for further references in the ‘snowball’ method described above. The ‘snowball’ method was also employed to discover further references from initial articles relating to mixedness that were found.
* A majority of searches unearthed literature originating from the United States, and/or without a focus on childhood and education.

# Appendix E: University of Sheffield Ethics Application and Approval Letter.

**The projects aims and objectives:** As a Trainee Educational Psychologist undertaking research, the over-arching aim of the current research is to contribute in some way to my own practice, and potentially to the practice and understanding of the field of educational psychology more generally. Educational Psychologists (EPs) work with children and young people (CYP) and their families at individual, school, and at times community levels. These CYP represent an often vulnerable sub-group of the population, consisting of children with special educational needs, children looked after by the Local Authority (LAC) and those who are finding it difficult to access or engage in education.

Currently, ‘mixed race’ is the fastest growing population of children in the United Kingdom. In particular, children with one black and one white parent make up a large proportion of this group. National educational statistics demonstrate that children with one black and one white parent are over-represented in at risk and under-achieving groups in education, similar to that of their peers with two black parents. At present, very little research exists which explore the phenomena of ‘mixedness’.

As a researcher and individual who defines themself as ‘mixed race’, I am interested in how being ‘mixed’ is experienced. What does ‘mixedness’ feel like to young adults with one black and one white parent, and how does this relate, if at all, with their experiences of school? In the process of this research, I also hope to be able to contribute to the professions awareness of issues specific to a growing, yet currently under-researched group of CYP

Critical Race Theorists (CRT) argue that gaps in attainment in black CYP relate to childhood and school experiences in a society built upon institutionalised racist practices, putting black CYP at a disadvantage through these marginalising experiences. From the position of CRT, I am interested in how children from a mixed black and white background experience this phenomena. My research is interested in gaining an understanding of how children who are identified as ‘not white’ experience school from the position of an ‘other’ non-white minority, particularly as these CYP experience life with a white parent.

In order to do this, the project aims to explore young adult’s experiences with a particular interest in their own experiences of school as a ‘mixed’ individual. To do this I will be talking to a minimum of four young adults with one black and one white parent. The research aims to explore the phenomena of ‘mixed race’ in a UK context from a CRT position. In order to achieve this, from the theoretical position of CRT, I will use Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis to interpret young adult’s reflections on their school experiences. In order to fulfil the projects aims, the following research questions will be answered:

* How do ‘mixed race’ young adults interpret their experiences of school?
  + How do racial and gender categories intersect in the accounts ‘mixed race’ young adults give of their school experience?
  + How can an analysis of these accounts inform Educational Psychology practice?

**The projects methodology:** The project aims to explore the experiences of school, with an interest in how race and gender categories may intersect in these accounts amongst a small group of young adults with a black and a white parent. The research takes a social constructionist perspective, arguing that our interpretation of the world around us is shaped through the interactions between experiences, contexts, and individuals. Further, the research also takes a Critical Race Theory (CRT) perspective, which positions itself as recognising the unequal and oppressive nature of current and past United Kingdom society with regards to race. For the purpose of this study, CRT theories which take into account institutional practices and systems as contributing to the disparities between different groups of people are argued to have an effect on individuals’ interpretation and understanding of their experiences and themselves.

Given this positionality, the research will be conducted using Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). A minimum of four young adults will be interviewed about their experiences and interpretations of race and culture, with a specific focus on their experiences of childhood and education. These interviews will be transcribed following the procedures of IPA. IPA will then be employed to provide interpretations of their experiences based on the position of CRT. IPA leads to the generation of super-ordinate and sub-ordinate themes based on the experiences of the participants interviewed. These themes will be discussed from the perspective of CRT and provide the discussion points relating to interpretations of ‘mixedness’.

Coming from a social constructionist perspective, my research does not aim to provide ‘answers’ or truths. However, the methodology will be strongly influenced by Critical Race Theory (CRT). Given this positionality, it is important to acknowledge that the research does aim to explore and potentially propose some interpretations of the phenomena of ‘mixedness’ from a particular epistemological and ontological stance.

*‘Mixed Race’:* For the purpose of this research, I use the term ‘mixed race’ to talk specifically about children who come from a background with one black parent and one white parent. To justify this decision, I think it is important to acknowledge that at present, children with one black and one white parent make up the largest ‘mixed race’ subgroup in Britain. Given the growth of this group and the currently limited research available in this area, it seems useful to spend some time developing exploration of the phenomena. Furthermore, children from black and white parentage also experience gaps in attainment similar to black children in the UK.

This gap reflects one of the largest in educational attainment across the education system. Children of other racial mixes, such as Chinese and white British and Indian and white British do not experience such large gaps in attainment. For example, DfE statistics from 2013/14 demonstrate that whilst 67.2% of ‘white and asian’ children achieve 5 or more GCSEs at grade C or above, only 49.0% of ‘white and black Caribbean’ children achieve this level, compared to the 56.6% national average. Beginning to explore this phenomena in research may contribute to professional practice which seeks to support the attainment of this group of children and young people.

*Use of Language*: With regards to language use, ‘Mixed race’ is often no longer the language of choice when discussing the identified group of adults. Current guidance often promotes the use of the term ‘dual heritage’. I think it is important to recognise that different individuals may prefer the use of different terms, and the meaning of these terms may be different to the individuals in question.

My own choice of language is influenced by the social constructionist standpoint from which I am undertaking this research. Whilst theoretically, ‘race’ does not exist, I would argue that individuals are still often placed in ‘racial categories’ based on the way they look. For this reason, I feel the term ‘mixed race’ most accurately represents our understanding of individuals with parents of differing ‘racial’ groups.

**Personal Safety:** The research will involve interviewing young adults aged eighteen to twenty five studying at undergraduate level. These interviews are likely to take approximately an hour each. I envisage that a majority of the participants will prefer to have the interviews in their educational or home setting. This could create potential safety issues for me in an environment that I do not know. To ensure my personal safety, I will make sure that if I am interviewing in an educational setting, a room is booked beforehand and that other adults know where this is and the estimated times of start/finish. I will also make sure that I follow the signing in and out procedures of the institution.

If I am interviewing in someone’s home environment, I will ensure that my whereabouts is known to a key person, and that the address and estimated start/finish time is also known to this person. I will leave contact details for myself with a key person I will also arrange to call this person to notify them when I have safely left the location. In terms of positioning in the room, I will make sure that I am able to leave should I feel unsafe, whilst also making sure that the interviewer is in a similar position of safety.

It is also possible that if interviews take place outside of hours or term times, the interview may take place elsewhere. I would have the facility to book a room in my Local Authority offices were this to be the case, where colleagues and security staff would have the ability to locate mine and the participants’ whereabouts.

**Potential Participants:** Young adults will be selected on a number of factors. Firstly, the young adults need to be in enrolled at a University. I have chosen a university sample as I feel this may give more opportunity for young adults to reflect on their school experiences as they enter a new chapter of their lives, as opposed to still being in school. Ethically, I also feel that young adults of this age range will be more likely to be able to give informed consent as to their participation in this study, and be able to manage the potentially challenging or difficult nature of the interview process with regards to reflecting one ones’ school experiences.

Young adults will also need to have one black and one white parent. This is to ensure that the young adults fit within the definition of ‘mixed race’ that I have defined for this study. I will not ask young adults to identify as ‘mixed race/dual heritage’ as I think this has too broad a meaning and creates certain expectations with regards to the nature of conversations.

Although this group could be seen as potentially vulnerable due to their minority status, I feel that the actions I am taking in selecting participants minimises the risk to them. Furthermore, careful consideration of how to protect the participants has been accounted for (see below).

**Recruiting Participants:** Potential participants include a minimum of four young adults. Information about the nature of the project will be provided to Universities which I have access to through key societies and networking groups. I also plan to inform other social contacts within the field of higher education of the nature of my research, in order to raise awareness of the research to potential opportunity samples of individuals connected to my own contacts through education. Once they have been provided with the information, key societies, networking groups and other contacts will be asked to identify any individuals who may be interested in taking part in the study. If interest is shown, I will provide more information on the research through sharing of the information forms and a telephone conversation with potential participants to ensure they fully understand the research.

I will select participants based on the first four who are interested in taking part, due to the potential difficulty in recruiting. The methodology I have chosen (IPA) suggests that should the researcher feel that greater exploration of the subject is required, additional participants can be recruited until ‘saturation’, whereby no new themes emerge from the analysis of further data, takes place. With this in mind, should I interview four participants and more are available, I will consider further interviews if I feel it would benefit the interpretation of my data.

Following this, should more potential participants come forward, I will offer them the opportunity to take part in an interview as part of a pilot study. This will ensure that all young adults have the opportunity to share their views and take part in the research at some level. Once an individual has been selected I will work with them to arrange a time to give them further information relating to the research and consent forms, allowing them time to consider whether they wish to take part.

If I find only four participants wishing to take part, I will continue to search for a participant specifically to take part in the pilot study.

**Consent:** In line with the BPS Code of Ethics and Conduct (2009) and HCPC Guidance on Conduct and Ethics for Students (2009) informed consent will be obtained from those involved. This will include providing relevant information as discussed above and detailed in the forms attached. Following the sharing of information, a consent form will be provided, which participants will be asked to sign. I will also make sure that participants are still fully informed and understand the right to withdraw from the study and the interview at any point before interviews take place and at the end of the interview. Information forms and consent forms are attached to this document.

**Payment:** There will be no payment of participants.

**Potential Harm to Participants:** There is limited scope for physical harm of participants besides from normal hazards of a workplace, which will be covered in health and safety procedures.

Given the potentially personal nature of the research topic, there is some potential for psychological harm/ distress to participants. Particularly in relation the young adults I plan to interview, discussions which concentrate on an aspect of their experiences of school may give rise to difficult memories or personal feelings. In order to minimise this risk, potential participants will be briefed and given written explanations as to the aims and scope of the research and the nature of the discussions that will take place (see attached documents). Participants will also be informed of their right to withdraw from the study and the interview at any point should they wish. This will be reiterated at different points in the process to support their decision making (e.g. in the selection of participants, before, during and after interview).

The participants will also be debriefed at the end of the interview to ensure that any questions or concerns are dealt with at the time. I also aim to spend some time before the interviews with participants, which will hopefully help them feel more comfortable in the relationship. It will also be important to create an interview environment which is comfortable and inviting for them, for example providing a drink and snack, comfortable seating etc. At the end of the interview I will also provide the participants with my contact details should they wish to discuss anything which causes them concern or distress after the interview, so that they have an opportunity to discuss this with someone. Within the briefing information, I will also signpost to an organisation which provides information and support for mixed race children and young adults and their families (for example ‘people in harmony’ and ‘intermix’).

**Data Confidentiality:** My data will be recorded on an audio device and transcribed using my home computer. The audio recordings and transcriptions of the interviews will be stored on my home computer, which is password protected. Any printouts of the data will be stored in a locked cabinet. Pseudonyms will be used to identify all participants involved in the research as well as a participant number for easy identification. Only I will know which person the pseudonym and participant number refer to.

**Data Storage:** As above, interviews will be recorded using an audio recorder. They will only be used for analysis and audio and transcriptions will be kept in a locked cabinet at my home address. Once I have received confirmation that my thesis has been examined and passed, the audio and any transcriptions will be destroyed appropriately. This information will be provided to participants in the information sheets (attached) and verbally.



Downloaded: 02/04/2016

Approved: 09/04/2015

Aisha McLean Registration number: 130113447

School of Education Programme: Doctor of Educational and Child Psychology

Dear Aisha

PROJECT TITLE: Exploring Experiences of School from a 'mixed' perspective

APPLICATION: Reference Number 003430

On behalf of the University ethics reviewers who reviewed your project, I am pleased to inform you that on 09/04/2015 the above-named project was approved on ethics grounds, on the basis that you will adhere to the following documentation that you submitted for ethics review: University research ethics application form 003430 (dated 27/03/2015). Participant information sheet 1006838 version 1 (27/03/2015). Participant consent form 1006839 version 1 (27/03/2015). The following optional amendments were suggested: Please see comments by reviewers especially connected to ensuring the participant info sheet is understandable and easy to follow. If during the course of the project you need to deviate significantly from the above-approved documentation please inform me since written approval will be required. Yours sincerely

Professor Daniel Goodley

Ethics Administrator School of Education

# Appendix F: Participant Information Sheet.

**Exploring experiences from a ‘mixed’ perspective.**

**Who am I?**

My name is Aisha McLean and I am a Trainee Educational Psychologist at the University of Sheffield. I am in the process of training to become an Educational Psychologist. Educational Psychologists work in schools and colleges with children, young people and their families and teachers to find ways of supporting them. As part of my studies I am doing some research and I would like to ask you to take part.

**Information Sheet.**

To help you make a decision about taking part it is important that you understand why I am doing this research, and what your part will be in the research. This information sheet is designed to help you understand the research aims and processes. Please read through the information carefully. Hopefully everything you need to know will be covered. If anything is not clear or you have some questions that I haven’t managed to answer please contact me on the details below.

It is completely your choice to take part in this research. If you decide you do want to be in the research and change your mind later, you can stop being involved at any time. Please think carefully about whether or not you are interested.

**What is the Study about?**

At the moment, statistics on GCSE examination results show that young people who are black, or have one black and one white parent, don’t do as well as young people who are white at the end of school. There has been some research looking into the experiences of black children and young people at school, and how this may affect their examination results.

There has not been much research that looks at the influence having one black and one white parent has on peoples’ experiences of school. I have one black and one white parent and think it is important for people to begin to understand how this may influence people’s experiences. I am interested in the experiences of young people with a black and a white parent.

I would like to ask young people who have one black and one white parent to talk to me about their experiences of school. I would ask about these experiences in an informal interview, where the conversation is led by the person I am interviewing. I hope that the study will help professionals working with children and young people to consider what having a black and a white parent means to the children and young people who experience this. I also hope that if you take part in the study you will feel like you have had the chance to talk about what having one black and one white parent means to you.

**Why have I been chosen?**

You have been asked to take part because I think you could add something important to this study. You have informed me that your parents are black and white. I have asked you to take part in this research so I can listen to your views on how being mixed race/of dual heritage has influenced (or not) your school experiences of growing up in the UK.

**What will happen if I choose to take part?**

If you choose to take part, the first thing that will happen is I will arrange a time to talk with you about the research. This is to make sure that you understand what will happen and that you are sure you want to take part. It will also be a good time for you to get to know me, and me to know you, a bit better. If you are sure you want to take part, you will need to sign a form to state that you wish to take part in the study. We will then arrange another time to meet one to one. When we meet this time, I will ask you some questions and we will have a conversation about your experiences. You will have the opportunity to talk about as much or as little as you want.

Our sessions would probably last about an hour and will happen some time between May and October 2015. I am interested in what you think, so there are no right or wrong things to say, and if what you think or say changes over time, that is also fine. You only have to talk about the things that you feel comfortable with, and if at any time you don’t feel comfortable then asking for the session to stop is okay.

