THE STAIN OF COLONIALISM: IS EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY 'HAUNTED' BY THE EFFECTS OF COLONIALISM? USING DECOLONISED METHODOLOGIES TO INTERROGATE PRACTICE

'The Stain of Colonialism'

Is Educational Psychology 'haunted' by the effects of Colonialism? Using Decolonised Methodologies to Interrogate Practice

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ABSTRACT

This *re-search* explored how trainee educational psychologists (TEPs) enact educational psychology on their fieldwork placements for the Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology (DECP). This study seeks to reconstruct educational psychology by exploring oppression, power, resistance, subjugation and revolution in relation to identity politics in educational psychology. Applying a postcolonial theoretical lens of 'psychopolitics', this *re-search* examined how psychological explanations of individual pathology ignore social, political, cultural and economic factors. In light of educational psychology's history of racialisation and colonialism, the 'hauntings' of current methodological tools, narratives and assessments are considered. This *re-search* moves away from Eurocentric forms of knowledge production in educational psychology, towards radical perspectives from black feminism, critical race theory and decolonised methodologies for 'knowing' individuals. The methods autoethnography and sharing circles were used with five Year 3 TEPs to collect stories from their placement experiences. The implications of using decolonised methodologies with white participants who occupy spaces of privilege are also discussed. The 'knowledges' gathered from TEPs were interpreted into poetic transcriptions and analysed using a psychopolitical framework. The analysis reveals that educational psychology's history of measurement, comparison, statistical norms and individual differences informs TEPs' understandings of their work with children, school staff and families. Educational psychology tends to be discussed in relation to individual descriptions of 'disorder', largely neglecting socio-political contexts. The emerging themes include: collusion, power, influence and appropriation. Using decolonised methodologies within a Eurocentric context raises the problem of how invested white participants can be in resistance and revolution. This thesis engages with questions around whether educational psychology can be decolonised and imagined anew. I conclude by arguing that, for change to occur, reform at the individual level of the educational psychologist is essential. Finally, I consider implications for future research and the practice of educational psychology.

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Chapter 1 **INTRODUCTION**

This Asian family are just in complete denial about their son's autism diagnosis.

When I was on placement at an Educational Psychology Service in northwest England (2014-2017), an educational psychologist made the above remark. The use of the word 'denial' is striking: the taken-for-granted idea that educational psychology and autism are somehow 'right and unquestionable', with any attempts to question this construed as absurd. This encounter reminded me of the use of psychology under formal colonialism: 'natives' who imagined the end of colonial rule were seen as mad because colonial rule was a natural benevolent fact, much as an autism diagnosis is often assumed to be (as discussed below). Then there is the Asian family, whose rejection of the diagnosis is framed as denial rather than resistance. There are many ways of reading this 'speech act': it could be a colleague offloading in a relaxed, unguarded safe space. However, whatever the educational psychologist's intention, this speech act has implications for the logic of educational psychology and the taken-for-granted narrative of psychological concepts and categories (Danziger, 1997).

I share this encounter not to victimise the educational psychologist, but to draw attention to how educational psychology is often understood to operate in an ahistorical and depoliticised vacuum, irrespective of social and cultural factors. Danziger (1997, 2013) stresses the importance of retracing the relationship between psychology and its history, which uncovers what psychology is and how we have come to know it. The emergence of psychology in a specific geographical location reveals its affiliations with colonialism, racism and oppression (Fanon, 1967; Nandy, 1983; Bhabha, 1994; Okazaki et al., 2008). Although psychology's history encompasses various 'sub-disciplines' and 'types' (Parker, 2007), it is the relationship with colonialism that tends to be glossed over (Bulhan, 2015). Once educational psychology's racial history is made visible, it is evident that the discipline rests on 'the psychology of the individual', which is intimately connected with scientific racism (Gould, 1981; Richards, 2012) and the eugenics movement (Gutherie, 1998). Though colonialism dates back to the 17th century, it continues today as 'coloniality' (Mignolo, 2007; Quijano, 2007). Coloniality recognises that the colonial legacy continues to affect people psychologically, through covert social, political, economical and discursive means (Fanon, 1967; Biko, 1987; Nandy, 1983; Bhabha, 1994; Spivak, 1995). Frosh (2012) describes ongoing oppression and social inequalities as 'hauntings', evident in the institutional racism within the psy-disciplines

(Fernando, 1988; McInnis, 2002) and in the disconnect ethnic minority psychologists experience from Western psychological theory (Shah, 2010). Examining the structures of colonialism helps understand how the socio-political context of an era can shape people and society (Fanon,1967). In this thesis, I draw on Frantz Fanon, a psychiatrist and anti-colonial thinker, raised in the French colony Martinique and practising in Algeria. Fanon (1967), dissatisfied with the operation of psychiatry under colonialism, sought other means of practising psychiatry which politicised the discipline through revolution.

Returning to the above encounter, I was fascinated by the educational psychologist's ability to blame the family and not the practice of educational psychology. Subsequently, I came to understand that educational psychologists might remain unaware of the historic epistemological assumptions underpinning our praxis – or perhaps fully aware, but disillusioned or disinterested. From claims to science (Farrell et al., 2006), to normative referencing (Williams & Goodley, 2017) and acts of violence through coercion, power and subjugation (Sewell, 2016), educational psychology remains a contested arena in terms of understanding what we do and why we do it (Ingleby, 1974). While I recognise that this is only one educational psychologist's reaction, amongst a varied group, I am interested in the making of educational psychology as a project of disciplining educational psychologists to enact and implement methodological tools, research, curriculum and language (Rose, 1985). Internalising this disciplining as a way of working as a TEP has engendered in me immense discomfort and resistance.

Such discomfort stems from my concerns about the parallels between colonialism and psychology, suggesting the need to reconstruct educational psychology (Gillham, 1978; Boxer, Challen & McCarthy, 1991; Burden, 1999; Gersch, 2004; Baxter & Frederickson, 2005; Ashton & Roberts, 2006; Cameron, 2006; Farrell et al., 2006; Fallon, Woods & Rooney, 2010; Farrell, 2010). Calls to reconstruct educational psychology are not new, with a focus on educational psychologists' over-reliance on psychometric testing (Gillham, 1978), raising questions of what exactly we do as educational psychologists, why, for what role purpose and for whom (Armistead, 1974). Consequently, it has been necessary to define our unique contribution to the profession (Ashton & Roberts, 2006), stressing our distinctive contribution to improve our self-esteem (Cameron, 2006). Therefore, I ask why we are still having this conversation over 40 years later. The reflexive box below captures my thought

processes and reflexive thinking in constructing this thesis. These boxes are spread throughout the thesis, revealing to the reader my internal reflections.

> I was undecided whether to use 'our' or 'their' to refer to educational psychologists. 'Their' would imply that I am not part of the educational psychology project, so I use 'our', because I have been 'disciplined' and 'indoctrinated' to practise a particular kind of psychology. By using 'our', 'we' and 'us' throughout this *re-search*, I acknowledge my own responsibility for reproducing psychological knowledges and language.

Educational psychology has existed for over a century, and has been classed variously as a scientific discipline (Hagstrom et al., 2007), as an interactionist discipline in multi-agency working (Gaskell & Leadbetter, 2009), and as a co-constructive form of knowledge (Wagner, 2000). Debates within psychology range from defining what the discipline should be interested in (Armistead, 1974; Danziger, 2013) to conceptualising what it means to be human (Shotter, 1974; Gergen, 2009). I aim to contribute to the methodological debate, by understanding our preoccupation with certain tools, narratives and conceptualisations of the 'other' (in this case, children and families). This thesis is concerned with what could be termed 'mainstream psychology', which has emerged from white, male, heterosexual, middle-class representations (Parker, 2007; Burman, 2008).

This *re-search* has a number of aims: to provide educational psychologists with insights into the historical location of educational psychology; to illuminate my own identity as someone disciplined to enact educational psychology; to explore my position as a racialised author, writer, researcher and practitioner embarking on Western forms of scholarship; and, by interrogating the praxis of educational psychology, to *rework, reconstitute* and *rethink* educational psychology as a discipline and a 'disciplining' agent. I use decolonised methodologies (Graveline,1994; Kaomea, 2004; Mutua & Swadener, 2004; Kovack, 2005; Bessarab & Ng'andu, 2010; Chilisa, 2012; Smith, 2012) to reveal the 'hauntings' (Frosh, 2012) of colonialism, and to hold educational psychologists' language and assessments to account for providing individualised explanations of human behaviour (Miller et al., 2008). I use *re-search* with a hyphen to reclaim the word for a new meaning (Martin & Mirraboopa, 2003). This meaning, diverging from conventional Western 'research', incorporates indigenous knowledge to generate new ways of thinking and methods for understanding the social world and people. I adopt this new meaning to distinguish my *re-search* from other research in educational psychology.