**Will I be recorded? How will the recordings be used?**

When we meet for our one to one session, I will record our conversation using a voice recorder. I may write a few notes to remind me of important things. The recording will be used to analyse our conversation. The analysis is when I listen back to the recordings and try and make sense of what we have talked about. All of the records, including voice recordings and anything I have written down (including the forms you have signed) will be kept in a locked cabinet. Any recordings stored on a computer will be protected by a password. When I am told that my research has been successfully completed, I will destroy all of this information.

**Are there any risk or benefits to taking part?**

**Risks:** It might feel difficult to talk about what you think and your experiences at first. If anything makes you feel too uncomfortable during our conversation, you can ask for us to stop or take a break at any time. If you are worried about something at any point during the research, before or after we have our one to one session, you can contact me on the details I will leave. If you have any worries that you don’t feel comfortable talking to me about, I will also leave you with the details of an organisation that can support young people.

**Benefits:** Hopefully you will find taking part in the research interesting, and will enjoy talking to me about your thoughts and experiences. By taking part in the research, I also hope that your thoughts and experiences will be able to help other young people and staff who work with young people to think about school experiences for young people with a black and a white parent.

***Complaints: If you have a complaint at any time you can contact either myself or my research supervisor on the details below.***

**Confidentiality.**

All of the information I collect will be kept confidential. This means that you will not be able to be identified by anyone else. To make sure of this, you will be given a false name so that you cannot be recognised in anything I write. You can choose this name if you wish.

If you tell me something that makes me worried about your safety or the safety of others, I would have to pass this information on.

**What will happen at the end of the research?**

The research will go into my research report. This report will be examined by my tutors at The University of Sheffield, and made available for other people studying at University to read. It is possible that at a later date, it may be published somewhere else, for example in a book.

**Who has approved the research?**

The research project has been approved by The University of Sheffield ethics committee. The ethics committee decide whether the proposed research is appropriate, and make sure that everyone involved is kept safe.

**Contact Details.**

For further information about the research, or to contact me at any time in the research process you can contact me by email or by telephone:

**Aisha McLean – Trainee Educational Psychologist**

[information removed for confidentiality reasons]

**You could also contact my research supervisor Anthony Williams**

[information removed for confidentiality reasons]

***Thank you for taking the time to read this information and considering taking part in this research.***

# Appendix G: Pilot Study.

*Preparing for the Pilot.*

I used my research questions as a guide for planning a set of interview questions. I wanted my interview questions to be able to capture the essence of my research queries, whilst allowing flexibility for the interviewee to respond in an open manner. Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009) suggest that whilst preparing interview questions can be helpful for the interview process, to respond to IPAs methodological approach effectively, where possible these interview questions should be used as a guide or prompt as opposed to a script. To reflect this, I prepared my questions to reflect what I felt would be the natural order of a conversation, with the aim of using them as a prompt.

In order to shape questions which tapped into the personal experiences of the participants, whilst attempting to capture aspects of their heritage, I adapted some of my questions from the text by Frosh, Phoenix and Pattman (2002) ‘Young Masculinities’. The texts’ psychosocial emphasis, coupled with its examination of themes of race and gender, leant itself to the theoretical positionality of my research. I shaped my questions into categories which I hoped would give me the scope to address each of my interview questions. For more detailed information on this, please refer to the pilot interview questions in Appendix F.

*Overview and implications of the pilot interview.*

Based on the pilot interview and its implications, I made the following changes to the interview process:

* Reworked a number of my questions to more closely reflect the research questions.
* Amended the interview questions to form a more concise guide to refer to. Please refer to Appendix G for examples of this.
* Decided to use my interview questions in a less structured format. I used a more participant-led interview procedure, letting individual participants’ lead most of the discussion.
* Decided to withhold from having a physical copy of the interview questions in front of me when interviewing- I felt this had led to over-reliance on the questions and diminished my ability to be responsive to the participant.
* Original research questions as devised through supervision (see proposal) were altered. It was felt that the research questions failed to link in closely enough with the interview questions based on the experiences of the pilot interview. In order to inform the interview questions to a greater degree, and improve the transparency of the research questions and the analysis phase, research questions were altered to:
  + What are ‘mixed race’ children and young people’s experiences of race and culture?
  + How do ‘mixed race young people interpret their experiences of childhood and education?
  + How can Educational Psychology practice develop through these accounts?

*N.B further to the research questions discussed above, at analysis phase, the third research question (How can Educational Psychology practice develop through these accounts?) was dropped as a research question. It was felt that the interviews conducted, and the analysis of the interviews, did not give sufficient reference to this research question to deem it appropriate. It was, however, still felt that an exploration of Educational Psychology practice was relevant. Thus, instead of attempting to focus on the research question through the interviews, this was adopted for consideration as a final, general point. This was felt to more closely reflect the limits of the information provided in the interviews. As this change was completed after the interviews took place, information provided in the appendices still refers to this question.*

# Appendix H: Pilot Interview Questions.

Draft Interview Questions.

Research questions:

What are ‘mixed race’ children and young people’s experiences of race and culture?

How do ‘mixed race’ young people interpret their experiences of childhood and education?

How can educational psychology practice develop through these accounts?\*

\*please see Appendix G above for further details on this question.

What does ‘mixed race’ mean to you?

What does being ‘mixed race’ mean to you?

Could you tell me about what primary school was like?

Can you tell me about your experiences of primary school?

How did you feel about primary school?

Do you have any specific memories of primary school?

What were your relationships with teachers at primary school like?

Tell me about the people in your class.

Tell me about your friends at primary school.

Could you tell me about your memories of moving from primary to secondary school.

What were your relationships like with your teachers?

Could you tell me about the people you went to school with.

What kind of subjects did you study for your GCSEs?

How did you decide what subjects to take?

How did you decide what to study at university?

Tell me about your time at university.

Tell me about your friendships at university.

Could you tell me about your parents.

Could you tell me about your family.

Have you any siblings?

Could you tell me about your experiences growing up.

Could you tell me about some memories that stick out to you from school.

Do you have any good memories of school?

Do you have any bad memories of school?

Can you tell me about some memories you have of growing up.

Can you tell me more about your family/parents/siblings.

Can you tell me about where you grew up.

Do you have any specific memories from growing up.

*Growing up-School-University-‘self’*

*Growing up*

Could you tell me about yourself.X

Could you tell me about where you grew up.

Can you tell me about your family. X

Do you have any specific memories from growing up?...

*School*

Do you have any specific memories from school?

Can you tell me about your teachers at school. What were your relationships like?

Could you tell me about the people you went to school with?

Can you tell me about your experiences of moving through school.

How did you make decisions about the subjects you studied through school?

*University*

Can you tell me about your decisions when it came to university.

Can you tell me about your friends at university.

Could you tell me about your experiences of university.

*Self*

Could you tell me about how you see yourself.

How do you think other people see you?

What is important to you in how you define yourself?

\*What does ‘mixed race’ mean to you?

\*What does being ‘mixed race’ mean to you?

# 

# Appendix I: Pilot Interview.

Pilot Transcription.

A: Okay it’s working. Okay, erm, can you tell me, about where you live, and who you live with?

P1: Okay,erm, I live in London. In like a [pause] inner city, London in Stockwell. With, my mum, who is white South African, erm, and [pause] at the moment it’s just the two of us. But I’ve got, my er older sister, who was born in South Africa, and my older brother, who kind of lives, he lives in and out of the house every now and then.

A: Mmhmm.

P1: And that’s it.

A: Okay, thank you. Erm, and where did you grow up?

P1: I grew up in the same house, in London, and [pause] do you want me to explain the kind of area that it is, or?

A: Yeah, that’s be great, say whatever you want basically.

P1: So, it’s a [pause] really mixed area, like, there’s lots of different kind of. There’s a big estate, there are lots of really [pause]erm, like affluent houses. Erm, we live on like a small [pause] on a road with like kind of small houses, but, it’s kind of right in the middle of

A: Yep.

P1: Stockwell, really diverse. So yeah, it’s kind of [pause] lot’s going on.

A: Mm. And er, did you go to school round there?

P1: Well I, went to school fairly close, actually ‘cause my brother and sister [pause] when they were in primary school they, lived in Clapham. So when I went to the primary school we went there because they were already there. So it’s not that far but it’s [pause] it’s a similar area as well.

A: Yeah. Okay. Erm, are there any particular people that you admire? [pause] Famous figures, family?

P1: Erm, dunno. My er [pause] I dunno like I really admire my mum, I think she [pause] like she did, she’s crazy

[Laughter]

P1: She did all sorts of stuff, like she [pause] she’s very much like an activist so she’s always like [pause] standing up for people and [pause] and apart from that, I don’t know about famous people. I can’t think of anyone. Any my sister as well, like she’s [pause] kind of [pause] yeah like raising children in kind of [pause] the middle of London. Yeah so

A: How old is your sister?

P1: Thirty [pause] six. Something like that. No Thirty nine.

[Laughter]

A: She’s Thirty something! And how old are her kids?

P1: They, she’s got a fourteen [pause] fifteen eight and five.

A: Wow.

P1: Yeah. Like [pause] it’s not easy! You can see the difference between like, when I was a kid and like, now that they’re kids. It’s like much harder.

A: Hmm. And [pause] could you tell me three things that you think are important about yourself?

P1: That’s good. Erm, so [pause] I’m [pause] in terms of my identity [pause] I’m really [pause] like I think it’s important to recognise all of my different heritages, background. I think being a woman is important. Erm [pause] and what else [pause] I was gonna think of something.

A: It’s okay. If there’s only two.

P1: Yeah, there’s only two important things.

A: Erm, could you describe your ethnicity for me?

P1: Oh, it’s such a difficult question!

[Laughter]

A: I like this question!

[Laughter]

P1: Ahhh! Oh it’s like that, ultimate like [pause] where are you from question!

[Laughter]

P1: So, my dad, both my parents are South African. They, my dad is black South African [pause] erm and my mum is Irish South African.

A: Okay.

P1: So, yeah, those a like [inaudible] important parts of my ethnicity.

A: Yes. Is your ethnic background important to you?

P1: Yes, very I used to get really annoyed when I was younger and people would be like [high pitched voice] but your passport says your British, so you’re British. I’m like, no, I’m not, I’m South African.

A: Mmhmm. So what did you [pause] do when [pause] that kind of thing happened?

P1: I would have big arguments with people, I still do. Like, people will be like, where are you from and I’m like well I was born in London, but [pause] that doesn’t make me English. I’m, like, so much South African. And I think, like [pause] there’s definitely things in my childhood that were like, no, that’s a very South African childhood as opposed to English. Or things that came from being in [pause] a melting pot! [laughter]

A: Yeah. How do you think other people would describe your ethnic background?

P1: Erm.

A: Or how *do* other people describe your ethnic background?

P1: People [pause] I get all sorts of stuff. Like, obviously everyone will always be like your mixed race. But then some people, like I’ll have random people coming up to me in the street and speaking to me in Spanish, or Portuguese, or something. Like, I remember when I was a kid like in the Indian takewaya shop and they’d be like [high pitched voice] Oh, little Indian girl! And I’m like no, I’m not an Indian girl, but thanks! So, because I’ve got, really straight hair, in comparison to like, my sister who’s got really afro hair I would always get like

A: Yeah.

P1: Any spectrum of brown.

[Laughter]

A: And how does it, how did it feel when people thought you were [pause] different ethnicities?

P1: It was, I mean most of the time I quite liked it because like my parents were very [pause] like open about it, my mum would like always stick up for me if anyone ever tried to say anything like, horrible about it. But [pause] I think in secondary school it was quite difficult because I never, I didn’t really have a place. Like, I couldn’t hang around with the black kids ‘cause they were all like [pause] oh yeah and they would be a bit weird, and then like, I had lots of like, middle class white friends but then I wasn’t quite [pause] I didn’t quite fit in with them so I was always a bit like, in the middle which, had a benefit as well for me because my parents were quite, again [pause] were aware of that. And used it to build my confidence rather than to [pause] knock me down but [pause] I dunno.

A:Mm. Erm, could you tell me any more about the friendships at schools, and [pause] fitting in with different people?

P1: So [pause] yeah like I said like [pause] growing up I always had like, in primary school I was in quite a small primary school so it was, like there wasn’t, it was diverse but it wasn’t like, big groups of people everywhere who kind of played together and all of that. But when once you get into secondary school, there were definitely like [pause] splits between. And again it was a really diverse secondary school but there were like, very, definite like these are different group of people. Like, there was a very middle class people, and then, like [pause] the working class kids and [pause] so I was always [pause] somewhere in the middle of everything like I remember always having friends in all the different groups of people rather than. So like, that was nice because I felt like I always had lots of different friends but then it was always like I didn’t quite fit in [pause] to any [pause] one particular place.

A: Thank you. Erm, [pause[] do you think that your gender has any effect on how people view your ethnicity?

P1: Yes, definitely. I think that there’s definitely a thing [pause] it’s like, it’s like different things, I remember, I think now more as an adult [pause] there can be times when other, mixed race women treat you with [pause] like [pause] they don’t want you to take their space, in their group of friends o stuff like that. So there can be quite a lot of hostility between like, mixed race women. And like, but then [pause] but then on the other side I think you, as a woman [pause] like I dunno if it was maybe like you can slip between groups more because you’re a girl, and people didn’t really like, mind that much and I know that with my brother it was a lot more difficult [pause] like [pause] like that like he was more labelled like [pause] black, like you’re a black, so he was kind of pushed aside and with different things like, with the police and stuff that was always quite difficult. Yeah, I think it makes a difference.

A: Yeah. Er, okay, right [pause] I’m going to ask you some questions about growing up [pause] erm [pause] could you tell me about your extended family?

P1: Okay, so most of my family live in South Africa. So growing up, there wasn’t that much contact with them, but like, my dad, dad’s family, there’s like, two very different families [laughter] like there’s no, comparisons between. Like we had more contact with my dad’s family growing up. They were, we would go to South Africa, like a completely different cultural experience, and like my mum’s family are like, very, like, Catholic, like, very white South African. Like, they hardly talk to each other, they’re all a bit, like, stand off-ish. And [pause] they [pause] were [pause] when my mum first had a mixed race child with my sister, they were like, horrified, and didn’t speak to her for years. So, it was quite difficult, but when I was a kid there was less of that, so. They’d kind of gotten over it by then [laughter]. But, it was quite difficult, but then my dad’s family were like, the complete opposite, just like, had no problems at all.

# Appendix J: Amended research/interview questions.

*Intro*

* Can you tell me about where you live and who with?
* Do you have any brothers or sisters? How old are they?
* Can you tell me about where you grew up?
* Can you tell me about where you went to school?

*‘admire’*

* Are there particular people you admire? [Or some people you would not like to be like?]
* Can you tell me three things that are important to you about yourself?

*Ethnicity*

* Could you describe your ethnicity for me?
* Is your ethnic background important to you?
* Could you tell me how you think other people would describe your ethnic background?
* Do you think your gender has any effect on how you or other people view your ethnicity? If so, could you describe how?

*Growing up*

* [Told me a little about your family already], could you tell me about your extended family? How did your family do things?
* Have you any specific memories of activities or outings that you did as a family that you could tell me about?
* Growing up, do you think there was anything particularly unique or important about your family?
* Do you think the ethnic background of you family was significant for you growing up? Could you tell me about this?

*School*

* Can you tell me about the people you went to school with? [Did you get on with them, who were your friends, were there any people or groups you didn’t get on with?]
* Can you tell me about your teachers at school. What do you think they thought about you?
* What are your memories like from school?
* Do you think your ethnic gender background affected your experiences of school? Could you tell me about this?

*University*

* How did you make decisions about what to study at University?
* Can you tell me about your friends at university?
* What have your experience of University been like?
* Do you think you ethnic gender background has affected your experiences of university? Could you tell me about this?

*Worrisome Question.*

* Has there been a difficult event in your life so far that you would be comfortable discussing? Is there anything that may have supported you through this time, or anything that did support you?

# Appendix K: Transcription Process.

Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009) suggest that interviews are transcribed verbatim, but due to the semantic approach of analysis, do not emphasise a need for phonetic transcription or the inclusion of highly detailed transcriptions such as pauses etc. For my own transcription, I felt that I including some more obvious details such as pauses, false starts and audible non-language based communication (for example sighs, coughs) would add the level of depth to my analysis that I wanted to achieve. Table AH.1 below includes details of the transcription style used:

*Table AH.1 of transcription style.*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| [comments in square brackets]  *Comments in italics*  (comments in brackets) | Pause over two seconds, coughs, sighs etc  Audible emphasis on words used  Notes by the researcher |

At my first stage of analysis, I wanted to fully immerse myself in the text as a whole. In order to do this, I chose to listen to and transcribe each interview as one flowing document, as opposed to line by line, table-based transcription methods more commonly used. This approach is not commonly used as part of IPA, however I felt that the detail I wanted to achieve in each individual interview would be better supported through this approach. Table AH.2 below provides a short extract from the initial transcription.

*Table AH.2 example of initial transcription*

|  |
| --- |
| A: Okay.  [Laughter]  S: And er, yeah, I actually really like my er, XXX, it’s a bit [pause] gritty like it used to be one of the rougher areas. It still kind of is but erm, it’s got a nice community vibe there and it’s still quite, it is quite diverse. Mainly like Caribbean and Polish now, but there’s like a bigger Brazilian community there now and stuff so. It’s nice, it’s cool. |

Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009) demonstrate a transcript format in a table form, with three columns used for the interview text itself, exploratory themes to the right and emergent themes to the left. I chose to use this format for the exploratory and emergent stages of transcription. In addition to the model shown in Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009), I also numbered each line of transcription to allow for easier referral and re-referral to the text at different points of analysis and later discussion.

I used three stages of ‘exploratory’ analysis in each interview. Emergent themes were coded in the right hand column and colour coded for stage of analysis. The initial analysis focused on descriptive aspects of the text, and was colour coded in blue. The second analysis focused on language use, and coded in green, whilst the third exploratory analysis focused on greater levels of exploratory depth and questions about the line of text as a whole. This stage was coded in red.

These three levels of exploratory analysis then fed into a further phase of analysis, which I have termed the ‘thematic’ analysis phase. The first part of this phase involved using my exploratory analysis to feed into emergent themes, which I documented in the left-hand column of the transcript table. Table AH.3 gives readers a short extract from one of the interviews using the table transcription format. For further details on this, please refer to Appendix X for a full transcription of an interview.

Table AH.3 example of exploratory and emergent transcription

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 9 | A: Okay. [Laughter] |  |
| S’s love of XXX | 10 | S: And er, yeah, I actually really like my er, XXX, it’s a bit | Back to XXX.  Strong emphasis on XXX despite it not being where she currently lives  XXX representing ‘home’ to S? |
| ‘realness’ of XXX | 11 | [pause] gritty like it used to be one of the rougher areas. It still | Choosing ‘gritty’ carefully?  Choice of the word ‘gritty’  Presenting a kind of ‘realness’/genuiness to the area through the words S has chosen? |

Once emergent themes were identified, analysis moved away from the transcription to focus on looking in greater depth at emergent themes. At this stage in the ‘thematic’ analysis stage, emergent themes were looked at as a whole and grouped to reflect shared concepts, themes and ideas, creating groups of ‘sub-ordinate’ themes for each participant’s interview. From here, sub-ordinate themes were broken down into distinct areas which shared an over-arching idea but were distinct in some way. ‘Super-ordinate’ analysis was used at this stage to create umbrella concepts which could describe the shared phenomenon within sub-ordinate groups which could explain their shared thematic content.

The final stage of analysis took place across all participant interviews, and involved searching for ‘higher-order’ themes or ‘umbrella themes which were able to capture an over-arching shared concept between participants. This level of analysis allowed for the divergence of individual experiences, whilst attempting to identify aspects of shared concepts between participants.

*N.B At the analysis stage, it was identified that the final research question was not appropriately addressed through the interviews (see Appendix G for details). Thus, the reader will see that this question was not addressed in the analysis process.*