This thesis is a provocation of the research methods and methodologies used by educational psychologists. I raise discomfort in my methodological choice and am

provocative in my writing style, making it a difficult read for educational psychologists who are emotionally and mentally invested in their work. Like many writers using decolonised approaches, I write from the margins (Kovach, 2005; Smith, 2012), beyond the comfort zone of educational psychology research. Therefore, what follows may be alien to educational psychology, but I ask the reader to join me on this journey of 'dismantling the master's house' (Lorde, 1984 p. 112) without using the master's tools. That is, I apply postcolonial theory to disrupt educational psychology as we know and use it.

To write myself into the *re-search*, I assert my identity and ancestral history: *I am Rebecca Wright, born in Nottingham to Ernest and Gloria Wright, with two sisters. I have two children: Rhea and Noah, aged 1. My ancestral history is from Sierra Leone, a former British colony. I was given a British name because this is more 'acceptable', according to my family, and cannot speak Krio, the native language, because this is (according to my family) for 'the streets'. I have led a fairly anglicised lifestyle, living in rural areas and educated at good schools. My parents moved to the UK in the 1960s following colonial independence. In my spare time I enjoy eating out at restaurants and playing league netball. As a black British female, I am located in the intersection of a racialised women and Western culture. I have a foot in both camps.*

Writing in first person, I offer a personal style and accessible, non-academic tone, to avoid marginalising others and connect with the reader. The chapters use an 'indigenist' approach (Wilson, 2008), suggesting how indigenous world knowledges can be applied to research, as an attempt to re-claim a new, improved *re-search*. I am embarking on a project of resistance and political activism to foreground the ill workings of educational psychology. As a racialised researcher and psychologist, I contribute to the limited work on the subjectivities of racialised people, which are missing from racism and psychology (Howarth & Hook, 2001; Shah, 2010; Paulraj, 2016). I give back to the educational psychology community my insights and learning from this thesis in thought and action.

In my attempt to embrace an innovative way of writing, this thesis intermittently excludes signposting and previewing at the start and end of chapters, except when my thinking may require clarification. The reader will know what is coming next from the chapter headings and contents page.

Chapter 2 **LITERATURE REVIEW: TO RE-VIEW THROUGH** *RE-SEARCH*

An indigenist literature review uses people and objects from local contexts whilst remaining aware of underlying cultural assumptions and worldview biases (Martin & Mirraboopa, 2003). It also actively looks beyond white, male, Eurocentric literature. I therefore use global academic and non-academic primary sources (blogs, websites and social media), as well as valuable forms of knowledge from my personal experiences.

The first part of the literature review defines colonialism, and uses postcolonial theory (Fanon, 1967; Biko, 1987; Hook, 2005, 2013b) to confront and disrupt individual explanations of the psyche, arguing that the profession continues to be 'haunted' by a colonial past. Drawing on Fanon's (1967) theories, I clarify the distinction between colonialism and racialisation by exploring resistance, compliance and institutional racism within settler colonies and a UK context. Racialisation refers to the social construct of 'race' as a social and political tool, as opposed to a biological marker of skin colour (Fassin, 2011). I propose new methodological approaches to educational psychology, using decolonised psychology and intersectionality to 'know' individuals when undertaking research. Throughout, I understand 'Western' research as research produced in Europe, Australia, New Zealand and North America whilst appreciating the latter are settler colonies.

The second part provides an overview of various perspectives in Euro-American psychology, with a focus on scientific racism and the eugenics movement. I then discuss the competing and often conflicting paradigms educational psychologists work in. This leads on to a critique of the competencies set out by the British Psychological Society (BPS) for Trainee Educational Psychologists (TEPs), and contextualise my work in research on ethnic minority clinical psychology trainees (Shah, 2010; Odusanya, 2016; Paulraj, 2016). The limited scope of this thesis does not allow me to tackle the shortfalls of both the Health and Care Professionals Council (HCPC) and the BPS. I have therefore chosen to critique the BPS because of its probable complicity in promoting 'governmentality' (1977, 2006) which is a key theme I draw on in deconstructing educational psychology (discussed later). The standards of practice outlined by the BPS (2015) could be directly related to forms of social control in regulating educational psychologists' practice, as well as children's lives. In this provocative reflection on educational psychology's methodological tools,

technologies and methods, I take risks, speak the unspeakable, and name the guilt, hurt, anguish and pain.

Part I: Colonialism, postcolonial theory and racialisation

What is colonialism and why is it important to educational psychology?

Rather than engaging in large-scale historical and geographical explanations of colonialism, I instead emphasise the echoes of different forms of colonialism in educational psychology.

While colonialism is related to modernity, capitalism and imperialism, it is distinguished by geopolitical locality and, above all, power domination. As Said (1993, pp. 8-9) explains:

> 'Imperialism' means the practice, the theory and the attitudes of a dominating metropolitan centre ruling a distant territory. 'Colonialism,' which is almost always a consequence of imperialism, is the implanting of settlements on distant territory.

Loomba (2015) extends this definition of colonialism to include its links with the aims of capitalism, such as mass production and economic expansion. In addition, colonialism is inseparable from modernity and European Enlightenment as a progressive transformation of technology, industry and economics (Mignolo, 2007). If colonialism is indeed a facet of modernity, it is crucial to acknowledge the devastating effects of displacing First Nations peoples' sovereignty, especially the psychological effects.

Colonialism existed in many different forms across the world (Loomba, 2015). Settler colonialism involved the displacement of indigenous communities to establish a colony (Ashcroft et al., 1998) that was distinct from the original indigenous heritage (Barker, 2012), as seen in parts of the Caribbean, East Africa, Australia and North America. Settler colonialism had different effects in different regions. In Australia, Aboriginals were violently displaced and largely annihilated through genocide; by contrast, Thiong'o (1988), writing about Kenya, describes how colonialism supresses the minds of colonised people and excludes them from society, calling for the 'decolonising of the mind'. This thesis addresses the parallels between settler colonialism and educational psychology, especially acts of complicity and benevolence.

The covert motives of settler colonialism illustrate the complicity of behaviours enacted by people in power. The historical legacies of colonialism (hegemony, othering and power) continue to influence the thought and behaviours of colonised and racialised people through psychological means, 'metacolonialism' (Bulhan, 2013) and 'coloniality' (Mignolo, 2007; Quijano, 2007). The term 'coloniality' signals the inseparability of colonialism from modernity, while also moving beyond geopolitical debates about colonialism towards psychological effects (Quijano, 2007). The Europeans monopolised power in settlement colonies, diffusing Western epistemology, ontology, paradigms and ideology. This monopolisation consequently influenced Western methodological practices and Westerners' hegemonic knowledge of colonised people. Distorted truths about colonised people's history and identities were often transmitted through narratives of inferiority or 'lack of civilisation' (Mignolo, 2007; Quijano, 2007; Bulhan, 2015). Similarly, the methodological practices of educational psychology may promote a European methodology characteristic of colonialism, which privileges hegemonic knowledges and dislocates marginalised voices.

This dislocation of voices may be explained by the infiltration of colonial histories into contemporary forms of knowledge and transformation into unquestionable truths. The notion of 'hauntings' explains how 'active ghosts of previous times' which are unknown and 'unworked through' are brought into the present, transmitted and re-enacted over time (Frosh, 2012, p. 242). Like Mills (2015), who also explores the parallels between psychiatry and colonialism, I am interested in illuminating the ghosts within educational psychology, which often pass unnoticed. This requires a thorough review of which colonial legacies have been brought into contemporary educational psychology, namely: scientific racism, social Darwinism, eugenics, British imperialism and psychometric testing (see below).

Postcolonial theory is a broad and heterogeneous body of literature; texts can be confusing, hard to read and unsettling (Ashcroft et al., 1998). Postcolonial theory is, arguably, useful to critical psychology (Parker, 2015) because it rejects Western hegemony, epistemologies and methodologies, enabling a move away from the scientific practice of mainstream psychology (Okazaki et al., 2008; Smith, 2012; Teo, 2015). Postcolonial theory centres on resistance to colonisation and European imperialism (Bhatia, 2002), and shuttles between past and present to illuminate how contemporary power relations are rooted in colonial history (MacLeod & Bhatia, 2008). Postcolonial theory is thus used in this *re-search* to *rethink* pedagogical

practices in educational psychology, *reshape* educational and psychological spaces, and *reconstruct* the goals of educational psychology by disrupting our current understanding.