# Appendix L: Extract from transcription.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  | A: So, erm, do you want to start by just telling me a little bit |  |
|  |  | about [pause] where you live, and who you live with. |  |
|  |  | E: Erm, I live in XXX which is, a small, town, and I live | Growing up in a small town |
|  |  | with my mum, my dad, and my older sister. And my boyfriend, | Living with family currently |
|  |  | during the week, he lives here too. | Boyfriend as part of the family |
|  |  | A: Right, okay. And, tell me a little bit more about your family |  |
|  |  | and the people you live with. |  |
|  |  | E: [pause] What do you want to know? |  |
|  |  | A: Anything you want to tell me, there’s no sort of rules just tell |  |
|  |  | me what you like. |  |
|  |  | E: Erm [pause] ooh [pause] erm [laughter] my mum, erm, works |  |
|  |  | for a marketing company, in er, she’s the manager, of there. But |  |
|  |  | she hates it, she hates everyone she works with, so every night |  |
|  |  | she comes home and, bitches about everyone, then we tell her |  |
|  |  | that she needs to leave but, she doesn’t want to. Then my dad, |  |
|  |  | erm, he, is, a labourer for an upholstery company. Erm, my |  |
|  |  | boyfriend got him his job, because he got made redundant from | Dad made redundant |
|  |  | his old job, and he was out of work so that’s why he works there. |  |
| Mixedness as a part of E’s ongoing life/culture |  | Erm, my sister she lives in XXX with her boyfriend, but er he’s | Sister in XXX with XXX boyfriend  Mixed relationships continuing into later generations |
|  |  | in the XXX Army at the moment, so she’s at home. And then, |  |
|  |  | my boyfriend teaches upholstery, to, college students, and |  |
|  |  | we’ve been together for five years, and he lives here, Monday to |  |
|  |  | Friday. |  |
|  |  | A: Right, right, and how old is your sister? |  |
|  |  | E: Er she’s twenty [pause] five. |  |
|  |  | A: And you are? |  |
|  |  | E: Twenty two. |  |
|  |  | A: Twenty two, you’ve been with your boyfriend for five years, |  |
|  |  | where did you meet your boyfriend? |  |
|  |  | E: Erm, at, a pub in XXX city centre [laughter] |  |
|  |  | A: [laughter] romantic story. |  |
|  |  | E: Yeah [laughter] |  |
|  |  | A: [laughter] And, you say that your dad, was made redundant |  |
|  |  | before he got the job he was in now, what did he do before |  |
|  |  | that? |  |
|  |  | E: Erm , he’s done a bit of everything really, erm [pause] | Dad having lots of different jobs |
|  |  | before that, he [pause] was on an agency so, he was [pause] |  |
|  |  | going to, all different factories whenever they needed labourers |  |
|  |  | then, before that he worked for, erm, this company that made |  |
|  |  | parts for planes, but then he got made redundant from there, |  |
|  |  | and then erm, he [pause] yeah he’s had loads of jobs, he’s |  |
|  |  | worked at a fireworks place, he’s worked at, he’s worked for |  |
| Association between race and social class |  | national rail, erm [pause] man just can’t hold down a job | Using Caribbean accent to discuss dad’s job changes  E’s association between blackness and lack of employability? |
|  |  | [laughter]. Erm, yeah he’s had loads of jobs. |  |
|  |  | A: Mm, mm, and what about the ethnic background of your |  |
|  |  | parents, can you tell me a little bit about that? |  |
|  |  | E: So, my mum, is [pause] English, and, so, as far as we know | White English mum |
| Englishness and whiteness as one and the same |  | just, one hundred per cent English, and then, my dad, is | Association with whiteness and Englishness |
| English as whiteness |  | [pause] half Jamaican and half English. So, my dad’s dad | Dad mixed Jamaican and English  English as whiteness |
|  |  | came, over from Jamaica when, he was eighteen to work on | Grandad from Jamaica |
| E’s family history as mixed |  | the railway, and then met my mumma whose, white English, | Grandma from England-white British |
| E’s dad as mixed |  | and then, had my dad. | E’s Dad the product of a mixed relationship |
|  |  | A: Mmhmm. What does he, does he say anything about that or |  |
|  |  | what it was like when he was growing up? |  |
|  |  | E: Er yeah, my dad, has got a lot of stories about [pause] | Hearing about dad’s childhood when growing up |
| E’s family connection with hometown |  | because my dad, is from this town as well he’s always lived | E’s dad growing up in the same place  Geographical connection between E’s family and her hometown |
|  |  | here, erm, yeah my dad’s [pause] used to have a lot, well, |  |
| Racism as experienced in generations of E’s family |  | some, some of the racist boys used to say to him oh you’re | Difficulty in talking about the racism dad experienced  Dad experiencing racism  Dad’s childhood experiences of racism |
| Mixedness as creating different racist experiences |  | alright, cause you’re, you’re like one of us, if they were, being | Dad being treated as one of the white children  Dad’s mixedness as ‘passing’ in some situations as a child |
| E’s dad’s whiteness as ‘passable’ |  | horrible to, say a full black person or, my erm, my Grandpa | Levels of understanding blackness-  ‘full black person’-blackness/mixedness in terms of measurements  E’s dad as white enough for white racist boys |
| Family history of dealing with racism |  | he’s had to, chase people across the park, because they were | E’s family needing to defend themselves because of blackness |
| E’s dad as the victim of racism |  | being horrible because my dad, he’s one of [pause] five kids, | Dad as the victim of racism abuse |
| Family history through stories of racism |  | erm, so, yeah I’ve heard stories about my grandpa beating | E’s understanding of family history through stories |
| Family history of fighting against racism |  | people up with a slipper, and [laughter] and erm, yeah, my, my | Stories about grandad fighting because of racism |
| Dad as closed about past experiences of racism |  | dad, I think he’s had it, harder than we know, he doesn’t really, | Dad as having a difficult childhood  Dad as keeping difficult experiences from his own children  E’s limited understanding of dad’s experiences |
| Dad as passive regarding racist experiences |  | he’s one of those people that’s like oh it happens, so, he | Dad underplaying the significance of events in his childhood  Dad as accepting of experiences of racism in childhood |
| Dad as closed about past experiences of racism |  | doesn’t really talk about it, we just hear snippets of, oh well, | Dad not sharing info on his childhood  Dad as private about childhood experiences |
|  |  | this one time I was in a fight and, like people have chased him |  |
| Dad as the aim of racism |  | like skinheads and stuff. And, *he’s* had to go to court a couple | Dad as the aim of racist crime  Dad as committing crimes |
|  |  | of times himself, erm, and one, because one time he, the |  |
|  |  | police found him, with erm, a plank of wood with a nail through |  |
|  |  | it, because they was, organising a fight. So yeah [pause] There | dad as involved in fighting |
| Hometown as associated with racism |  | did, I think it did used to be quite a racist town, but now, even | Hometown as previously a racist place |
|  |  | compared to when I was younger, there’s so many more, | Change in hometown over E’s lifetime |
| Growing visibility of mixedness |  | especially mixed families. Like there’s one, just down the road | Mixing as more common in hometown now  Growing visibility of mixedness |
|  |  | from us, and compared to when I like, erm, as I was saying |  |
| E’s mixedness as isolated in childhood |  | earlier, when I went to school because I was only, me and my | E and sister as only mixed in school as a child |
|  |  | sister and then there was a couple of others, we all had to |  |
| School as aware of E as different |  | have a massive, interview at school like, how do you find | School as picking up on E’s difference |
|  |  | XXX | Asked about being mixed race at primary school  Checking if happy at primary school |
|  |  | erm, not different from anyone else so, yeah, it has changed, a | School assuring E she wasn’t different- in contrast to the fact that they put something ‘special’ on for her and sister |
|  |  | lot, from when I was growing up. |  |
|  |  | A: Mm, so what, what was it like when you were growing up I |  |
|  |  | guess you always, you’ve grown up here you’ve always lived |  |
|  |  | here? |  |
| E as connected to hometown throughout life |  | E: Yeah, always lived here, I went to school down the ro- all | E always living in same place |
|  |  | my schools down the road, erm [pause] yeah it, I [pause] [sigh] | Schools close to home |
| Racism as an underlying constant to E |  | you don’t really notice it, but then at the same time [pause] | E not noticing the racism of hometown  Racism as always underlying E’s consciousness |
| Racism as common in hometown |  | there have like, there have been quite a few [pause] incidents, | Incidents of racism as common in hometown |
| E the victim of racism |  | of like, people calling you nigger, or erm, people because, my | Others racially abusing E |
| E as different from her mum |  | mum, she used to not know how to do black hair so she used | E’s mum not knowing how to look after E’s hair  E’s mum’s whiteness as creating a lack of knowledge of looking after E |
| E as unattractive in childhood |  | to brush out my hair, and then it, so it was like a massive frizzy | E’s hair as different/unattractive looking in childhood |
|  |  | thing at the back of my head, and like, kids at school used to |  |
| E’s visual difference as a target in childhood |  | put pencils in it, and, like erm, I’ve been called a monkey, and | E as the target for bullying  E as subject to verbal racist abuse  E’s visual difference as a target |
|  |  | [pause] erm, yeah just [pause] childish things really like that. | Description of racist abuse as ‘childish’- underplaying it’s significance? |
|  |  | A: And what age were you when you were experiencing those |  |
|  |  | kind of things? |  |
|  |  | E: Erm, I think my earliest memory [pause] was probably, |  |
| Racism as a feature of childhood |  | about [pause] eight, of being called a nigger, er yeah. It’s | Earliest memory of racism at eight y.o  Childhood memory of racism |
| Experiencing racism before knowing about racism |  | probably er, I didn’t even know what that word was, as well and | Not having knowledge about racist words but having them used on her  Experiencing racism before knowing of racism |
|  |  | then obviously I came home and said it, and they were like |  |
|  |  | well, who said that and [sigh]. |  |
|  |  | A: And what was your parents’ response like when you came |  |
|  |  | home saying that, someone had said that to you? |  |
| Mum as not acknowledging racism |  | E: Erm, well my mum, she’s tries and, brushes those kind of | Lack of response from mum to racism towards E  Mum as not wanting to acknowledge racism |
| Mum as underplaying significance of racism |  | things under the carpet like, well, well, ooh, it doesn’t matter to | Mum not wanting to acknowledge racism  Mum as not wanting to address significance of racism |
| Mum as underplaying emotional significance of racism |  | erm, you’re not upset are you. Yeah [pause] and it was like, | Mum not wanting E to show being upset at racism  Mum not wanting to deal with potential consequences of racism |
| Experiencing racism before knowing about racism |  | well I didn’t know what it meant, so, I was like no, I’m not upset. | E not upset because of lack of meaning to her about the word |
| Mum as avoiding difficulty of racism |  | My mum doesn’t really like, confrontation, so she tries and | Mum as avoiding confrontation |
| Mum as closed about racism |  | makes, everything, just [pause] not talk about issues. | Mum not wanting to talk about difficult subjects  Mum as not open |
|  |  | A: Mm, And what about your dad? |  |
| Dad as passive in E’s understanding of response to racism |  | E: Erm [pause] I can’t really remember what my dad did. Erm, | Dad as passive to E’s experiences of racism |
| Parents as passive to E’s experiences of racism |  | it was mainly my cousin, my cousin erm, he went and erm, | Not parents who reacted to E being racially abused  Parents as passive to E’s experiences of racism |
| Racism as a close feature of E’s childhood |  | knocked, because it was someone on this street, he went and | Proximity of the racism towards E  E as surrounded by racism in childhood |
|  |  | knocked on the door and like, punched them in the face. I can’t | E’s cousin’s reaction to racism=violence |
|  |  | remember what my dad’s reaction was [pause] he’s quite like |  |
| Dad as not acknowledging racism |  | my mum as well like he doesn’t really like talking about things | Dad not wanting to acknowledge racism towards E |
| Dad as finding racism difficult to acknowledge |  | [pause] that’s probably why. He probably didn’t talk about it. | Dad not talking about the racism towards E  Dad as not acknowledging racism |
|  |  | A: And tell me [pause] when that happened, you say that your |  |
|  |  | cousin [pause] went round. Can you tell me about your cousin, |  |
|  |  | and what, who they are and where they fit in with your family? |  |
|  |  | E: Yeah erm, so [pause] growing up [pause] my dad’s mum |  |
|  |  | and dad, my mumma and grandpa, erm, the one from |  |
|  |  | Jamaica, and then my dad’s four, brothers and sisters erm, we |  |
| E’s closeness to mixed family members |  | all grew up, really close as cousins so it was me and their kids | E close geographically and emotionally to cousins |
|  |  | so I’ve got, an older, male cousin, two younger, girl cousins, |  |
|  |  | erm, and then, another younger, guy cousin. Erm, and we all |  |
| Childhood experiences of family mixedness |  | used to grow up at my mumma and grandpa’s house because | Childhood at grandparent’s house (mixed grandparents)  Growing up alongside mixed cousins |
|  |  | all our parents worked so, after school and stuff we’d always |  |
|  |  | be at that house, playing together, or they’d come round here | Growing up alongside mixed cousins |
|  |  | because my mum, was a stay at home mum for a bit so they’d |  |
| Emotional closeness to mixed family members |  | come round here. So, we were really close growing up, so I | Closeness to mixed cousins  Mixedness as a normal family situation for E |
|  |  | think because, XXX the guy that, erm, responded, to what |  |
|  |  | happened to me, I think because we were all so close and | Significance of being close to cousins |
|  |  | because he’s black as well and he knew more about what that | Describing mixed cousin as black |
|  |  | word meant [pause] he just got [pause] upset, more upset |  |
|  |  | than, I was, about that it had happened and [pause] yeah, |  |
|  |  | punched him. |  |
|  |  | A: And how about all your other cousins are they black or, |  |
|  |  | mixed? |  |
|  |  | E: Yeah erm, so, I’ve got [pause] all my cousins on my dad’s |  |
| Family normality as mixed |  | side, are mixed race, so they’ve all got one black and one | Family as largely mixed  Family normality as mixed for E |
|  |  | white parent, and then my mum’s side, I’ve just got one white |  |
|  |  | cousin. |  |
|  |  | A: So what, how did you find, growing up round here? |  |
|  |  | E: Erm, it was [pause] it was good, erm, as I say I don’t really, |  |
| E as minimising racism in childhood |  | look back and [pause] think that it was [pause] really racist | Not seeing the racism of hometown  E as not acknowledging racism? |
| Differentness as a fact for E |  | town. But then, at the same time [pause] I kind of always knew |  |
|  |  | that I was different [pause] to [pause] and, until I met, XXX, I | Feeling different from others  E feeling her difference as a fact, not a perception |
| E’s school experience as a minority |  | didn’t have any black friends or mixed friends it was, it wasn’t | Growing up with no black/MR friends  E’s childhood as a minority |
| E’s schooling as white |  | until I got to college that, I had any, mixed race or black friends | Having black/MR friends later in childhood  E’s childhood experience as white normality |
|  |  | [pause] so, it’s kind of, I guess in a sense [pause] you don’t |  |
| Differentness as unconscious awareness |  | really notice it but if you haven’t got anyone that’s the same as | ‘differentness’ as not explicit but always aware of it |
| Family as isolated in mixedness |  | you apart from your family then, I guess it is a bit [pause] | Family as isolated in their differentness |
| E as ‘not normal’ in childhood based on mixedness |  | because, growing up and you want to, do make up and hair. | Harder to do ‘normal’ growing up things  E’s heritage as making her ‘not normal’ |
| E as unable to ‘be normal’ with white friends because of mixedness |  | You can’t do make up with your white friends and they don’t, | Difficulty in being a part of the same ‘normal’ activities of other girls  E’s appearance as making her not ‘normal’ |
| Lack of understanding from white perspective |  | erm, understand about, curly hair but, yeah. It wasn’t hard but I | White friends not understanding E’s hair  Lack of understanding from white perspective |
|  |  | guess [pause] when, I think, because [pause] when my dad |  |
|  |  | was growing up here, it was quite a racist town, and some of |  |
| Racism as ingrained in hometown |  | that did get passed on from, because, this is the type of town | Racism passed down through generations |
| Hometown as a closed environment |  | where everyone stays here, so, children who I went to school | Closeness of town leading to racism continuing  Hometown as a closed environment |
|  |  | with my dad went to school with their parents, and, so [pause] |  |
| Racism as a continuing legacy |  | their, parent’s bigotry kind of did get passed on. Like, when, | Parents passing on racist views to children  Racism as a continuing legacy |
|  |  | being called a monkey in school and stuff [pause] but now as I |  |
|  |  | say I think it’s, a lot better [pause] I, about every other person | Recent changes in racism |
| Increase in non-whiteness as positive |  | when you walk down the street now, they’re, black or mixed | Increase in black/MR faces in the town |
|  |  | race. |  |
|  |  | A: Mm. And why do you think that’s changed so much? |  |
|  |  | E: I’m not sure really, erm [pause] because obviously being |  |
|  |  | down the road from XXX which is, got a massive reputation |  |
| Hometown as part of a racist culture |  | for being XXX- racist, I’m not really sure why, there’s so many | Proximity to a highly racist town  Hometown as surrounded by racism |
|  |  | black people that live here. I don’t know [pause] it’s just |  |
| Association with blackness and class |  | become the ghetto [laughter]. | Association with black people living somewhere and it being the ghetto  Association with blackness and lower class areas? |
|  |  | A: Tell me a little bit more about your friends at, at primary |  |
|  |  | school, and the, sort of people that you, were hanging around |  |
|  |  | with or the sort of people you, really didn’t hang around with. |  |
| E as socially limited in school |  | E:Erm [pause] I onl- I had a small group of friends at primary | Limited friendships at primary school |
|  |  | school I’d probably say that I was friends with about [pause] |  |
|  |  | three girls. And [pause] and, I remember as well I went through |  |
|  |  | a whole summer where I had *no friends*, because we all fell | Experience of having no friends |
|  |  | out, erm [pause] but [pause] yeah they’re, they’re all kind, all |  |
| E as surrounded by whiteness at school |  | white, and [pause] all, a lot, wealthier than what we were, so | E’s friends as all white  E as surrounded by whiteness  E’s friends having more money than her  E as a different class from primary peers |
| E’s association with opportunity and whiteness |  | they could do things that I couldn’t do, because, when I was | E’s friends having more opportunity than her |
|  |  | younger my mum didn’t have a job and my mu- and my dad |  |
|  |  | was always out of work [pause] so, I guess [pause] and, now, I |  |
| School as emotionally insignificant |  | don’t even speak to them people at all, anymore [pause] and | No connection with school friends now  No connections with first friends |
|  |  | the kids at school who I didn’t, really like, was probably [pause] |  |
|  |  | everyone else. | Largely not liking people at school |
|  |  | A: What, how [pause] tell me about those everyone else, what |  |
|  |  | were they like? |  |
|  |  | E: Erm [pause] at school , not so much, primary school but, in |  |
|  |  | secondary school [pause] everyone was just [pause] quite |  |
|  |  | nasty, and quite, judgemental. So [pause] I wouldn’t even | Secondary school peers as not nice |
| E as isolated at secondary school |  | speak to anyone. Well, I speak to one person who I went to | E isolated from peers at secondary school |
|  |  | secondary school with but, other than that, everyone was just |  |
| Appearance as key at secondary school |  | quite focused on, looks, and popularity. Just going to let the cat | Appearance as an important factor at secondary school |
|  |  | out [laughter]. |  |
|  |  | A: So that was at, at secondary school. In what kind of ways do |  |
|  |  | you think they were focused on that? |  |
|  |  | E: Erm [pause] because, all of, erm [pause] the whole, they all |  |
| White ideal of secondary school |  | looked exactly the same, all of the, popular girls looked exactly | Similarity in appearance of girls at secondary school-highlighting E’s difference? |
| E as not fitting the secondary ideal |  | the same. And I guess I just didn’t, fit in, that mould, and | E’s appearance as different from peers at secondary school |
|  |  | [pause] so yeah they were, they were nasty, about, about my |  |
| E’s appearance as a target |  | hair, because my hair was different, so I started straightening | Negative about E’s differences  E’s appearance as something negative  E’s attempts appear more like them based on negative experiences  E as trying to be more like peers |
| Racialisation as another layer of teenage angst |  | my hair, and [pause] erm [pause] I had quite bad skin as well, I | E’a racial appearance on top of ‘normal’ teenage appearance problems as an issue |
|  |  | was, quite spotty, and I guess [pause] because I was [pause] |  |
| Intelligence and non-whiteness as challenging to others |  | cleverer, than they were as well, they just didn’t [pause] I did- I | E’s intelligence as difficult for others to accept positively |
|  |  | didn’t really get picked on, I just [pause] I didn’t like them and |  |
|  |  | they didn’t really like me. | Mutual dislike between E and school peers |
|  |  | A: Mm. How did it feel to [pause] to be there in school with |  |
|  |  | those girls? |  |
|  |  | E: I hated school, lots of people say school is [pause] you, | School as a highly negative experience |
| No emotional connection with school |  | want to go back but I hated it, I would never go back to school. | Wanting to leave school experiences behind |
|  |  | Erm. Like me and my best friend, we used to run out of school | Escaping from school |
|  |  | and stuff, and, not come back for, lessons. Yeah, I hated |  |
|  |  | school. | Repetition of I hated school-significance of it |
|  |  | A: What was it specifically, or are there any specific things that, |  |
|  |  | made you hate it so much? |  |
|  |  | E: I think, it was just the people I went to school with, they | Not getting on with the people at school  E as different from the people at school |
| Whole school experience as negative |  | were, nasty, and, the teachers as well. My, my own form tutor | E seeing whole school as nasty |
| School peers and staff as the same |  | didn’t even like me, so that was [pause] not nice. | Feeling disliked by school staff |
|  |  | A: What do you mean by that? |  |
|  |  | E: [pause] They, he, erm [pause] I don’t know it almost felt like |  |
| E as targeted by whole school |  | he was out to get me. Any little thing that I did, it, he was just | Feeling picked on by teachers |
|  |  | nasty about. And my mum, even went in and had an argument |  |
|  |  | with him, about it. He just didn’t like me. | Feeling not liked by teachers |
|  |  | A: What sort of, things did he do? |  |
| School as targeting E |  | E: Just, snidey comments and [pause] he’d, let [pause] he’d, | Feeling singled out by teachers |
| Whole school seeing E as different |  | with me, he seemed always pick me up on things that he’d let | E’s teacher as seeing her as different (negatively) |
| School as targeting E |  | slide with other people. So, he’d be like oh why you doing that | E’s actions as more noticeable [negatively] than others |
| School as disengaging E |  | or oh why you talking. So in the end, I just stopped going to, | E stopping attendance at form because of teacher  School experiences affecting school attendance |
|  |  | tutor, group as well. Which, got me in trouble because they |  |
|  |  | said that, I wouldn’t be allowed to go to prom so I had to start |  |
|  |  | going again. |  |
|  |  | A: Mm [pause] So, where do you think your ethnicity fitted into |  |
|  |  | your experiences of school? |  |
|  |  | E: Erm [pause] I mean, I think it played a part [pause] in, me |  |
|  |  | [pause] not liking people, erm [pause] because I was so |  |
| E’s self-perception as so different |  | different, and [pause] I think, as well [pause] like [sigh] just, | E’s perception of self as so different |
| E as a slave to her racialized appearance |  | when people make fun of things that you can’t change it’s just | E as something to be laughed at by others  E as powerless to her own appearance growing up |
| E feeling others see blackness as inherently funny |  | annoying, and [pause] like, when kids make jokes about black | Others making jokes about blackness  Blackness as inherently funny |
| E’s emotional connectedness to blackness |  | men and stuff I just don’t like it because, that’s my dad. | E seeing others perceive blackness as funny  E feeling personally connection with blackness  Other’s jokes of blackness playing into E’s personal connection with blackness  E as different perspective from others |
|  |  | A: What kind of, things did they say that you particularly didn’t |  |
|  |  | like? |  |
|  |  | E: [sigh] I think just things like [pause] ooh, erm, you get, erm, |  |
| E feeling others see black male sexuality as inherently funny |  | just joking around, to the girls and stuff like, ooh, you’ll get | Black male sexuality as funny |
| Stereotypes of black maleness as funny |  | fucked by a big black cock and stuff and it’s like [pause] there’s | Stereotypes about black maleness |
|  |  | no need to say things like that. |  |
|  |  | A: How did it feel to you when that sort of thing got said? |  |
| E’s experience vs others’ perception of race as at odds |  | E: [sigh] erm, I just [pause] I just don’t see any, any difference | E not seeing why race is so significant to others  E’s personal understanding of race as different from those around her |
|  |  | between [pause] that and, I don’t understand why, a black willy | E arguing for normalisation of black maleness |
| E’s experience vs others’ perception of race as at odds |  | is any funnier than a white one. I just, don’t understand [pause] | E as not understanding other’s perceptions about race |
|  |  | and, and that’s why I think [pause] because I guess, if, you |  |
| Normality of blackness to E but not others |  | grow up with, a black man [pause] then, it’s not funny, | Blackness as normal to E but not others |
| Normality of blackness to E but not others |  | because, it’s no different to, a white dad. | Black parenting as normal to E |
|  |  | A: Mm. And what did you do in those situations? |  |
| Pressure to conform to group racial perceptions |  | E: I think [pause] at the time, you would [sigh] laugh because, | E feeling a need to conform to group racial perceptions |
| E not wanting to appear different from peers |  | you don’t want to be the only one there who’s like oh, that’s not | E not wanting to appear different to others |
|  |  | very nice guys. But now, looking back, and even when I hear |  |
|  |  | jokes like that now I just think, well [pause] it’s not funny. | Retrospectively more challenging to accept?  More confidence in own position as an adult? |
|  |  | A: And, how do you think, how do you think people at school |  |
|  |  | saw you? |  |
|  |  | E: [pause] hm. [pause] erm [pause] I think they just [pause] I |  |
|  |  | think they did just see me as, a normal person, but then, at the |  |
| E not feeling wanted at school |  | same time, looking back [pause] erm, I never had a boyfriend | Not having a boyfriend thorough school  E as not feeling wanted at school |
|  |  | throughout school, and, I think [sigh] [pause] I think it was |  |
|  |  | because [pause] they just didn’t, the boys that I went to school |  |
| E as unattractive based on appearance |  | with just didn’t find me, pretty, and I don’t know whether that’s | E as not attractive to others at school based on appearance |
| E as unattractive based on racial appearance |  | because, whether race does play a part in that, because, I was | E’s racial appearance as unattractive to others at school |
| Black girls as unattractive at school |  | one of the only, black girls in school [pause] or I, I don’t know. | E as a black girl  Black girls as not attractive in school |
| E’s racial appearance as affecting experience as a ‘normal’ girl |  | Because, I guess, every teenage girl just wants a boyfriend, | E feeling like other girls  E’s ideas about girlhood-getting a boyfriend |
| E’s racial appearance as affecting experience as a ‘normal’ girl |  | but, no, I didn’t have one until as I say when I, when I went to | E’s appearance as stopping her from engaging in ‘normal girl’ activities |
|  |  | college in XXX, and then, my horizons got broadened, | Going to college/into the city as opportunity |
|  |  | and that’s when, I finally started dating and, so I, I think, I think |  |
| E as insignificant in school |  | to most people, in school, I was just, there. | E as insignificant in school |
|  |  | A: Mm. And how did that feel at the time to be, to be just there? |  |
| E as powerless to change school circumstance |  | E: [pause] I didn’t, I don’t think I minded it at the time but now | E as accepting her position in school at the time  E as accepting of her non-importance in school |
|  |  | looking back, I think it is quite, upsetting, about the fact that, I | Sadness as school experience |
|  |  | didn’t, I haven’t got, any lasting memories, of being, friends | Lack of positive memories about school |
|  |  | with people in school and doing stuff with people in school. | Lack of connectedness with school |
|  |  | Because [pause] I just didn’t, like them. |  |
|  |  | A: If, someone could have [pause] if like a professional person |  |
|  |  | could have come in to your primary or secondary school, and |  |
|  |  | [pause] in a magical world done something to make it better for |  |
|  |  | you, do you, do you think there’s anything they could have |  |
|  |  | done to make that experience more enjoyable or, change |  |
|  |  | anything? |  |
|  |  | E: I think [pause] erm [pause] I would say, maybe [pause] |  |
|  |  | more, it would have been easier to go, to a school with, more, |  |
| Diversity as potentially positive for E’s experiences |  | mixed or black children, but then at the same time I don’t think | Diversity as something seen as positive/beneficial for E |
| Diversity as having limits of benefit |  | that would have been, an answer. I think [pause] maybe [sigh] | No easy way of making E’s childhood education experience easier  Diversity as not the whole answer for challenging racism |
|  |  | [pause] if there was [pause] if children, got, socialised, with |  |
| Diverse experiences as useful for others’ understanding |  | different cultures [pause] then, maybe it would make them, not | Benefit of diverse experiences for others |
|  |  | be so, horrible, but, I don’t, I don’t know really what, what |  |
|  |  | would have made, it better [pause] because I think a lot of, |  |
| E seeing racism as ingrained in others |  | attitudes towards, black people are quite, ingrained, erm | Perception of the ingrained nature of racism towards black people |
|  |  | [pause] so I’m not really sure, what would have made it better. |  |
|  |  | Apart from [pause] maybe if people, but then you don’t want to |  |
| Differences highlighted as negative |  | have a lesson, that makes you seem special. I don’t know. | Not wanting to seem different from others  Highlighting difference as a bad thing |
|  |  | A: Mm, How do you think your teachers coped with [pause] the |  |
|  |  | school you went to and the people in your school? In terms of |  |
|  |  | the, ethnic diversity? |  |
|  |  | E: [pause] in primary school, I think, they tried, I think they tried | Primary school as trying to approach diversity |
|  |  | to handle it, by, when I had, when, me and my sister and a few |  |
|  |  | others had a meeting about being, black and mixed race in the |  |
|  |  | school. But then [pause] my secondary school I don’t think they |  |
|  |  | handled, bullying, the right way because I, I reported a few | Secondary school as not caring |
|  |  | instances in secondary school, and [pause] as far as I’m aware |  |
| Secondary school as passive towards racism |  | of nothing really got done about it, so. | Secondary school as inactive in response/support to racism |
|  |  | A: Mm. What were those, those instances where you reported |  |
|  |  | them? |  |
|  |  | E: Erm, I reported, one, one boy, calling me, a nigger, and |  |
| Secondary school as overtly racist |  | another boy, calling me, a monkey with a moustache, and, | E’s overtly racist experiences in secondary school |
| Secondary school as passive towards racism |  | nothing really happened, so. | Lack of response of secondary school to racism |
|  |  | A: How, in those situations, what was it like to have people say |  |
|  |  | those sort of things to you? |  |
|  |  | E: [pause] upsetting, really upsetting. [pause] but then, as well, | Upset by racism |
| Identifying with others as helping feeling supported  Racial identification as supportive |  | because, you haven’t got, anyone else, who is black who, | Lack of others to identify with for support |
| Shared identity as shared support |  | could understand, you kind of just have to brush it off because | Shared identity as shared understanding and support- lacking for E |
| Whiteness as lacking identification with non-whiteness |  | [pause] my, my friends wouldn’t really, understand why that | E’s friends as not understanding her experiences  Whiteness as unable to understand experience |
|  |  | would be so upsetting for me. |  |
|  |  | A: Mm. [pause] It sounds like there’s lots and lots of, actually |  |
|  |  | really horrible [pause] memories that you’ve got. |  |
| Ongoing emotional impact of school experience |  | E: Yeah, really, oh god I’m getting upset. Re- really horrible | School as highly negative experience  Ongoing significance of school experiences for E |
|  |  | memories [crying] |  |
|  |  | A: Is it okay to carry on? |  |
|  |  | E: Yeah, it’s fine. |  |
|  |  | A: How do you think that has, shaped you now and, shaped |  |
|  |  | your [pause] feelings about education and, school? |  |
|  |  | E: [crying] erm [pause] I’m not really, I think [pause] [sigh] I |  |
|  |  | don’t know, erm [pause] I mean I, I dropped out of university I | Dropping out of university |
| Link between school and university negative experiences |  | don’t know whether, my [pause] experiences of school made it | Link between school and university experiences of negativity |
| School experience as impacting university engagement |  | [pause] so I didn’t, try as hard, but then [pause] I think, my | School experiences as affecting university engagement |
|  |  | experiences, at school and how they’ve shaped me today, I |  |
| Pressure to conform to white ideal image |  | think [pause] for a long time [pause] like, I would straighten my | E trying to conform to a white norm/ideal |
|  |  | hair and [pause] but then [pause] now, I think I’m quite, |  |
| Growth of racial self-confidence with age |  | comfortable with being mixed race. | Greater level of self-acceptance of mixed identity with age |
|  |  | A: mm. When you were straightening your hair, is there |  |
|  |  | anything else you did, alongside the hair straightening? |  |
|  |  | E: Erm, no, it was, I mean I do still straighten my hair, but now |  |
|  |  | it’s more for going out, and, whereas, whereas during the day, |  |
| Growing acceptance with natural racialised appearance |  | I’m mostly just leave my hair the way it is. That was mainly the | Acceptance of natural appearance |
| Uncomfortability with racialised appearance |  | thing, that I did, because, I just wasn’t comfortable, with my | Uncomfortability with racialised appearance |
| E’s hair as the symbol of others’ racial dislike |  | hair. I think it was because that was, the target, of a lot of, what | Disliking an area that others targeted  E’s hair as the objectification of other’s dislike of her |
|  |  | people used to say about me. Because, my mum didn’t know |  |
|  |  | how to do my hair and it was, a frizzy, mess. That people stuck |  |
|  |  | pencils in. |  |
|  |  | A: When you had, that meeting thing, in school, what, what did |  |
|  |  | they do and, how did they do it? |  |
|  |  | E: It was, we got pulled out of lessons, and then, erm, it was, |  |
|  |  | kind of, an informal meeting, but it was recorded as well, and |  |
|  |  | [pause] they was just asking us questions about, being mixed | Primary school attempting to support MR |
|  |  | race and [pause] erm, how we felt, being in the school and |  |
|  |  | [pause] I don’t really remember much about it because I think I |  |
|  |  | was only in, about, year one, and my sister would have been |  |
|  |  | about, year three or something. So I don’t remember that, |  |
|  |  | much about it I just remember, that it happened. |  |
|  |  | A: Can you remember anything that you thought about it |  |
|  |  | happening? |  |
| Normal until others demonstrated otherwise |  | E: I, I just thought [pause] it was normal, and that, everyone | E not understanding the significance of the meeting  E not seeing the significance of her difference in young childhood |
|  |  | was having it, but then [pause] when I speak to my sister about | E not seeing herself as different from anyone else at that stage |
|  |  | it now, we think it, it’s kind of funny that it happened. Because, |  |
| Others as creating E’s sense of difference |  | up until [pause] erm, children started being horrible, we didn’t | Other children’s behaviour as the catalyst for feeling different  Others’ perceptions and behaviours as creating E’s sense of difference |
|  |  | even think of ourselves as different, so to have that meeting |  |
| School as creating E’s sense of difference |  | when you don’t even think of yourselves as different, is a bit | School-led meeting highlighting E as different  School as creating feelings of difference  Actions of school unintentionally creating feelings of difference |
|  |  | [pause] we just thought that, everyone was having it because |  |
|  |  | we didn’t think of ourselves as different. |  |
|  |  | A: So when you say that, you didn’t, think of yourself as |  |
|  |  | different as then at that stage but, later on you did, what, what |  |
|  |  | kind of things made you feel that way? |  |
| Others as negatively influencing E’s self perception |  | E: I think just, just the words that people would say and [pause] | Other’s perception as changing E’s self-perception |
|  |  | because, growing up with [pause] being really close to, black |  |
| Blackness as normal to E in childhood |  | cousins and, you just, well it is normal and, this is your life you | Blackness as normal to E |
| Blackness as normality as questioned through school experiences |  | know it’s normal, but then, going to school and hearing people | Home and school as separate/different experiences  Majority narratives of normality of creating doubt in own experiences of normality with regards to race |
|  |  | say, making out that you’re different, calling you a, a monkey |  |
| Others as confirming E’s difference |  | and, you do realise that, you’re not the same as everyone else. | Feels that there is a ‘reality’ to E’s thinking that she is different  Other’s perceptions as behaviours towards E as creating her own difference |
| School memories as emotional |  | Sorry I don’t know why I’ve got so upset it’s not, I can look | Childhood memories as upsetting for E |
|  |  | back and, and not get upset I don’t know why that’s happened. |  |
|  |  | I’m just an emotional person. |  |
|  |  | A: Well, it’s an emotional thing to talk about as well, to |  |
|  |  | remember those kind of things being said to you and |  |
|  |  | happening to you. Especially, as you’re growing up I think. |  |
|  |  | E: Yeah. |  |
|  |  | A: I think it’s really, significant and it has an impact on you that |  |
|  |  | these sort of things, happen. How do you think [pause] how do |  |
|  |  | you think that your, parents helped you to deal with that? |  |
| Parents as emotionally unsupportive of racial self-understanding |  | E: Erm [pause] I don’t think that they did help me to deal with | Parents as emotionally unsupportive to E’s racial understanding of self |
| Parents as emotionally closed |  | that, erm, because, they, don’t like talking about things that | Parents as uncommunicative |
| Dad as powerless to racism |  | upset people. My dad [pause] just kind of accepts racism, as it | Dad as accepting racism  Dad as powerless to racism |
|  |  | happens, and [pause] my mum [pause] yeah, she just doesn’t |  |
| Mum as disengaged from racism |  | like to talk about things, so things happen and, as long as | Mum as not wanting to acknowledge racism |
| Mum as unable to manage emotional impact of racism |  | you’re not too upset by them then it doesn’t matter that much. | Mum as minimising E’s emotional responses to difficult childhood experiences  Mum as minimising the significance of E’s racial experiences |
|  |  | A: How did that feel for you when everything was going on? |  |
| Emotional significance of lack of parental support on E |  | E: [pause] erm, I think, I did [pause] withdraw into myself, a lot. | E as withdrawn from others based on experiences  Experiences as closing E off from the world |
| Social emotional significance of lack of parental support on E |  | I think that’s why I probably didn’t have very many friends in | E’s behaviour as affecting friendships  E’s experiences as closing her off socially from others |
|  |  | school because I did withdraw into myself because, I didn’t |  |
| E as unable to express emotions relating to racism |  | want to talk about it because, no one wants to talk about it. | E’s behaviour as a direct response to parents behaviour  E feeling unheard/powerless |
|  |  | [pause] [sigh] I’ve lost my train of thought now. |  |
|  |  | A: It’s alright. Erm, just thinking about, your ethnicity and, how |  |
|  |  | other people, see it. How do you see it and how did you see it |  |
|  |  | when you were growing up? |  |
|  |  | E: Erm [pause] I don’t, I don’t know how, I see [pause] I would |  |
| Language as part of personal identity |  | call myself mixed race, but I don’t like it, when you’re, on the | Choice of language to define mixedness  Language as part of personal identity |
| Self identity as controlled/dictated by society |  | tick forms, and it asks you to put your ethnicity, and you have | E’s negative perception of ethnic monitoring  Feeling self-identity is controlled/dictated by society |
|  |  | to put, white and black british. I don’t like, because I wouldn’t | Constriction of monitoring forms |
| Contrast between self and society’s definition of mixedness |  | think of myself, like that. Erm [pause] I used, used to call | E’s self-perception and society’s definitions as different |
|  |  | myself quarter caste as well, but then [pause] now, people | Choice of ‘quarter caste’-old fashioned language use |
| Identity as directed by societal norms |  | don’t like that word, so [sigh] [pause] yeah I guess I would, just | E aware of political elements of mixedness in language choice  E’s self identity as directed by societal norms |
|  |  | call myself, mixed race. |  |
|  |  | A: Mm. And you say that, you used to call yourself, quarter |  |
|  |  | caste. Why have you, why don’t you use that any more? |  |
|  |  | E: I, I still do use that word, to be fair, I think, a lot of people, |  |
| Political significance of mixedness on self-identity/expression of self |  | just get funny about it, so I don’t say it, that often but, people | Recognition of other’s dislike of language use  E’s self identity as directed by societal norms |
|  |  | like my dad he would still call himself half caste all the time. I | Dad’s self-identity affecting E’s self-identity in language use |
|  |  | think he would use that word over mixed race whereas if |  |
| Mixedness as reflecting historical socio-political ideas about race |  | someone asked me, I’d probably say mixed race first and he | Generational difference in language choice |
|  |  | would say, half caste. |  |
|  |  | A: And what do you think about people’s reactions to, changing |  |
|  |  | words and the words that people use to describe themselves? |  |
| Mixedness as politically driven |  | E: I think people, erm [pause] are a bit too, PC about words | Seeing others as overly political in language use |
| Socio-historical position as separate from self-identity |  | like half- I know, the origins of half caste, but I think because- | E’s awareness of social-historical implications of language use and mixedness  Socio-historical position as separate from personal meaning/self-identity |
|  |  | [interrupted] |  |
|  |  | A: Erm, so what were we talking about. Oh yeah ethnicity and |  |
|  |  | you describing, your ethnicity. |  |
|  |  | E: Erm, I think we was talking, erm. Oh, you asked me, about, |  |
|  |  | how I feel about, erm, people’s changing opinions, on what |  |
|  |  | they say. And I was saying like, yeah, I think people get, too, |  |
|  |  | ‘PC’ about, words like half caste and I understand, the origins |  |
|  |  | of like, where it’s come from, but then, at the same time, every, |  |
| Experience of language vs societal norms of language for mixedness  Societal norms as controlled by whiteness |  | black person that I know [pause] uses that word, so I think, | Mismatch between political and experiential understandings of language use related to mixedness for E |
|  |  | people getting upset, o- the only people I know that get upset |  |
| E’s self as influenced by white society |  | about that word, is, white people, who are like, you can’t say | Politicisation of mixed language taken by white people  E’s self-identity as controlled by white society |
| Society and E’s experiences as separate |  | that, and, it’s like well, everyone I know says it, so I think | E’s experience as different from the political norm  Separation of E’s black cultural world and society as a whole |
|  |  | [pause] I think half caste is kind of [pause] like, like how the rap |  |
|  |  | industry has tried to adopt the word nigger, I think half caste |  |
| Language as racialised  Language as related to power |  | [pause] is kind of a black person word and [pause] I don’t see | Language use as empowering for black people |
|  |  | the need for people to get upset about it because no one has |  |
|  |  | ever said it, as a nasty w- nastily like oh you’re half caste | Significance of intent rather than meaning to word which is important for E |
|  |  | [pause] |  |
|  |  | A: mm. [pause] Mm. What, when you were a, when you were |  |
|  |  | growing up, did you f- [pause] how do you think that your |  |
|  |  | gender, and ethnicity, affected your experiences of growing |  |
|  |  | up? Or do you think it did at all? |  |
|  |  | E: I think, it’s easier for [pause] people to, accept, black males | E seeing black maleness as easier socially |
|  |  | than, I think [pause] racists get quite confused by, black people |  |
| Attractiveness of black femininity as confusing |  | women, like, with black men, they know what they’re getting. I | Black women as confusing to others  Black men as predictable-stereotypes of the black male  Attractiveness of black femininity as confusing |
|  |  | think, especially, male, racists, I think they get quite confused |  |
| Attractiveness of black women as problematic |  | by, women because, they think that you’re pretty but at the | Attractiveness of black women as problematic |
|  |  | same time you’re black, so. I think, being a woman, and being |  |
|  |  | black or mixed is much harder than being a man. And [pause] | Black/MR femaleness as difficult |
|  |  | my aunty, when she was at school my dad’s sister erm, she |  |
|  |  | had one teacher, that, erm, she was wearing a summer dress, |  |
|  |  | the same as, all the other girls in school and, he was like ooh |  |
| Association between black/MR females and overt sexuality |  | you’re a slag, you’re a, you’re a tart and I think it’s just | Association between black/MR females and sexuality |
| Attractiveness of black/MR women as problematic for others |  | because, he fancied her, and she was mixed, so, he called her | E’s perception of others not able to manage their own attractions towards black/MR women  Attractiveness of black/MR women as problematic for others |
|  |  | a slag. | Response to black/MR females as aggressive |
|  |  | A: and, how does that relate to any experiences that you’ve |  |
|  |  | had? Growing up as a mixed girl, and woman? |  |
| Self-confidence as challenged by mixedness |  | E: Erm [pause] I think, it’s harder to feel body confident. | Self-confidence as challenged by mixedness |
|  |  | Because [pause] most of the bodies that, you see, are [pause] |  |
| Femininity as polarised to E |  | either white, or black, you don’t really see, mixed women get | Racial polarity of female images to E |
| Mixed femininity as invisible |  | represented that much, they either push for black people, or | Mixed femininity as invisible |
|  |  | you just see white people, so I think, trying to feel body |  |
| Association between mixedness and not fitting |  | confident when [pause] nothing is really, right for your body, it | Feeling of not fitting into a category because of mixedness |
|  |  | is hard. |  |
|  |  | A: Mm. [pause] have you got any, specific memories of that, |  |
|  |  | like, in action, when you were at school or, anything like that? |  |
|  |  | E: Erm [pause] not really, as I say, other than, the hair |  |
|  |  | straightening thing, to fit in, I [pause] don’t really, feel [pause] I | Wanting to be part of the norm |
|  |  | think [pause] noticing, other than noticing that you’ve got a big |  |
| Physical differences from the norm as challenging |  | bum, compared to everyone else. [pause] There’s not really | Physical differences from the ‘norm’ white girl as challenging to self |
|  |  | anything other than, those things. |  |
|  |  | A: Why do you think that, there is the, kind of, white, and then |  |
|  |  | there is the, black, images? |  |
|  |  | E: [pause] I think it’s because [pause] people want to show, |  |
|  |  | that they’re [pause] not racist, so they push for the black to | Needing to demonstrate lack of racism as opposed to actual lack of racism |
|  |  | show people that, they accept black people, but [pause] not |  |
| Limitedness of current non-white representation |  | everyone is white and black, so I think [pause] they need to, | Limitedness of current non-white representations |
|  |  | make a, I don’t know. |  |
|  |  | A: What do you think, a, you said, you think it’s harder to be a |  |
|  |  | black or mixed girl or a woman. What do you think it’s like, if |  |
|  |  | you’re a mixed boy or what kind of, I guess you’ve got cousins |  |
|  |  | and stuff, who are mixed boys, what do you think it was like for |  |
|  |  | them? |  |
|  |  | E: I think for them [pause] it’s easier, it’s easier for them in a |  |
|  |  | white community, but then, my er, my dad he’s, he’s had loads |  |
|  |  | of crap off the black community for being mixed, so I think for | E’s dad’s mixedness as challenged by black community |
|  |  | mixed and black males it’s easier in a way in the white | Mixed maleness as easier in white community |
|  |  | community [pause] than it, I don’t know I think, because |  |
| General power of men making any maleness easier |  | [pause] men are, generally more accepted in society anyway if | General power status of men as making any maleness easier |
|  |  | you’re a male erm it’s, easier, because, I would say but, I don’t |  |
|  |  | know why, I guess [pause] I just always [pause] without talking |  |
|  |  | to them [pause] but then [pause] but then I’ve got friends, that, |  |
|  |  | erm, I’ve met, since, I erm, XX- me and XXX know this guy |  |
|  |  | called XXX, And he’s mixed race, lighter skinned than me, and |  |
|  |  | he,erm, there’s a pub, in XXX, where, I’m accepted to go | ‘accepted’ sounds like American style segregation |
|  |  | in, no one’s ever said anything about me being black, yet they | Experiencing different approaches to blackness depending on gender |
|  |  | were, racist to him, so I don- [sigh] I’m not sure I guess it’s not, |  |
|  |  | easier, for [pause] black men. I don’t know [laughter]. | Confusing feelings over gender/race |
|  |  | A: It’s really interesting to think about. Erm, we’ve talked a lot |  |
|  |  | about school and, your kind of memories of school. What about |  |
|  |  | when you went to college, tell me about that, about college. |  |
|  |  | E: Erm [pause] I think college [pause] really [pause] can you, is |  |
|  |  | your recording alright with that banging? |  |
|  |  | A: I hope so [laughter] let me just, I can stop it and check if it’s. |  |
|  |  | [new recording] |  |
|  |  | A: Right, and it’s on again [laughter] so yeah, where, where did |  |