Postcolonial, or anti-colonial, theorists have characterised the colonial encounter variously, at psychological, political and social levels. Their theories range from emphasising the domination of colonised people by Europeans (Fanon, 1967; Biko, 1987) to more nuanced understandings of resistance (Bhabha, 1994) and of the insecurities of coloniser Europeans themselves (Nandy, 1983). There have been numerous representations of how colonised people make sense of their identity. Said (1993), a Palestinian scholar living in the USA, uses 'Orientalism' to explain how the 'First world'/ 'Third World' dichotomy perpetuates notions of 'the Native', viewed as 'Other' by Europeans. Consequently, colonised people have been viewed as lazy, primitive and powerless, in contrast to their 'superior' colonisers. In more contemporary work, Wynter (2003, p. 316) uses the binary of 'ethnoclass man' (white bourgeoisie) and "human struggle" (other) to understand contemporary racial injustices; the colonial mentality is reproduced through dichotomies of rational/irrational or human/superhuman. Wynter (2003) believes that such distinctions exacerbate the 'coloniality of power' (Mignolo, 2007), which defines the qualitative difference between "ethnoclass" and 'human other'. Consequently, power differentials permeate into the social reality of what it means to be human. Similarly, distinctions in educational psychology between special educational needs (SEN)/non-SEN may also be informed by powerful ideologies, which affect our conceptualisations on what it is to have a 'disability' – as seen in the speech act that opened this thesis. Indeed, the psychologist is often viewed as the sane, knowledgeable 'viewer', while the 'object' (child/parent) has little autonomy in how they are theorised (Rose, 1985; Parker, 2007).

Colonised people have not always succumbed to the role of passive victim or to fixed notions of racial categories. Bhabha (1994), an Indian-born scholar teaching in USA, dismisses binary explanations of selfhood as 'fixity', suggestive of racial purity, and lists a multitude of colonial strategies that produce stereotypical knowledge about colonisers and colonised people. Binary categories create a culture of confused identity formations: colonised people view themselves within limits of selfhood defined by European colonisers (Nandy, 1983). The binary categories created through colonial identity politics are echoed in educational psychology, which labels and categorises disorders to access resource funding. Some discursive forms of

postcolonial theory can perpetuate binary identities, thus positioning 'othered' people as 'the object of investigation' (Spivak, 1995). Since this perpetuates the dominance of elite 'European subjects' and silences the subaltern, intellectuals are also complicit in the construction of 'other' (Spivak, 1995).

Other postcolonial theorists focus on the nuanced interplay between complicity and resistance among colonised people and European colonisers which is highly complex, not a simple binary (Bhabha, 1994). Colonised people, through their behaviours, thoughts and actions mirrored colonial ruler's notions of identity. This "mimicry" performed by colonised people was used as a tool to resist the identity imposed on them by colonisers. Revealing the cracks of European coloniser's selfhood was potentially threatening to identity constructions of masculinity and control (Bhabha, 1994). Likewise, Mills (2015) views psychiatry through a postcolonial lens to characterise hospitalised psychiatric patients' resistances to medication as 'sly compliance' and 'sly civility'. In this study, patients took medication as a way of conforming to institutional expectations of recovery, which may be seen as a survival mechanism. Such 'performing' behaviour parallels colonised peoples' compliance in adopting European notions of selfhood against their will. Appearing to conform through compliance behaviours but resisting through mockery demonstrates how actions and intentions can differ significantly, colonised people were not necessarily working towards the same goals as colonisers. These nuanced forms of resistance are also evident in educational psychology, as children, their families and school staff may appear complicit in their interactions, but yet may avoid being 'psychologised' or disciplined into individualised explanations of behaviour.

Given European civilisation's responsibility for creating psychologised explanations of alienation, black individuals can only be understood through deconstructing 'whiteness' and its effects on the black psyche (Fanon, 1967; Wyrick, 1998). Fanon (1967) used the term 'sociogeny' to emphasise the roots of pathology in the socio-political context, which has profound effects on black people's selfhood (Wyrick, 1998). Fanon (1967), recognising that the psyche is politicised within a colonial environment, questioned the operation of psychiatry as a discipline within this context. Sociogeny can be articulated by exploring the 'psychopolitical', which seeks psychological explanations from social, political and cultural contexts, and is conceptualised as a 'to-and-fro movement'. Psychopolitics stresses the political nature of psychology, in terms of racialised power, colonial violence and cultural subordination, as well as the psychological dimension of power (Hook, 2012). A

socially induced inferiority complex is produced in colonised people through their adherence to a set of colonial values which perpetuate 'white mask psychology' (Fanon, 1967). Similarly, educational psychology replicates socio-political agendas, as the regulatory body dictates 'Standards for Educational Psychology Training' (BPS, 2015), creating a psychological language of 'proper development' or 'positive wellbeing' to implement individual and psychological explanations of children and their families. Educational psychology may therefore objectify children and their families, placing both the 'viewer' and the 'viewed' under socio-political scrutiny (see below).

Fanon's (1967, p. 112) description of a young boy shouting 'Look, a Negro!' at him on a train captures a scene of victimisation, whereby the 'white gaze' exerts a 'psychic assault' on Fanon's racialised body. Such colonial violence 'dissipates his subjectivity', his sense of personhood and his ability to represent himself (Fanon, 1967, p. 112). In post-war Britain, the arrival of the Windrush marked the beginning of a historical era where many British people saw black people for the first time. The response was to dislocate the black body through racism or violence in attempt to reinforce the notion of racialised 'other' (Hesse, 1997). What Hesse (1997) places less emphasis on is that the presence of black communities in the UK predates the Windrush (Olusoga, 2016), but much of the teachings and history has been erased from wider knowledge systems (Coleman, 2015). The integration of psychology, colonialism and racialisation still resonates in UK classrooms, where whiteness dominates pupil/teacher interactions. Abdi (2015) describes a British Somali boy deemed disruptive within the 'white' space of the classroom, arguing that the boy was behaving in a way that was fulfilling his perceived racial stereotype of how black boys 'should' behave. The young boy became objectified in the interaction with his teacher; the focus fell on his racialised body in accordance with 'whiteness', not on other aspects of his selfhood. This outward-looking 'objectification' or 'gaze' on racialised bodies parallels that of colonisers on colonised peoples.

In using psychoanalytical vocabulary to understand racialisation and normality, Fanon (1967) overlooks the fact that psychoanalysis is also guilty of racism (Frosh, 2013). Psychoanalytical theory famously prioritises individual complexes over historical, cultural and social forces (Hook, 2006), which goes against much of Fanon's argument. Moreover, psychoanalysis has been directly responsible for perpetuating descriptions of colonised people as psychologically underdeveloped, primitive savages, or as behaving in impulsive, barbaric and over-sexual ways

(Frosh, 2013). However, there are instances where psychoanalysis is successfully applied to social and political commentary on racialisation, rather than individualising descriptions (Riggs & Augoustinos, 2005; Hook, 2006); I hope my work will also achieve this. Similarly, in my work, I take caution in using essentialist terms such as 'white', 'male', 'Western' and 'Eurocentric'. Although power may be implicated in these terms, there may be times in my professional role where I, as a black female, am given opportunities to exercise power (as noted in my poems in Chapter 5). This makes the notion of power complex, interchangeable and suggests that terms such as 'white' has its limitations in describing the distribtuion of power.

Nevertheless, Fanon (1967) develops psychoanalytical language such as 'white souls', showing how black people think of themselves as white by adopting the language and culture of European colonisers (Hook, 2013b). In this dynamic, the racialised body, either unwittingly or in wilful denial, emulates colonisers' behaviour and/or actions. The result is internalisation, whereby racist cultural values become a way of defining the self. Fanon (1967) also describes the process of 'scapegoating', whereby colonisers project blame onto a group for something colonisers themselves are guilty of; externalising this guilt makes them feel better. Also, Fanon's (1967) term the 'European collective unconscious' captures the unreflectiveness of colonisers in repressing their actions and avoiding confrontation with the qualities of the self. Throughout my *re-search*, I recognise the complicity of my role when enacting white mask educational psychology, as well as the psychopolitical agenda of educational psychology. This interplay between the personal and the political allows a critique of educational psychology's premise of individual differences, measurement and categorisation, as well as offering alternative theoretical approaches to studying racism, oppression, identity, subjectivity and resistance (Parker, 2015).