|  |  | you go to college? |  |
|  |  | E: Er, I went to XXX erm, in, the city centre |  |
|  |  | in XXX. And yeah that really, opened [pause] my, eyes. | College as a new experience |
|  |  | Well [pause] I wouldn’t say it opened my eyes but I’d, I’d say |  |
|  |  | [pause] I grew up with my black family but then, as I say, at |  |
| College as first non-white social experience |  | college is where I met my first black *friends* who weren’t part of | College as first experience of black peers and black social life  College as experiencing a non-white social sphere |
|  |  | my family, so. That was, that was good, and I think, college as | Non-white friendships as good for E |
|  |  | well, was, the first time where I erm, there was actually full, |  |
|  |  | erm, black people, because at school, it was only other, mixed | Difference between mixed and black |
|  |  | race people, and then at college, is where I met, not for the first |  |
| ‘full’ blackness as a new experience for E |  | time but, girls who were full black. And [pause] yeah, college | First experience of black non mixed black girls |
|  |  | was a lot better than school, and, I think because it was in |  |
|  |  | XXX as well, and not, half an hour out of town, I, it was, | Being in a city as positive |
| Reflection of self as important in understanding self |  | a lot more, you could see yourself in, other people, so that’s | E’s self-identity as reflected by others at college  Reflection of self-identity as important in understanding self |
|  |  | nice. |  |
|  |  | A: What, tell me about the sort of people that you met and |  |
|  |  | who you made friends with. |  |
|  |  | E: Erm, I met a really nice girl called XXX [laughter] erm, just, |  |
|  |  | erm, pe- [pause] people who [pause] I don’t know, just, a lot |  |
|  |  | more accepting people. But I think that as well, is because | College as a more accepting experience |
|  |  | everyone, has kind of grown up from, you’ve left school that | Age as affecting others’ response to socialising at college |
|  |  | summer, so you’re going to college, and, you have to be more |  |
|  |  | accepting of people, because you are going to meet people |  |
|  |  | [inaudible]. That’s, probably [pause] the first, I, I was a lot |  |
|  |  | happier at college than I was at school. |  |
|  |  | A: What subjects did you do at college? |  |
|  |  | E: Erm, I did a B-TEC in fashion. Well, I did, erm, I did try and |  |
|  |  | do A Levels at the start, I was going to try, I was doing |  |
|  |  | Psychology, Media, and Art and Design, but, I dropped out of |  |
|  |  | there, and then, did a B-TEC in fashion and clothing, finished |  |
|  |  | off there. |  |
|  |  | A: So when you started, with the er A Level subjects, what |  |
|  |  | made you choose those, to begin with? |  |
|  |  | E: Because I’ve always been, an arty person I’ve always |  |
|  |  | enjoyed Art, I did it at GCSE as well, erm, so that’s why I |  |
|  |  | wanted to do art and then [pause] I don’t know why I chose, it’s | Lack of pre-planning of A Level subjects |
|  |  | probably why I dropped out because I didn’t choose anything | Lack of prior knowledge as impacting drop out |
|  |  | like, I didn’t know why I chose them. I just did them. | Not putting thought into ALevel choices |
|  |  | A: Mm. How long did you do them for? |  |
|  |  | E: Erm, I think I lasted, about three months, so not long. |  |
|  |  | A: What was it like when you were doing those subjects? |  |
|  |  | E: Erm, at the start because it was new, and good, I really |  |
|  |  | enjoyed it, but then I just stopped going, so, I just found it | Disengaging because of not liking Alevel subject choices |
|  |  | boring and I didn’t like it. | A levels as boring |
|  |  | A: And then, why how did you decide what you were going to, |  |
|  |  | swap on to? |  |
|  |  | E: Erm, I think [pause] I did, erm, in the summer, before school, |  |
|  |  | I did a summer school, at XXX University, and | Previous experiences helping inform new college choices |
|  |  | erm, that was, about fashion, so, I think I, I knew I liked it from |  |
|  |  | the summer school, so I just decided to do it, and I was good at | Being good at subject influencing enjoyment |
|  |  | it so. |  |
|  |  | A: Mm. And what about the people that were on your course? |  |
|  |  | E: Erm [pause] yeah, all, all really, good people erm, came |  |
| Diversity as creating more enjoyable experiences |  | from, all over XXX and then some from XXX as well. It | College as having a wide group of people  Diversity as creating a more enjoyable experience |
|  |  | was really nice to meet, people who weren’t from, XXX. | College as friends outside of local area |
|  |  | A: Why was that so nice? |  |
|  |  | E: Because, erm [pause] they [pause[ they just, erm, because I |  |
| Isolation from hometown people |  | don’t like, anyone from XXX so [laughter] it was, a lot | E not liking people from her hometown  E’s isolation from hometown people |
|  |  | better for me, because they have, erm [pause] er, they had |  |
|  |  | different attitudes, about people, and it was, a lot better. | College as peers with different attitudes |
|  |  | A: What, how do you think their attitudes differed, to people in |  |
|  |  | XXX? |  |
|  |  | E: I think, because there were quite a few, black people, and | More black people in college as positive |
| Diversity as changing perspective on E’s non-whiteness |  | mixed people on my course, erm, it just wasn’t even an issue. | Diversity as making E’s non-whiteness less significant |
|  |  | Erm, ev- don’t get me wrong still the course was majority white, |  |
|  |  | but [pause] because [pause] because, erm ,there was the |  |
|  |  | black people, and then erm, I think because a lot of the girl, the |  |
|  |  | kids were, from, the city as well they’d had more experiences | Experiences of non-whiteness as positive for position on non-whiteness |
| De-emphasis on whiteness as easier for E’s self-identity |  | with black and mixed people. So I think, it just wasn’t an issue f | Non-whiteness as not important for college peers  De-emphasis on whiteness as easier for E’s self-identity |
|  |  | or anyone on the course, whereas in school, it was an issue for | Non-whiteness as negative for school peers |
|  |  | people. |  |
|  |  | A: How did that feel, to you, to have that difference in the way |  |
|  |  | that other people felt, about race? |  |
|  |  | E: I didn’t really think of it, at the time, but now, we’re talking | E’s retrospective view as more attuned to racial issues than at the time |
|  |  | about it, I can see, the, I think that’s where, I became, a lot |  |
| College as impacting on sense of self |  | more [pause] more comfortable, in my ways, erm [pause] | College as developing positive sense of self |
|  |  | because as I say I was comfortable, when I was younger then I |  |
|  |  | think I went through a long period, where, I think probably, if I |  |
| School experiences as influencing E’s self perception |  | could have been, I would have, made myself white. But then, | Wanting to be white as a child  Childhood experience influencing E’s desire for whiteness |
|  |  | when I went to college, because of the such, not an issue to | Others acceptance of non-whiteness as influencing E’s perception of self |
|  |  | anyone, I think I became, a lot more comfortable, and because |  |
| Others non-whiteness as positive for E’s self-perception |  | there were, blacker people than me there and I saw that, they | E more comfortable in self because of other people being blacker  Level of blackness as related to other’s perception  Being ‘more white’as a more positive way of being non-white |
| Others comfortableness with non-whiteness as influencing E’s self-perception |  | didn’t care so, yeah, it made me a lot more comfortable. | Other black people’s confidence in own blackness influencing E’s self perception |
|  |  | A: How did, how do you think your experiences of college, |  |
|  |  | influenced, what you did after that and when you decided |  |
|  |  | about, like going off to uni and those kind of things? |  |
|  |  | E: Erm, I think, going, I think going to college. Well, I did erm |  |
|  |  | [pause] I did erm, I did fashion at uni as well, I did fashion |  |
|  |  | design and performance sportswear design so I followed the | College choices influencing university choices |
|  |  | course, into university, so. [pause] but then [pause] I, I dropped | E dropping out of university |
|  |  | out, of university. After one and a half years, because I went to | E dropping out half way through course |
|  |  | university in XXX, and [pause] I think, if I, if I hadn’t, if I |  |
|  |  | hadn’t have gone to college. Well I wouldn’t have been able to |  |
|  |  | go to university anyway but, I wouldn’t have, pushed myself to |  |
|  |  | go to university, but then [pause] I wish that instead of going to | College as influencing decision to go to university |
|  |  | university in XXX, I’d gone to university [pause] up here, | Wrong choice of university for E |
|  |  | because, I, I think, people’s, mindsets, in the north, in the | E’s perception of geographical differences in people’s perceptions |
| Cities as easier for non-white people |  | midlands, are a lot [pause] better, especially in the bigger |  |
|  |  | cities, they’re a lot better, than people’s mindsets in, XXX | Cities as easier places for non-white people |
|  |  | because it’s [pause] a, everyone’s just, the town where I went |  |
|  |  | to university it’s just such a small town and they were all, I don’t | Small towns as difficult for non-whiteness |
|  |  | want to say backwards because that’s really nasty but, the | Small town of university as old fashioned |
|  |  | locals were quite, small town mindset, so I guess in a way, | Local community of university town as not accepting of E |
|  |  | when I went to university, it was like being back [pause] during, |  |
| University as mirroring school experience |  | that period of time at school, and [pause] I don’t know whether | University experience mirroring school experience |
| School experience affecting ability to cope with university experience |  | that contributed to me dropping out of university, all I know is, | Effect of school experience on ability to cope with university experience |
|  |  | that, I wasn’t, happy, and I, I actually got diagnosed with | E not happy at university |
| University experience as affecting mental health |  | depressive anxiety disorder when I was at university. So, I just | E’s mental health affected by university experience |
|  |  | came home, left. | E unable to stay at university |
|  |  | A: What was it like when you, went to University? What, where |  |
|  |  | was it? |  |
|  |  | E: Erm, I went to XXX University, and, erm, at first I |  |
|  |  | thought it was great, but, then as I say I just got, more and | Initial experience of university as positive |
|  |  | more [pause] depressed. I’m not really, like, I can’t [pause] |  |
|  |  | even pinpoint a reason I just wasn’t happy, and [pause] I think | E’s feeling of general unhappiness at university |
|  |  | it’s because, my life at home, everyone’s quite [pause] |  |
| Home region as significant to E’s emotional wellbeing |  | because, I’ve met a lot of people, in XXX, I go to | E’s friendships as at home  E’s attachment to her home region |
|  |  | XXX quite a bit, whereas in XXX, no one wanted to | E as an outsider at university |
|  |  | [inaudible] w-well, talking about it now it actually was, quite a |  |
| Reliving school isolation at university  University experience as bringing back school memories |  | lot like school, no one wanted to hang out with me, I didn’t | E as having no friends at university  University as mirroring school experience  Social situation of school and university as similar |
| E as socially isolated at university |  | have any friends so, I was quite, sad. | E as socially isolated at university |
|  |  | A: How did you, when you were still at college and you were |  |
|  |  | making those decisions about going to university, how did you, |  |
|  |  | make your decisions, about the course, and where you went, |  |
|  |  | and what university you went to? |  |
|  |  | E: Erm, a couple of people from the year above me in college, |  |
|  |  | they were going there, and I knew that the university had quite |  |
|  |  | a good reputation, for, the arts [pause] I guess I didn’t really | Reputation of university as influencing decision to go there |
|  |  | think it through I just went on the, University’s reputation | Lack of thought into university attendance  E as not able to consider whole university choices |
|  |  | instead of, researching it properly. And I [pause] I think I made | Lack of research into university choice |
|  |  | quite a bad decision. |  |
|  |  | A: Who, what were the people like who you went to university |  |
|  |  | with and who were on your course and [pause] in, was it halls |  |
|  |  | you were in? |  |
|  |  | E: yeah, I was in halls. Erm, they were all [pause] quite [pause] |  |
| University peers as different from E |  | from, wealthier backgrounds and quite, lived quite sheltered | University peers as wealthy  University peers as different childhood experiences from E |
|  |  | lives. And I think that’s probably why I didn’t really, find anyone |  |
| Differences in upbringing affecting relationship formation at university |  | that I clicked with because, I had a completely different | University peers as different from E  Difference in upbringing affecting E’s ability to form relationships with university peers |
|  |  | upbringing to what they did so I think, no one [pause] I just |  |
| Inability to form relationships at university |  | [pause] didn’t click with anyone. | E unable to develop relationship with university peers |
|  |  | A: What kind of upbringing did they have? |  |
|  |  | E: I think it was more of a privileged upbringing and a more | University peers as privileged |
|  |  | sheltered upbringing there was quite a few people from my | University peers as protected |
|  |  | school and at my university a- on my course that went to | Peers as different educational experiences |
| Level of difference between university peers and E |  | private schools and [pause] just a completely different, life to | Level of differences in experiences between E and peers as leading to difficulty in forming relationships |
|  |  | what I’d had. [pause] so [pause] we just couldn’t relate to each |  |
|  |  | other. |  |
|  |  | A: Mm [pause] where [pause] do you feel as if [pause] what am |  |
|  |  | I trying to ask. [pause] I want to make sure I get the words right |  |
|  |  | [laughter] [pause] how could it have been, different or, better |  |
|  |  | for you? |  |
|  |  | E: I think, if I’d have gone, to, a university [pause] in, one of |  |
| Location as affecting university experience |  | the, bigger cities [pause] up north, or [pause] in Lon- no not | Location as potentially affecting university experience |
|  |  | necessarily London. Just, in a bigger city, where people are |  |
| Diversity as supporting other’s awareness |  | more cultured more culturally aware, and, people come from | Diversity as supporting other’s awareness |
| Diversity as affecting others acceptance of non-whiteness |  | lots of different backgrounds, because they live, around a city, I | diverse experiences as affecting others’ acceptance of non-whiteness |
|  |  | think, it would have, been a lot, better for me I think I would |  |
| Diversity as affecting E’s university experience |  | have probably stuck out my course. | Diversity of university as impacting E’s completion of course |
|  |  | A: Erm, can you talk to me about your decision to, to leave the |  |
|  |  | course after a year and a half. |  |
|  |  | E: Mm, erm [pause] I was just very depressed I was seeing a |  |
|  |  | councellor, taking antidepressants, I just wasn’t going to | E’s mental health affected by university experience |
|  |  | university erm, I, so, I spoke to, my mum and my dad, and, | E’s parents as providing support to leave university |
|  |  | decided that, I would go home. And I was going to try and |  |
|  |  | transfer, to another university, but then, I just [pause] didn’t, | Initial plan to change university not happening |
|  |  | just got a job instead. |  |
|  |  | A: Mm. And that kind of process of coming home and stuff, |  |
|  |  | how did that feel to, to go through that? |  |
| E equating not finishing university as failure |  | E: I felt like a failure, but then [pause] I felt, happy, that I wasn’t | Leaving university as a failure  E equating not finishing university as failure |
|  |  | going to live there anymore so I knew that I’d made the right | E being glad to get away from university |
|  |  | decision, because, I wasn’t sad at all that I was leaving that |  |
|  |  | place. |  |
|  |  | A: how did other people that you were at uni with respond, to |  |
|  |  | the fact that you were going? |  |
|  |  | E: [pause] I don’t think anyone really cared. | University peers as not caring about E |
|  |  | A: mm. Who did you live with at that time? |  |
|  |  | E: Erm, I lived, with, one other girl, in a house [pause] but, she |  |
|  |  | just used to, sit in the house and smoke weed all the time, so I |  |
|  |  | don’t think that helped the situation. I didn’t do that so I, I didn’t |  |
|  |  | like it so erm, when I did leave, she got really aggressive | Housemate as unsupportive to E |
|  |  | towards me as well, was calling me pathetic and stuff. So, I | Housemate as abusive towards E’s decision |
|  |  | think it was, the right decision, to leave, if I was living with |  |
|  |  | someone like that. |  |
|  |  | A: When you look back on, that experience of being at uni, how |  |
|  |  | do you, how do you feel about it now you’re not there |  |
|  |  | anymore? |  |
|  |  | E: [pause] I feel happy, that I’m not there anymore. I look back | Relief at not being at university |
|  |  | at that time in my life and I can see, how sad, I was. I never | University as sad and bad memories |
|  |  | realised at the time, but now I can see how sad I was, and |  |
|  |  | [pause] yeah, I just think, it was a bad decision, to ever go to, a |  |
|  |  | university in XXX. |  |
|  |  | A: Mm. What kind of support did you have, whilst you were |  |
|  |  | there and all these horrible things were going on? |  |
|  |  | E: Erm, I went to see the, I, I saw a counsellor, through erm | Counselling support at university |
| University as unsupportive |  | uni. But I didn’t I, I didn’t really, have that much, I just spoke to | Limited sources of support at university |
|  |  | a counsellor. |  |
|  |  | A: What were the, erm, like the people, the people who run |  |
|  |  | your course, like the lecturers and tutors aware and did they, |  |
|  |  | do anything? |  |
|  |  | E: Erm, they did know [pause] but [pause] they didn’t really |  |
| University course as unsupportive |  | [pause] help. It was mainly, they’d, if I brought a letter from the | Lack of support from course team at university |
| University as lacking emotional/personal support |  | counsellor then they’d push back a deadline, but I didn’t feel | Recognition of E’s needs at procedural level but nothing else  University as procedural support |
|  |  | supported by the course, at all. | Feeling unsupported by the course |
|  |  | A: Do you think there’s anything that they could have done, |  |
|  |  | differently in that situation? |  |
|  |  | E: I think, if I’d have [pause] I know that, this probably would |  |
|  |  | have cost a lot of money, but if I’d have just had someone, to | Having individual course related support as useful |
|  |  | help me with my coursework. Well not necessarily help but I | Increased support relating to course as useful  Course-related support as useful |
|  |  | could talk to about, the coursework and what I needed to do, |  |
|  |  | that would have been helpful. Instead of just speaking to the |  |
|  |  | counsellor about how I was feeling, it would have been nice to | E’s problems at university as going beyond emotions |
| Need for emotional and academic support |  | have someone, who, was trying to, motivate me to do my work. | Course related, work related support as useful  Get the feeling was struggling with course expectations as well? |
|  |  | A: And what about in terms of sort of, social, side of things? Do |  |
|  |  | you think there’s anything that could have, been different, |  |
|  |  | there? |  |
| E’s closeness to home friends as important |  | E: Yeah, if I could have brought, my friends, from up here | E’s need for familiar type of friends |
|  |  | down there I’d, I think life would have been a lot easier. |  |
| E as socially isolated at university |  | Because I didn’t really have, any, friends, and we, I was friends | E as socially isolated at university |
| E as isolated on course |  | with the girl that I lived with, but I didn’t really see anyone from | E as isolated from her course |
|  |  | the course outside of university. [pause] so yeah more, if I’d |  |
|  |  | have had more friends [inaudible] |  |
|  |  | A: Mmhmm. How do you think people on the course saw you? |  |
|  |  | E: [pause] I think, they probably thought [pause] a version of |  |
| University as holding E’s personality back |  | me that isn’t, true they probably saw someone like, sad, and, | E as not getting a chance to show her true self at university  Experiences influencing E’s ability to be self at university |
| University as disempowering E’s true self |  | that’s not, who I really was. So I think, I didn’t help myself make | University experience as changing E’s sense of self |
| University as not interested in E |  | friends but then, at the same time no one really tried to make | Others as not interested in E |
|  |  | friends with me so, it’s kind of a, lose lose situation I think if I’d |  |
|  |  | tried harder than I probably would have been happier but then, | E feeling a lack of trying |
|  |  | at the same time, they, probably saw me as someone they |  |
| E as unwanted at university |  | didn’t want to be friends with. | E as feeling unwanted by university peers |
|  |  | A: And how about now, now that you’re out of that situation |  |
|  |  | and you’re here [pause] how does that feel, for you now? |  |
|  |  | E: A lot better, I’m a lot, happier, being, away from there. Yeah |  |
| Freedom from university |  | I’m just, I’m so much happier, now that I’m not at university I | Out of university as sense of freedom |
|  |  | feel sad that I didn’t complete the course I would have liked to, | Disappointment at not completing course |
|  |  | have got, a degree out of it but, then, at the same time I just |  |
|  |  | think it wasn’t worth, my sanity. |  |
|  |  | A: Yeah, yeah. Is there anything else that you thing is |  |
|  |  | important? Erm [pause] or that you want to talk about in terms |  |
|  |  | of, erm your experiences of childhood, and growing up. |  |
|  |  | Anything that we’ve missed, or anything that’s just occurred to |  |
|  |  | you as, significant? |  |
|  |  | E: [pause] I don’t know I, I think we’ve, covered a lot and |  |
|  |  | [pause] yeah it’s. I can’t think of anything else. |  |
|  |  | A: What’s it been like talking about it? |  |
|  |  | E: Yeah it’s hard, it has been hard I didn’t think I’d have such | Reliving childhood experiences as hard |
|  |  | an emotional reaction to, it, but, I guess because not | Reliving childhood experiences as emotional |
|  |  | something, that you talk about that often you don’t realise how | Lack of emphasis on racialized experiences in day to day |
|  |  | much it does actually affect you. [pause] As I say I think |  |
| Lack of representation of mixed leading to lack of understanding |  | because, mixed people aren’t, represented, as much in society | Lack of representation of mixed leading to lack of self-understanding of mixed |
| Mixedness as unconsciously significant |  | you don’t realise how much, you are affected. | Levels of effects of MR as underlying |
|  |  | A: Do you think, it’s something that’s important to you in terms |  |
|  |  | of understanding that you are mixed? |  |
| Mixedness as important |  | E: I think it’s really important, yeah [pause] like I’m so proud | Mixedness as important  Mixedness as positive |
|  |  | now that I am mixed, I think it’s great that, I’ve got family in |  |
| Mixedness as important |  | Jamaica and I think, well I don’t know [pause] whether they, do | Pride of mixed origins |
|  |  | this in school now but I think [pause] you should you should be | School as an opportunity to celebrate identity |
|  |  | made to feel proud of yourself and, I think erm, instead of just |  |
| Mixedness as under-represented |  | [pause] because mixed race people do have their own history | Mixedness as under represented historically |
| Mixed identity as stand-alone |  | like coming, about, English people, having mixed babies and I | Mixed identity as meaningful in itself, not as part of blackness/whiteness |
|  |  | th-I think, a lot more should be done, instead of just, pushing, |  |
| School as single dominant narrative |  | one history, and I think [pause] in the curriculum, it should be a | School as having one narrative on history |
|  |  | lot more about everyone, you should be able to, find yourself in | Education as needing to be more inclusive |
|  |  | someone there, in school. | Education as needing to reflect individual people’s experience |
|  |  | A: And do you think that you were able to, in school? |  |
|  |  | E: No I don’t think I was, at all. | E’s educational experience as impersonal/meaningless |
|  |  | A: That’s about it, that I wanted to talk about, but I just wanted |  |
|  |  | to make sure you’re okay? |  |
|  |  | E: Yeah, yeah. |  |
|  |  | A: Because, it’s, from the, conversations that I’ve had, I think |  |
|  |  | people have really really different experiences, but it’s always |  |
|  |  | emotional and it’s always emotional to think about. And I don’t |  |
|  |  | think that you should t- like it’s not embarrassing, it’s just, |  |
|  |  | childhood regardless of where you grew up and, and what |  |
|  |  | experiences you had to look back on it is quite emotional. |  |
|  |  | Yeah, and especially if you’ve had things happen that aren’t, |  |
|  |  | nice. |  |
|  |  | E: Yeah, no, I’m fine, I don’t even [pause] it’s not that I’m |  |
|  |  | finding [pause] I’m not even really, upset I don’t feel like I’m, |  |
|  |  | like going to, I just, I don’t know, and I am quite an emotional |  |
|  |  | person anyway so I think it’s, it just comes out in tears no |  |
|  |  | matter what, if I’m happy I cry, if I’m sad I cry if I’m angry I cry. |  |
|  |  | Yeah, I’m fine. |  |
|  |  | A: Yeah, I just, really, I suppose I’m really grateful, that you |  |
|  |  | were able to still talk about things even though you had a |  |
|  |  | response to it, so I just wanted to say thank you. |  |
|  |  | E: Ah, it’s fine, yeah it’s fine. |  |
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# Appendix M: Example of analysis for individual superordinate themes.