The resistance towards 'decolonising minds' lead to social revolution and the liberation of colonised people (Fanon 1967; Biko, 1987). In the 1960s, during South African apartheid, Steve Biko (a black South African) rallied and fought against the inequalities that apartheid created. Although Biko's (1987) arguments about South African identity politics are dated and based on an idealised nostalgia for pre-colonial 'Africanness', his theory moves away from Fanon's interest in the psyche and society. Biko located the liberation of personhood in individual subjectivity, rather than seeking collective hope and security in transforming national politics. This disagreement on where to effect strategic change – in people's minds or in the socio-

political environment – also raises questions about whether educational psychology may be receptive to change at micro or macro levels, or both. Liberation may either be sought in the BPS or in the minds of individual educational psychologists. Furthermore, 'conscientisation', (the 'mental emancipation' whereby liberation begins in the minds of people) reminds us that the colonial encounter should not only be explored in terms of colonisers' control over colonised peoples, but should also address colonised people's acts of resistance (Biko, 1987, p. 29).

Colonialism and racialisation

Colonialism can cast light on the institutional racism that permeates the psy-disciplines. In psychiatry, institutional racism is comparable to the cultural racism in colonial education (Fernando, 1988). Just as English language was imposed as a medium of education (Thiong'o, 1986; Kanu, 2003, 2007), some psychiatrists may make similar impositions when working with black individuals. Psychiatry was deemed necessary for black people because they needed 'educating' to fit into the white norms of psychiatry (Fernando, 1988), and was thus based on racially biased judgements, which still infiltrates psychiatrists' clinical diagnoses today.

The psy-disciplines are now addressing the resistance typically associated with colonialism (Fernando, 1988; McInnis, 2002; Shah 2010; Mills, 2015; Paulraj, 2016; Wood & Patel, 2017). Clinical psychologists are engaging in debates about the profession's institutional racism (McInnis, 2002) and its assumptions of 'whiteness' that exclude minority ethnic communities (Wood & Patel, 2017). This has highlighted that the clinical psychology training programme operates within a sphere of whiteness (Shah, 2010; Paulraj, 2016); non-white trainees feel estranged, like outsiders, working with clients in the NHS (Odusanya, 2016). Such estrangement is prominent when wider racial stereotypes enter the consulting room (Fernando, 1988; Metzl, 2009; Thomas, 2013). Minority ethnic clinical psychology trainees share their difficulties of not being white and the emotional work of negotiating multiple identities (Shah, 2010). Similar descriptions of dislocation within postcolonial theory discuss 'brown sahibs' in British India (Nandy, 1983; Bhabha, 1994), whereby status was afforded to 'Europeanised' selfhood that outwardly demonstrated pro-imperialism. Feeling estranged may affect the embodied practice of educational psychology, leaving the sense of self in a vulnerable, fragmented position. This onus could perhaps be alleviated by training course tutors to address theories of whiteness through self-reflection (Wood & Patel, 2017).

These clinical psychology studies find shared experiences of upheaval among minority ethnic trainees during the training, which I also echo. However, their methodologies are Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) (Shah, 2010; Odusanya, 2016) and thematic analysis (Paulraj, 2016) – they thus employ the very forms of knowledge production that they are critiquing (Eurocentric, Western epistemologies), avoiding methodologies that resonate with racialisation. In my *re-search*, I critique the privileging of ethnocentric methodologies in educational psychology, deploying methodologies aligned with racialisation and decolonisation to offer a provocation of Eurocentrism in the training, research and practice of educational psychology.

I am disappointed at the Eurocentric curriculum of the educational psychology training course and the lack of contributions from non-Western scholars. Political movements such as 'Why is my curriculum white?' (Osborne, 2017) and 'Why isn't my professor black?' (Jahi, 2014; UCL, 2017) interrogate the whiteness of universities and their curricula, which reproduces racism in society. For scholars, it is crucial to elucidate the barriers that black academics face, to reveal the racist legacies of Eurocentric academic institutions (Black, 2014; Jahi, 2014; UCL, 2017). This lack of curricular engagement with white privilege, racial power structures and racialised subjectivities may be seen as an attempt to 'whitewash' universities' association with the eugenics legacy (Coleman, 2015). I share the pain and anguish of my racialised counterparts in being taught a Eurocentric curriculum (Mandhai, 2017). My *re-search* thus aims to address the colonial legacy of academic knowledge which is evident in educational psychology teaching, research and practice.

My use of postcolonial theory

I align myself with Hook's (2005, p. 495) proposition:

> […] postcolonial criticism offers a new and expanding field of concepts which may be used as tools by psychologists attempting politically engaged psychology in their own local spheres.

This allows us to explore the relationship between the psyche and the social structure in educational psychology, and the perpetuation of this relationship by our methodologies. Additionally, I observe my enactment of educational psychology as a racialised person in undertaking *re-search*.

Although I feel a moral need to satisfy my educational psychologist peers, my provocation of educational psychology also recognises my complicity in the very acts I critique, which hopefully 'softens the blow'.

> My need to maintain justice, fairness and equity is also crucial to my practice. This may come from my therapeutic urge to contain people's emotions and maintain a state of equilibrium. It may be part of my psychological urge too!

Decolonised psychology and intersectionality

Decolonising helps us *rethink*, *reconsider* and *rewrite* how knowledge, language and concepts are used in research. It is a critique of colonial psychology and Western research, through proposing indigenous perspectives.

There are fundamental distinctions between postcolonial, indigenous and decolonising research; sometimes these projects are in opposition, despite their similarities. Collectively, they may be aligned with interpretative and, in particular, critical approaches that share similar emancipatory goals (Kovach, 2005). Postcolonial theory focuses on the temporal and spatial location of people. For example, Australia is a settler colony with indigenous (Aboriginals) and non-indigenous people (white Australians). White Australians have also experienced colonisation through the effects of assuming a 'settler identity' associated with status and authority (Barker, 2012).

By contrast, indigenous research comes from indigenous people themselves, addressing indigenous-related issues and ways of knowing, being and doing (Porsanger, 2004; Kovach, 2005; Smith, 2012). Such research starts from appreciating the traditions of the first inhabitants who occupy land, including Torres Strait Pacific Islanders, Aboriginals and First Nations people (Parades-Canilao et al., 2015). Given the dominance of Western knowledge and methodology in psychological practice and research, indigenous perspectives have been marginalised through violence, genocide and acts of brutality (Smith, 2012). Indigenous ways of 'knowing' and 'being' thus offer alternative perspectives for racialised and indigenous groups to re-claim their identity.

Certain Western paradigms may constitute forms of scientific imperialism and ethnocentrism (Bhatia, 2002; Church & Katigbak, 2002), which were related to scientific racism and eugenics (see below). By contrast, indigenous psychology strives to involve indigenous people at all levels of research, to 'give back' and 'give voice' to the community (Kovach, 2005). Using indigenous perspectives in

educational psychology offers flexibility, avoiding the prescriptive aspects of some Western methodologies. Some writers prefer to bridge the gap between Western and indigenous knowledge through hybrid research (Chilisa, 2012). Others, like Grande (2014), refer to 'red pedagogy' as a crossroad methodology where Western critical theory meets indigenous knowledge, which can cause writers to query where their loyalties lie (Kaomea, 2004).

In the UK, there are no groups directly comparable to Aboriginals or First Nations communities. Therefore, I establish an indigenous perspective by using intersectionality and critical race theory (detailed below). I 'indigenise' my *re-search* by resisting the Westernised practices of the university and centring my epistemology on indigenous concepts of inter-relationality, transformation and self-determination (Smith, 2012). Tuck and Yang (2012) writing from the settler colony of Canada, argue that decolonisation risks becoming a metaphor as it is used as an all-encompassing term synonymous with social justice, racial emancipation and transformative approaches (Tuck and Yang, 2012). Therefore, I will be explicit when describing decolonisation in my *re-search*; my descriptions will avoid blurring it with other forms of oppression.

Pillay (2017), writing from a South African context, believes that decolonising psychology requires: curriculum content and teaching processes; alternative research utilising new methodologies, epistemologies and methods; equality in selecting and recruiting psychology students (reflecting national demographics); changing the depoliticised, ahistorical and context-free nature of psychological interventions; and discursively and materially changing attitudes amongst psychologists. Thus, as in my *re-search,* she distinguishes between research methodologies and practices in decolonising psychology as well as acknowledging contributions from Global South nations (Mkhize, 2013).

To illuminate hauntings in educational psychology, Tamburro (2013) uses 'remembering' the past as a discursive tool to reveal such manifestations of colonial power such as othering and hegemony. Remembering encourages reconnecting to what happened in the past, thus helping racialised peoples restore their cultures and languages (Bhabha, 1994). Therefore, an acknowledgement of colonial authority should be integrated into educational psychology curriculum and practice. Typically, educational psychology, like clinical psychology, has operated within a paradigm that is exclusively 'white' (Wood & Patel, 2017); it should therefore widen its remit to recognise indigenous and racialised agendas. Likewise, there are calls within

disabilities studies for a reconceptualisation of 'dis'ability to include racialised and indigenous people in its descriptions (Gorman, 2016).