Research Questions:

* What are ‘mixed race’ children and young people’s experiences of race and culture?
* How do ‘mixed race’ young people interpret their experiences of childhood and education?
* How can Educational Psychology practice develop through these accounts?

Transcription Three: Emmy.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **What are ‘mixed race’ children and young people’s experiences of race and culture?** | **How do ‘mixed race’ young people interpret their experiences of childhood and education?** |
| ***‘Mixedness’ as a stand-alone identity.***  *Mixedness as a part of E’s ongoing life/culture*  E’s closeness to mixed family members  Emotional closeness to mixed family members  Family normality as mixed  Mixedness as unconsciously significant  Mixedness as important  Mixed identity as stand-alone  *E’s family history as mixed*  E’s dad as mixed  Childhood experiences of family mixedness  E’s emotional connectedness to blackness  Blackness/MRness as normal to E in childhood  Mixedness as creating different racist experiences  Normality of blackness/MRness to E but not others | ***Racism as an untouchable subject.***  *Parents as passive to racism*  Dad as closed about past experiences of racism  Dad as passive regarding racist experiences  Dad as closed about past experiences of racism  Mum as not acknowledging racism  Mum as underplaying significance of racism  Mum as underplaying emotional significance of racism  Mum as avoiding difficulty of racism  Mum as closed about racism  Dad as passive in E’s understanding of response to racism  Dad as not acknowledging racism  Dad as finding racism difficult to acknowledge  Parents as passive to E’s experiences of racism  Parents as emotionally unsupportive of racial self-understanding  Parents as emotionally closed  Mum as disengaged from racism  Mum as unable to manage emotional impact of racism  *E as minimising racism in childhood*  Emotional significance of lack of parental support on E  Social emotional significance of lack of parental support on E  E as unable to express emotions relating to racism |
| ***Racism as a part of life.***  *Family history of dealing with racism*  Racism as experienced in generations of E’s family  E’s dad’s whiteness as ‘passable’  E’s dad as the victim of racism  Dad as powerless to racism  Family history through stories of racism  Family history of fighting against racism  Dad as the aim of racism  *Racism as a continuing legacy*  E seeing racism as ingrained in others  Racism as an underlying constant to E  E the victim of racism  Racism as a feature of childhood  Experiencing racism before knowing about racism  Racism as a close feature of E’s childhood  *Hometown as associated with racism*  E as connected to hometown throughout life  Racism as common in hometown  Racism as ingrained in hometown  Hometown as a closed environment  Hometown as part of a racist culture | ***The isolation of childhood and growing up.***  *E’s mixedness as isolating in childhood*  E’s school experience as a minority  E’s schooling as white  Family as isolated in mixedness  E as surrounded by whiteness at school  E as isolated at secondary school  White ideal of secondary school  Isolation from hometown people  *Whole school seeing E as different*  E as targeted by whole school  School as targeting E  School as disengaging E  Secondary school as passive towards racism  Secondary school as overtly racist  E as socially limited in school  E not feeling wanted at school  E as insignificant in school  E as powerless to change school circumstance  School as emotionally insignificant  No emotional connection with school  Whole school experience as negative  *Ongoing emotional impact of isolating experiences*  E as socially isolated at university  Inability to form relationships at university  E as socially isolated at university  E as isolated on course  University as unsupportive  University course as unsupportive  University as lacking emotional/personal support  Need for emotional and academic support  University as not interested in E  E as unwanted at university  Freedom from university  Ongoing emotional impact of school experience |
| ***Identity as dictated through society.***  *Contrast between self and society’s definition of mixedness*  Socio-historical position as separate from self-identity  Experience of language vs societal norms of language for mixedness  Society and E’s experiences as separate  *Power of society in constructing self/perception*  Identity as directed by societal norms  Political significance of mixedness on self-identity/expression of self  Mixedness as reflecting historical socio-political ideas about race  Mixedness as politically driven  Societal norms as controlled by whiteness  E’s self as influenced by white society  Language as racialised  Language as related to power  Language as part of personal identity  Self identity as controlled/dictated by society | ***E as inherently ‘different’.***  *Difference based on mixedness*  E as ‘not normal’ in childhood based on mixedness  E as unable to ‘be normal’ with white friends because of mixedness  Self-confidence as challenged by mixedness  Association between mixedness and not fitting  *Differences as fundamental*  E as different from her mum  School as aware of E as different  Differentness as a fact for E  Differentness as unconscious awareness  E’s self-perception as so different  E not wanting to appear different from peers  Differences highlighted as negative  University peers as different from E  Level of difference between university peers and E  *Difference as created by others.*  Normal until others demonstrated otherwise  Others as creating E’s sense of difference  School as creating E’s sense of difference  Others as negatively influencing E’s self perception  Blackness/MRness as normality as questioned through school experiences  Others as confirming E’s difference |
| ***The value of diversity.***  Diversity as potentially positive for E’s experiences  Diversity as having limits of benefit  Diverse experiences as useful for others’ understanding  Diversity as creating more enjoyable experiences  Diversity as changing perspective on E’s non-whiteness  Cities as easier for non-white people  Diversity as supporting other’s awareness  Diversity as affecting others acceptance of non-whiteness  Diversity as affecting E’s university experience  Lack of representation of mixed leading to lack of understanding  Increase in non-whiteness as positive | ***E as her racialised appearance.***  *Racialised appearance as too different*  E’s visual difference as a target in childhood  Appearance as key at secondary school  E as unattractive in childhood  E as not fitting the secondary ideal  E’s appearance as a target  School experiences as influencing E’s self perception  Racialisation as another layer of teenage angst  *Non-whiteness as a problem*  E as a slave to her racialized appearance  E as unattractive based on appearance  Black girls as unattractive at school  E’s racial appearance as affecting experience as a ‘normal’ girl  Pressure to conform to white ideal image  Uncomfortability with racialised appearance  E’s hair as the symbol of others’ racial dislike  Physical differences from the norm as challenging |
| ***Gender and race as problematic for others.***  *Black masculinity as comedic*  E feeling others see blackness as inherently funny  E feeling others see black male sexuality as inherently funny  Stereotypes of black maleness as funny  *Black femininity as problematic*  Attractiveness of black femininity as confusing  Attractiveness of black women as problematic  Association between black/MR females and overt sexuality  Attractiveness of black/MR women as problematic for others | ***University as mirroring school experience.***  University as mirroring school experience  School experience affecting ability to cope with university experience  University experience as affecting mental health  Reliving school isolation at university  University experience as bringing back school memories  Link between school and university negative experiences  School experience as impacting university engagement |
|  | ***Shared identification as shared support***  Racial identification as supportive  Shared identity as shared support  Growth of racial self-confidence with age  Reflection of self as important in understanding self  Others non-whiteness as positive for E’s self-perception  De-emphasis on whiteness as easier for E’s self-identity  Others non-whiteness as positive for E’s self-perception  Others comfortableness with non-whiteness as influencing E’s self-perception |
|  |  |