Indigenous, postcolonial and decolonised positions help cement discourses of resistance and liberation, creating new ways of relating the individual to society as a critique in critical psychology (Hook, 2005; 2013a). The intersections foster productive exchanges that facilitate my political writing style, language, worldviews and reflective thoughts, which are both personal and politicised in their connections with the wider social contexts that educational psychologists work in. Reconfiguring educational psychology may begin with incorporating intersectionality.

Postcolonial theory has been criticised as patriarchal, overlooking the voices of women, who also occupy spaces of oppression. The notion of intersectionality draws attention to people who occupy multiple, intersecting forms of oppression (Crenshaw, 1991). Given the UK's history of oppressed and racialised groups, intersectionality is also relevant here (Chantler, 2005; Abdi, 2015; Theara & Abbott, 2015). Chantler (2005), a British counsellor, argues that oppression should not be viewed within the singular notion of 'race'; rather, examining racialised experiences through multiple positions of marginalisation (race, gender, sexuality) offers a plural process in both theory and practice. As a TEP, I possess numerous intersecting identities as a female, racialised, heterosexual practitioner, which inform my view of educational psychology. Other educational psychologists may also self-identify as occupying multiple and intersecting forms of oppression, in terms, for example, of sexuality or class, so educational psychologists should not be essentialised as only possessing 'white identity'.

Part II: Psychology and educational psychology: types, historical overview and present day

There are many ways of telling the history of educational psychology. The story depends on which lens is selected, what is seen to constitute psychology, which perspective is adopted, what is included and excluded, and how far back one looks. My story of educational psychology begins by exploring the different types of psychology, before interrogating its mandate by addressing its relevance and purpose (Ingleby, 1988). Exploring the birth and historical trajectory of psychology allows me to question taken-for-granted assumptions and contextualise them socially, culturally and politically. As the storyteller, I focus on colonialism and racialisation to explore how psychology is constituted by a racist historical past and a

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colonial legacy (Bulhan, 1985; McCulloch, 1995; Gutherie, 1998; Bhatia, 2002; Okazaki et al., 2008; Richards, 2012; Bulhan, 2015). I argue that the formal period of colonialism continues to 'haunt' the methods and methodologies used by educational psychologists.

Different types of psychology and educational psychology

While avoiding debates about what psychology is and what it is not, I here present different categorisations of psychology. Psychology can either be split into subdisciplines (social, health and developmental) or into methodological frameworks that inform practice (phenomenological, social constructionist and realist) (Parker, 2007). The notion of subdisciplines reminds me of my A-Level and undergraduate days, when psychology would be carved into distinct categories corresponding with teaching modules and chapters in general textbooks which related cognition, perception and emotions to understanding everyday problems. From behaviourist psychologists who are concerned with cause-and-effect relationships (for example, Pavlov and Skinner) to cognitive psychologists who propose the biological hardwiring of the brain (for example, Chomsky), each subdiscipline is premised on a particular way of viewing the world, or paradigm. Subdisciplines, topics and paradigms often contradict and compete with each other, making psychology a well-debated terrain.

A distinction can be made between 'mainstream psychology' and 'critical psychology': the former is concerned with cognition, perceptions and intelligence, whereas the latter critiques the 'psychological gaze' by which we know and understand people, thereby questioning psychological categories and conceptualisations (Parker, 2015). Increasingly, 'critical psychology' movements, such as feminist, black and indigenous psychology, radically challenge their predecessors' dehumanising tendencies, unequal power distribution and capitalist ideologies (Parker, 2007, 2015; Hook, 2013a). However, while mainstream and critical psychology seem wholly opposed there can be overlaps within the debates, I hope to illustrate the debates both within and between the two fields, which make psychology productive and controversial.

Over the last 40 years, attempts to *reconstruct, reformulate* and *refocus* educational psychology have focused on the role identity of educational psychologists (Gillham, 1978; Boxer et al., 1991; Burden, 1999; Gersch, 2004; Baxter & Frederickson, 2005; Ashton & Roberts, 2006; Cameron, 2006; Farrell et al., 2006; Fallon et al., 2010). Urgent attempts to save the professionalism of educational psychology, and

uncertainty about our future direction (Gersch, 2004), have led to debates about what makes the field unique (Ashton & Roberts, 2006; Cameron, 2006). While such contestations are important, I ask why we are still having this debate: it is time to fundamentally change the methodologies of educational psychology.

This *re-search* is aligned with critical theory, taking psychology's history as crucial to understanding its methodology (Danziger, 2013). In Euro-American psychology, categories and conceptualisations are heavily influenced by the culture of Eurocentric psychological knowledge (Danziger, 1997). Eurocentric culture has also been termed the 'intuition of ethnocentrism' (Teo & Febbraro, 2003), which assumes a particular cultural perspective based on social and historical forms associated with Western epistemology, empirical research and the superiority of Western over non-Western categories. This assumed intuition of ethnocentrism informs and structures individuals' lives and academic knowledge production. In contrast, my *re-search* appreciates how the socio-political climate binds educational psychology to the status quo of social institutions (Rose, 1985; Ingleby, 1988). The speech act cited in the introduction of this thesis promotes a certain ideology in educational psychology about truth, significance and meaning as taken-for-granted scientific fact (Ingleby, 1974). At the same time, I acknowledge the varied styles of practice from educational psychologists who utilise different approaches not just the scientific based practitioner. I go beyond such taken-for-granted conceptualisations of individuals/families and suggest possibilities for change by asking: What am I doing in educational psychology? and Why am I doing it? I share similar goals to my predecessors in expressing my dissatisfaction with educational psychology and the need to *re-examine*, *reconstruct* and *rewrite* a different project (Gilham, 1978). I move away from the 'reflective writing' of these distinguished academics to actively mobilise change in my practice, but also to review the implications for educational psychology. I challenge Western educational psychology methodologies which narrow and limit human experience (Parker, 2007). I expand my methodological approach by deploying a postcolonial lens which acknowledges the social, political and economic contexts we work in. I now locate educational psychology historically, by exploring science and racism.

Scientific racism

Psychology undeniably has a painful past fraught with racism, oppression and an obsession with individual differences (Bulhan, 1985; Gutherie, 1998; Richards, 2012). In the early 19th century, pre-Darwinist polygenists Samuel Morton and Louis Agassiz formed a collection of skull sizes of different races, categorising them with blacks at the bottom and whites at the top (Gould, 1981). In the mid-1800s, scientific truth claims were used by physical anthropologists to study the size of lips, brains, noses and hair textures of Africans to seek explanations for racial differences between blacks and Caucasians (Gutherie, 1998). Biological constructions of African brains as smaller and lighter than their European counterparts contributed to a discourse of the 'Crazy African', depicting a 'colonial psyche' (McCulloch, 1995). This discourse sought to justify and legitimise the 'civilisation of natives' by superior, well-meaning Europeans. We may discern the beginnings of a methodology founded on the assumption that psychological abilities such as intelligence are found within physical locations such as the brain.

In the early 19th century, interest continued in the identification of measurable differences in individuals' physical attributes. Eugenics was part of a scientific discipline that assumed the primacy of heredity over environment. Cyril Burt pioneered psychometric testing, claiming that intellectual ability is genetically determined, which validated the use of Intelligent Quotient (IQ) standardised testing in educational psychology (Ward, 1998). Diagnostic

> I recall a conversation with a psychologist where we were discussing the role of educational psychology. She commented that without psychometric testing there would be little that we could offer as psychologists: removing psychometric testing would be the death of educational psychology. Another colleague sarcastically proposed that there was little need for a three-year doctorate: a few sessions on psychometric testing would be enough to teach TEPs the role.

work with individual children prioritised the fixed and stable composition of a child's mental abilities (Department of Education and Science, 1968). Psychometrics are often welcomed by educational psychologists as a closed test (Farrell, 2010) which are 'familiar and reassuring' and 'secure and well-rehearsed' (Gillham, 1976, p. 83). These individual psyche explanations were a result of the eugenics movement, which promoted notions of individual differences and categorising (Chitty, 2007; Frederickson & Miller, 2008). Not only was educational psychology used to distinguish between 'intelligent' and 'unintelligent' as inherently educable and uneducable, but it also contributed to a government agenda of regulating children's lives (Billington & Williams, 2015). Historically (and presently), educational

psychology has been shaped by, and shaped, a theoretical framework that is connected to wider political agendas.

Gould (1981) argues that Burt's tests were methodologically flawed in their claims to scientific truth and objectivity, entailing inaccurate conclusions about human's mental abilities. Such truth claims, Gould (1981) suggests, were often based on unquestionable realities and the socio-historical constructions of imperialism and scientism. These inaccuracies are echoed in contemporary educational psychology, whereby educational psychologists often assume truths in their formulations and theories. In the speech act that opened the thesis, the educational psychologist could be accused of making a theoretical truth claim about autism which the profession promotes. It is essential to question the assumed nature of psychological truth; psychologists must 'wake up from the trance of their own unquestioning professionalism' whereby psychological testing is viewed as a 'socially embedded activity' (Ingleby, 1974, p. 317). Educational psychologists who follow Burt's principles of psychology base their involvement with children on two premises: identifying deviation from a statistical norm and applying this measurement to individuals (Williams & Goodley, 2017). The need to mark differences is similar to the racial differences of scientific racism and a developmental discourse to 'improve' the plight of certain individuals (Li, 2007); this premise continues in educational psychology.

There is little critique of the tools and practices that psychologists are led to believe are beneficial for shaping and governing children's lives (Burman, 1996). Educational psychologists are accountable for performing 'acts of government' through regulation and pathologisation of children's behaviour (Billington, 1996). In this thesis, I thus dissociate myself from the regulating forms of Burt's psychology, and propose frameworks of resistance. I refuse to write in an individualised, essentialised way, and I foreground the current socio-political context. The literature from scientific racism asserts links between physical attributes and the individual psyche, which continue to haunt educational psychology today. The socio-political context of scientific racism is implicated in, and co-constitutive of, the methods used by educational psychologists.

The role of psychology: power, psychologisation and governmentality

Both psychology and colonialism demonstrate the complicity of power, and the influence of the socio-political climate. Indeed, the prominence of psychology has resulted in a process of 'psychologisation', whereby psychological discourses and practices have infiltrated wider dominant and everyday knowledges (Rose, 1985). The interweaving of psychology with power in everyday discourses is a dangerous combination, as psychology can serve socio-political agendas (Gordo & Vos, 2010). Psychology is now producing 'subjects' who are ready to speak to educational psychologists, expecting that we are ready to hear about their problems, so they can be 'cured' (Parker, 2005).

Although psychology is viewed as a well-meaning, 'helping' profession, it is typically concerned with pathologising difference (Rose, 1985). This pathologisation of difference may be construed as an economic and political tool which regulates lives through power and exploitation – the psy-complex (Rose, 1985). Social work, though not a psy-discipline, is an example of the uncritical use of tools and technologies (Nayak, 2015), and professionals are instrumental in promoting the benevolent acts of 'giving advice' to advocate for change within the limits of the status quo (LeFrancois, 2013). The carving of organised psy disciplines (psychiatry, psychology, psychotherapy) through scientific discourses and truth claims creates a professionalism (evident in technology, language, journal publications) of psy-expertise, formulating a psychology of the individual based on the psyche. Like colonialism, the psy-complex operates as an economic and political tool to regulate lives. I want to examine how the psy-complex operates within educational psychology in colluding with the state and wider socio-political agendas, which is justified through our 'unique contribution' (Ashton & Roberts, 2006) of psychologising children and families.

State collusion may be addressed through Foucault's concept of 'governmentality', signifying the exercise of control in regulating individuals to fulfil the political agenda of social institutions and reproduce the status quo. Governing occurs through knowledge, ideologies, social policies and institutions (for example, the BPS) as power relations operate in intricate, unseen ways throughout society, which should be unmasked (Foucault, 1977, 2006). However, Foucault's theory does not capture the experience of regulation for racialised people in a UK context. Hesse (1997) argues that 'white governmentality' acts as a disciplinary logic of whiteness which regulates racialised people's lives. According to Hesse (1997, p. 100) 'racist

programmes of government' cause fear and moral panic in the public, but also control the conduct of racialised bodies (evident today in the embedding of counter-terrorism strategies in schools through the 'Prevent' agenda). My thesis examines how power, racism and oppression serve as regulating agents in my personal embodiment of educational psychology, which privileges Western forms of knowledge production. Through the concept of regulation, I identify not only how educational psychology has been 'disciplined' as a discipline, but also how educational psychologists seek to discipline the very people we work with – as evident in the speech act which opened the thesis.

The British Psychological Society (BPS) and educational psychology training

I turn now to the BPS, the professional body which (mis)represents the philosophy of psychology and accredits doctoral training in educational and child psychology. The BPS (2015, p. 6) aims to 'promote excellence and ethical practice in the science, education and practical applications of psychology'. Accreditation provides quality standards in psychology by which universities can be assessed. To practise under the title of 'Educational Psychologist' requires registration with the Health and Care Professionals' Council (HCPC). This affiliation with governing bodies suggests that the BPS and HCPC dictates the type of psychology that trainees should be taught, leaving training providers with little agency in organising course content. Wood & Patel (2017) argue that when teaching clinical psychologists, the tutor's duty should be to teach trainees resilience in tackling the social injustices psychologists are working in.

The 'top down' perspective in educational psychology is evident in the BPS's 'Professional Practice Guidelines':

> Professional educational psychologists are concerned to support and promote the proper development of young people. In doing so, they work not just directly with young people, but also with their parents and families and with the other adults who teach and care for them […] It is the duty of members to promote the welfare of their clients. This duty will reflect an awareness of how factors such as disability, race, religion, nationality, gender, social standing, sexual preference and political belief can affect access to education and educational experience. It will be demonstrated by members through an explicit commitment to promote equal opportunities. (BPS, 2002, p. 4)

Educational psychology is presented as a 'helping profession', alluding to benevolent social practice (Ingleby, 1988). The discipline is defined as locating impairment in people, implicating the kinds of lives people should aspire to, and a metanarrative

about authoritative claims on people's lives (Parker, 2007). It also invokes an explicitly developmental narrative of young people following a linear growth trajectory (Williams & Goodley, 2017), which is co-constitutive of and tied to colonialism and scientific racism (as discussed earlier). This developmental narrative echoes the idea of 'developing countries' which were subject to colonialism and in need of 'civilising' from a civilised nation.

Educational psychology training focuses on research, practice and intervention to gain the 'core competencies' listed by the BPS (2015), which guarantee a level of suitability for professional practice. The BPS's (2015, p. 16) Standards for the Accreditation of Educational Psychology Training, together with the 2016 update, outlines the statement of intent:

> Educational Psychology is both a profession and a scientific activity. Educational psychology transcends the psychology of children's development and education: It is centrally concerned with the psychology of education and making use of psychological methods that are themselves educational.

The opening line focuses on the 1949 Boulder Conference, which situated educational psychology as 'scientific practitioner' (Hagstrom et al., 2007). As discussed above with regard to scientific racism, science inevitably involves practitioner subjectivity, so it is essential for trainee practitioners to make explicit the relation between their personal embodiment, professional boundaries and wider political influences. Gillham (1978) and Moore (2005) believe that reflexivity is less prominent in educational psychology, as the profession places uncritical confidence in our predecessors' performance. The BPS makes brief references to reflexivity: practitioners are to 'demonstrate self-awareness and work as a 'reflective practitioner' and 'engage in a dynamic, responsive and evolving process to maintain and develop professional practice through the process of appropriate professional reflection and continuing professional development' (BPS, 2015, p. 24). However, reflection figures as an internal process about the self, rather than as a process of questioning the limitations of educational psychology methodologies.

The latter part of the BPS (2015) statement of intent suggests that educational psychology endorses the regulation of people into certain forms of behaviours (Foucault, 1977; Ingleby, 1988). The idea of 'education' resonates with colonialism: in settler colonies, colonised people were taught (often forcefully) to abandon their culture and identity in favour of Western values in the name of education (Thiong'o, 1986; Kanu, 2003, 2007; London, 2012). Education was used as a form of ideological

control to create a sense that colonial ideals were in colonised people's 'best interests' (Kanu, 2003; Smith, 2012). Educational psychology is thus still based on an ideological mantra of assimilation for the 'betterment' of people and society.

In addition, the emphasised quote above establishes educational psychologists' position of power on the basis of knowledge construction and truths around child development (Sewell, 2016). 'Epistemological oppression' leads to a self-assurance about educational psychology as a well-meaning discipline, without questioning its underlying paradigm (Moore, 2005). Billington (2006) describes how educational psychologists may commit epistemological violence by identifying deviant children and removing those who do not fit social norms to special schools – educational psychology thus operates as a form of social control.

The BPS's (2015) statement of intent consistently emphasises 'psychological knowledge and skills' as a central philosophy. This psychological knowledge arguably privileges white, Western practices and methodologies (Hesse, 1997; Teo & Febbraro, 2003; Parker, 2007; Burman, 2008). Certainly, the guidance states: 'Educational psychologists recognise the diversity of the social, economic and cultural context of their work' (BPS, 2015, p. 16). However, there is little recognition of wider socio-political contexts, from the psy-complex of individual explanations (Rose, 1985) to psychology's colonial legacy (Okazaki et al., 2008) and racialised histories of oppression in psychology (Bulhan, 1985). Thus, the BPS proposes an ahistorical and depoliticised definition of educational psychology, which glosses over its past, reproduces oppression and reinforces social injustices.