# Appendix N: Individual Superordinate themes feeding in to Higher order themes.

Research Questions:

* What are ‘mixed race’ children and young people’s experiences of race and culture?
* How do ‘mixed race’ young people interpret their experiences of childhood and education?
* How can Educational Psychology practice develop through these accounts?

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| **Transcription number/name** | **RQ A:What are ‘mixed race’ children and young people’s experiences of race and culture?** | **RQ A:Higher order themes** | **RQ B:How do ‘mixed race’ young people interpret their experiences of childhood and education?** | **RQ B:Higher order themes** |
| Transcription One: Sativa | ***Importance of cultural significance***  *Importance and Value of Diversity and ‘Mixed-ness’*  *Understanding and Value of Heritage*  *Mixedness as culturally contextual* | Culture/heritage | ***The Significance of Isolation and Belonging***  *Childhood experiences as isolated*  *S as part of the ‘in’/’out’ group*  *S as self-isolating*  *Emotional Significance of ‘home’* | Isolation and belonging |
|  | ***Mixedness as a challenge***  *The need to make sense of mixed race*  *Polarisation of Mixedness*  *MRness as a part of blackness*  *Mixed race as a group identity* | Mixedness as challenging constructions | ***Perception and Self-Identity***  *Importance of finding/being a ‘true’ self*  *The performance of self*  *Racialised perceptions*  *Separation of S’s identity and perception of S* | Perception and Self-Identity |
|  | ***Expectations and Understandings of Mixed Families***  *Mixed relationships as difficult*  *Mixed families as missing something* | Racial stereotypes | ***The Relationship between S and Dad*** |  |
|  | ***Intersectionality of Race and Gender***  *racialisation and femininity*  *Racialised male-female interactions*  *Black/MR femininity as sexualised*  *Black maleness as negative* | Intersectionality |  |  |
|  | ***‘Race’ as a difficult subject***  *Understandings and Approach to ‘race’*  *‘Blackness’ as Stereotype* | Blackness as problematic |  |  |
| Transcription Two: Tunde | ***Impact of context on self/world understanding***  *The importance of heritage.*  *Shared cultural identity*  *Cultural experience and identity as intertwined.*  *Relationship between class-culture-race* | Culture/heritage | ***The significance of T’s father for T’s identity.*** | Isolation and belonging |
|  | ***Mixedness as challenge for others.*** | Mixedness as challenging constructions | ***Self-identity as challenged by others.***  *Appearance a challenging*  *T’s self as questioned/challenged* | Perception and Self-Identity |
|  | ***Understanding of society through inequality***  *Education as abuse of power*  *Alternative perspectives as rejected*  *The experience of powerlessness* |  | ***T’s childhood as part of black culture***  *Non-whiteness as cultural*  *Shared non-white identity as natural*  *T’s responsibility for non-whiteness* | Isolation and belonging |
|  | ***The inter-relationship between blackness and gender***  *Black maleness as a problem*  *Black masculinity as understood through female interactions*  *Parenting and black masculinity* | Intersectionality | ***The benefits of being mixed.*** |  |
|  |  |  | ***University experience as a challenge***  *T as feeling different from University peers.*  *T as disempowered by University experience.* | The power of educational experiences |
|  |  |  | ***Racialised perceptions of T***  *Appearance as informing perception*  *T’s black culture as problematic to others*  *Dichotomy between perception and identity*  *T’s identity as consumable by others* | Perception and Self-Identity |
| Transcription Three: Emmy | ***‘Mixedness’ as a stand-alone identity.***  *Mixedness as a part of E’s ongoing life/culture*  *E’s family history as mixed*  *Racism as a continuing legacy*  *Hometown as associated with racism* | Mixedness as an identity | ***Racism as an untouchable subject.***  *Parents as passive to racism*  *E as minimising racism in childhood* |  |
|  | ***Identity as dictated through society.***  *Contrast between self and society’s definition of mixedness*  *Power of society in constructing self/perception* | Mixedness as challenging constructions | ***The isolation of childhood and growing up.***  *E’s mixedness as isolating in childhood*  *Whole school seeing E as different*  *Ongoing emotional impact of isolating experiences* | Isolation and belonging |
|  | ***The value of diversity.*** | Culture/heritage | ***University as mirroring school experience.*** | The power of educational experiences |
|  | ***Gender and race as problematic for others.***  *Black masculinity as comedic*  *Black femininity as problematic* | Intersectionality | ***E as her racialised appearance.***  *Racialised appearance as too different*  *Non-whiteness as a problem* | Perception and Self-Identity |
|  |  |  | ***E as inherently ‘different’.***  *Difference based on mixedness*  *Differences as fundamental*  *Difference as created by others.* | Isolation and belonging |
|  |  |  | ***Shared identification as shared support*** | Isolation and belonging |
| Transcription Four: Henry | ***The relationship between self and context***  *Heritage as informing identity*  *Identity as informed by multiculturalism/mixedness* | Culture/heritage | ***H as a product of his environment*** | Isolation and belonging |
|  | ***Non-whiteness as unifying*** | Culture/heritage?  Mixedness as an identity | ***Football as defining***  *Football as mulitcultural*  *Football as defining H’s non-whiteness* | Isolation and belonging |
|  | ***Whiteness as intangible*** |  | ***Primary school as defining***  *Primary as developing sense of self*  *Primary as developing sense of the world* | The power of educational experiences |
|  | ***‘Mixedness’ as tangible***  *Mixedness as a shared experience*  *Mixedness as creating opportunity* | Mixedness as an identity | ***University as alien***  *University as alienating to H’s sense of self*  *University as an alien system* | The power of educational experiences |
|  | ***‘Mixedness’ as a problem***  *Problems in perceiving mixedness*  *Problems in being mixed* | Mixedness as challenging constructions | ***Experience as creating understanding*** | Isolation and belonging |
|  | ***Blackness as a problem***  *The problem with blackness and the black community*  *The perception of blackness*  *H as protective of blackness* | Blackness as a problem | ***Mixed maleness as currency***  *Mixed maleness as power*  *Mixed maleness as a coveted* | Perception and Self-Identity |
|  |  |  | ***Racialised perceptions of H***  *Colour as defining*  *Identity/perception as contextual* | Perception and Self-Identity |