While I have been writing this thesis, these competencies have been reworked, but the curriculum content is still based on prescriptive formulas for fulfilling the criteria of 'excellence in psychology'. Indeed, the competencies relating to diversity and cultural differences in the BPS (2016) standards include:

> Demonstrate appreciation of diversity in society and the experiences and contributions of different ethnic, socio-cultural and faith groups.
>
> Demonstrate understanding and application of equality and diversity principles and actively promote inclusion and equity in their professional practice
>
> Demonstrate understanding of the impact of inequality, socioeconomic and cultural status and disadvantage and the implications for access to resources and services. (BPS, 2016, p. 21)

Diversity thus figures as something that exists within people as static, fixed, internal states that need to be considered or worked (Hook & Howarth, 2005). A disruption is

therefore needed into how race is theorised; attention should be directed towards the 'objectifying' psychological gaze, rather than fixing the gaze on racialised others (Howarth & Hook, 2005; Riggs & Augoustinos, 2005). Understanding how race plays out in society requires interrogating spheres of 'whiteness' and white privilege (Hesse, 1997), exploring the subjectivities and embodiment of practitioners and researchers, and questioning the discipline educational psychologists are expected to work within. For too long the focus has been on a problematic group 'out there', not on self-critique, thus providing a further example of colonial practices of projection and scapegoating of others.

There is a reluctance to name racism and oppression, which are often cloaked in a language of 'culture, equality and diversity' and 'non-discriminatory' practice. Educational psychology services are expected to adhere to a performance checklist for promoting racial equality, set out in the *Standards of Proficiencies for Psychologists* (HCPC, 2015). This approach suggests that scientific racism and colonialism have been dealt with, and we have progressed to 'celebrating diversity'. Such neo-liberal protocols on race deploy a comfortable language that ignores the root causes of imperialist thinking, white privilege and Western hegemony. As in discussions of 'white guilt', and as with the 'settler guilt' of settler colonies (Tuck & Yang, 2010), language becomes a tool for communicating innocence. Insufficient attention is given to the historical forces that shape cultural differences, such as cultural oppression or assimilation. It is essential to disrupt these dominant narratives in educational psychology, which reproduce discourses of unequal difference and implicate us in racialised power relations.

Conclusions and justification

Many scholars have emerged from their professions expressing dissatisfaction with their methodologies and praxis (Fanon, 1967; Shah, 2010; LeFrancois, 2013; Badwall, 2014; Nayak, 2015; Paulraj, 2016). This *re-search* is necessary, as there are few examples from the UK which, using postcolonial theory, analyse power, subjectivities and oppression to *reconstruct* educational psychology. Since little attention has been paid to how colonialism and racism 'haunt' educational psychology, I aim to make these hauntings more visible and open to challenge. The literature review demonstrates that, as institutions, the BPS, universities and educational psychology are complicit and indeed instrumental in enacting colonialism. Additionally, a colonial academic knowledge base creates various sensitivities for me as a racialised researcher, but also for educational psychology

course providers. I aim to articulate a voice in the profession, using decolonised methodologies to resist the dominant discourses in educational psychology, evidenced in the speech act opening the thesis. While, of course, educational psychology is not solely to blame for oppression, inequalities and injustice, I hope to show our collusion, as educational psychologists, in maintaining them (Burman, 1996). The reconstruction debate has been articulated over time by eminent academics in educational psychology (Gillham, 1978); however, I offer first-hand experiences as a trainee approaching the profession with fresh eyes. Adopting a postcolonial framework, I offer a provocation of educational psychology through analysing theoretical, methodological and research practices, to facilitate a shift from regulation to resistance (Burman, 1996). This *re-search* arises from a context in which educational psychology relies on technologies and forms of knowledge production based on a colonial, racist past. Moreover, the socio-political climate educational psychologists work in has detrimental effects on how we work and how we speak of children and their families (Billington, 2006).

This *re-search* thus addresses the following research questions:

1. Can educational psychology be seen as a colonial practice?

2. What kinds of subjectivities and embodiments does educational psychology make possible?

3. Could educational psychology be part of a decolonising project?

> I initially sought to phrase the *re-search* questions in a way that was more palatable to readers within the educational psychology community. However, my supervisor felt the questions were too passive and needed to be directive. By granting this permission, she transformed my view of undertaking this *re-search* project. The idea of permission struck me given the previous discussions on the whiteness of academia, especially as my main supervisor is in fact white! Just as other postcolonial theorists do not 'mince their words', I hope throughout this thesis to deploy a direct tone and anarchic style of writing.

Chapter 3 **METHODOLOGY: TO RE-FRAME THROUGH** *RE-SEARCH*

To reframe *re-search* through decolonised methodologies is to be contextual, relational, multi-dimensional and respectful of the relationships between entities (Martin & Mirraboopa, 2003). This chapter addresses the incommensurables of using critical race theory, black feminism, indigenous perspectives, decolonised methodology and postcolonial theory in 'knowing' individuals. Decolonised methodology is viewed as a 'soft' methodology within academia, due to its perceived lack of scientific rigour. However, I believe that people's stories should be taken seriously as valuable knowledge forms. I begin by discussing ethical quandaries and provide an overview of my *re-search* design. I then define decolonised methodology and justify my choice of methods (autoethnography and sharing circles) by exploring their strengths and weaknesses. I end the chapter by explaining how quality has been maintained.

I do not discuss my mode of analysis in this chapter because I prioritise the debates about decolonised methodology. This chapter works within the parameters of methods, paradigms and epistemology of decolonised methodology. The same epistemology also underlies my analysis in the following chapter, so the two chapters are distinct yet interlinked. What makes this *re-search* different from decolonised methodology work, and raises further ethical issues is my use of TEPs who are not considered as an oppressed group. (Please note TEPs and trainees are used interchangeably from this point forward).

Ethical considerations

Before discussing my design, I must declare a caveat: my *re-search* is with trainees, not 'oppressed' people (although they may self-identify as oppressed); ethical principles for working with 'oppressed' people may not be transferable to work with trainees, who are assumed to hold power and privilege. It is necessary to discuss with participants the importance of colonisation, oppression and social injustices as key themes from the literature, which can be emotive topics. Nevertheless, difficult conversations about oppression should not be avoided to protect TEPs' wellbeing. Indeed, our role as educational psychologists involves putting children and families into the difficult position of discussing their 'problems' for assessment purposes. These discussions provoke anxieties, yet they are not closed off, but are continued in an ethical manner in the name of educational psychology. One may expect that as

trainees contend with daily ethical quandaries in practice, they should become emotionally resilient to manage critical reflection and self-reflexivity through the support of a supervisor. Originally, I had planned to conduct my *re-search* with educational psychologists at my service, but my supervisors and I doubted whether this could be conducted ethically. However, not using qualified educational psychologists implies that it is unethical to expose potential racism in the profession; the need to 'protect participants' (even if they are enacting racism) overrides the need to expose oppression. Instead, trainees were deemed suitable participants, as they are at the start of their career and hence possibly less defensive of the profession. I consider defensiveness in the following chapter in a psychopolitical framework.

Encouraging difficult conversations allows trainees to confront possible defensiveness in the profession over educational psychologists' tendency to avoid discussions about the taken-for-granted aspects of the role (Gillham, 1978). There is a risk that, by illuminating educational psychologists' 'denial', I am imposing a psy-discourse onto their behaviour, thus re-enacting the very behaviour of my colleague that I criticised in the opening of the thesis. I do not want to alienate educational psychologists, but I am also mindful of educational psychology's ability to discipline my application of psy-discourse. I encourage trainees to adopt a similar self-exposure in reconstructing educational psychology – by exploring the profession's assumptions and understanding the role we envisage for ourselves.

A further conundrum lies in the implications of a racialised researcher using decolonised methodology when working with trainees who self-identify as 'white' and have white privilege, even if they occupy 'othered' categories within 'whiteness'. Contrary to the colonial roots of ethnography, whereby white researchers worked with 'colonised people', my *re-search* conversely shifts the anthropological gaze onto me as a black researcher working with white participants. This role reversal crystallises the uniqueness of this *re-search*: I possess a form of power that is not typical of most educational psychology research (where white researchers are assumed to hold power). The power differentials may jeopardise my design, because, unlike this study, decolonised methodology generally seeks to reduce power dynamics between the researcher and indigenous populations to promote equity (Smith, 2012). Graveline (1998), a First Nations Canadian teacher, conducted a Talking Circle (a decolonised method involving group discussion) with her students in a cross-cultural issues class. Students were from culturally diverse backgrounds;

some were white. When analysing the data, Graveline (1998) stressed the difficulties of using an indigenous model in a Eurocentric school context, with white students finding the principles of 'heart-full' speaking and respectful listening a challenge. Similarly, in my *re-search*, trainees were familiar with Eurocentric research methods of interpreting behaviour as individual rather than related to social structures. Exchanging these ways of thinking for reflexivity and structural critique helped trainees engage with the sharing circle (see below) and, consequently, helped them explore the entities we are connected to in the living world.

Autoethnography captures my experiences of using educational psychology whilst on placement. Given the connectedness between colleagues, school staff and children, relationships can become intimate with inter relational bonds being formed, so it is essential to take responsibility for my actions and their consequences (Ellis, 2007). Balancing the needs to *re-search* with the positive relationships I have forged with educational psychologists makes me anxious. Indeed, my provocation of educational psychology uses autoethnography to place my enactments of educational psychology at the centre, placing activism at a local level. Ethical approval was not sought from the educational psychology service, because I am telling the story, meaning that I own it. However, ethical approval was sought from, and granted by, the university. As Chang (2008) highlights, experience does not exist in a vacuum; my stories encapsulate the multifaceted roles of author, researcher and informant, meaning that others will always play a visible or invisible part in my accounts.

The autoethnographic nature of my work means that if harm does arise, I have access to my research supervisor for debriefs. In March 2016, I submitted an ethical review to the University of Sheffield Ethical board. The ethical considerations are in line with the BPS's (2009) *Code of Human Research*. For examples of consent forms, participant information sheet, briefing and debriefing, see appendix 1. My ethical obligations also require disseminating the findings. Smith (2012), a Maori scholar, discusses two requirements of ethical working: 'reporting back' research to communities, as a dialogical, collaborative engagement; and 'sharing knowledge', as a long-term commitment to the people involved in the research. Accordingly, it is my responsibility to demystify my work for the BPS, educational psychology training providers, educational psychologists and trainees.

Re-search design

My interpretative, inductive design uses reflexivity to reconstruct the role and professional identity of educational psychologists by examining the internal workings

> Interestingly, as educational psychologists, we happily collaborate with school staff and parents to offer support and recommendations about how to work with a child's special educational need. However, we are less open to opportunities for self-scrutiny and critique of our own roles to expose racism and discuss social inequalities. Are we protective of our profession? Or too emotionally invested in our work?

of the profession. The primary method is autoethnography, used alongside sharing circles to enhance the _re-search_ credibility. As I link micro-levels (my own and trainees' lived experiences) to macro-levels (educational psychology as an institution), I wanted a method that reflects psychopolitics (Lebeau, 1998). This term signifies the creation of psychopathological disorders by socio-political conditions (Rose, 1985). Hence, the personal is political and vice versa when addressing psychological disturbance (Hook, 2005). _I discuss this further in the analysis chapter._

Process and method

I collected my data in the order outlined in the audit trail (appendix 2). An opportunity sample was used for the sharing circle, whereby I emailed Year 3 TEPs inviting them to participate in my _re-search_ on a voluntary basis. Five trainees came forward, two males, three females, aged between their early 30s and early 40s, including one person of colour. The self-selective nature of this sample may risk bias, since participants who put themselves forward could be more open to the idea of challenge and resistance. Moreover, the small sample may not be representative of the target population, which consequently may raise issues about validity. However, this _re-search_ does not aim to generalise or provide totalising accounts, but rather to understand the internal dynamics of educational psychology as a discipline (Willig, 2013).

A pilot study with newly qualified educational psychologists highlighted the importance of sharing stories in bringing people together (appendix 3). One participant suggested another form of data collection within the sharing circle, to minimise disengagement from storytelling. Subsequently, I added the sacred objects and brain showering activities.

Positionality

I self-identify as a black female researcher. Self-identification in Western research can incorporate categories which are deterministic, unitary and static (Sudbury, 2001). I acknowledge my exposure to primarily Western knowledge at university, which may describe me within the category 'black'. Selfhood is

> I feel uncomfortable with the word 'data'. It seems meaningless and does not capture the richness of the stories generated. Data conjures up images of extracting information from vessels at a static point in time. In addition, data is a word familiar to the research world. I thus use the word 'knowledges'.

based on how others view me, which is mainly associated with biological constructions of race. I thus prefer to discuss positionality based on the location of the black woman's story, which acknowledges that stories can shift according to location (Mohanram, 1999). I am not a colonised person, but I have been indirectly affected by colonialism through my parents having lived in a former British colony (Sierra Leone), though I live in a metropolis (the UK). Although my body is physically distant from the colony, I have been subject to colonial forms through the parenting I receive and the stories I hear, which affect my view of the world (Mohanram, 1999). A distinction is necessary between racialisation and race. While race is defined by biological, physical differences, racialisation emphasises the social construction of 'race', capturing multiple persons in the interaction and contextualising the objectification of bodies socially and historically (Fassin, 2011). On the other hand, incorporating colonialism into definitions of identity focuses on psychological effects of settler colonialism and the location of bodies in Global North and Global South countries (Loomba, 2015). The intersection of colonialism and racialisation (my ancestral history from the Global South but my home in the Global North) affects how I approach, represent and interpret the analysis of knowledge.

My racialised position is distinct from indigenous perspectives. Indigeneity does not reflect my experience as an African-British citizen. My positionality does not easily fit decolonised methodology, as many sharing circle scholars have indigenous heritage. My non-indigenous position inhibits my ability to draw on specific indigenous knowledge. Instead, I discuss racialisation, which fits my experience and embodiment of educational psychology.

Black female experiences can go hidden or undocumented (Henry, 2015). As a black, female academic, my *re-search* is informed by various incommensurable projects from black activism, critical race theory and indigenous research. My *re-search* uses black feminist perspectives, which recognise intersectionality

(Crenshaw, 1991) and multi-faceted experiences of gender, race and class (see below).

Critical race theory excavates how race informs every aspect of daily life and structural racial oppression (Ladson-Billings, 1998). It challenges the notion of 'whiteness' as a denominator for understanding the 'other' that often refuses to succumb to white supremacy. Given the tendency for whiteness to dominate research and practice, my *re-search* has, unsurprisingly, presented an internal battle, for example, making me feel unable to speak to colleagues about my topic. Occupying this tenuous position perhaps reflects my marginalised place in society, which previously precluded me from writing or speaking from a racialised position (Henry, 2015). Critically engaging in autoethnography allows me to narrate my stories without a sense of guilt, or fear of provoking trouble as the 'angry black woman' (Ahmed, 2009).

As a racialised researcher and practitioner, I occupy an 'outsider within' position (Collins, 1991), which precludes full insider status in educational psychology due to my allegiances with the black community. Complete assimilation into the white academic and educational psychology service is thus unrealistic. To embark on a project about racialisation may incite particular responses and is contentious, especially for a black female. Indeed, I am writing in the context of Islamophobia, Brexit, the Trump presidency and Black Lives Matters campaigns, which are all deemed controversial, racialised topics. In a climate of systemic injustices, questioning what I do as a psychologist and going beyond the 'core competencies' of the training course is essential to gain ethical grounding and reflection in my practice (Wood & Patel, 2017). I may be negatively categorised by some, or 'hailed' (Althusser, 1971), as another black female obsessed with race (Hendrix, 2002). Hendrix (2002), a black female professor, found that her white teaching counterparts minimised the difficulties facing black professors teaching white students.

My positionality in working with trainees is complex: I am an outsider, a racialised person with a colonial past; but I am also an insider on a research journey of 'data' collection to complete the educational psychology training course, and am therefore close to trainees (Ellis, 2007). It is thus plausible that trainees told me stories that I wanted to hear, producing a 'halo effect'. However, the benefits of valuing heartfelt speaking and dispensing any thoughts before entering the circle may help counteract these biases.

At the time of writing, I am the only person of colour at the educational psychology service and the only black person (in addition to two other people of colour) in my cohort on the doctoral training course. I am therefore uniquely positioned to write this thesis. I am aware that my positionality may affect how I read, perceive and interpret the situations which I wrote about in my diary, as my racialisation radar functioned at maximum level when storying my experiences, thus presenting biases.

> I deploy postcolonial theory differently at the educational psychology service and at university. I feel comfortable stipulating my young, black, educated female position amongst university peers and tutors, as there is an acceptance of critical theory. In contrast, I feel less able to articulate my *re-search* with work colleagues because they largely work within what I would describe as a mainstream psychology theoretical framework. This has been an ongoing tension throughout the training course.

Decolonising methodologies

Building on the literature review, I now show how decolonised methodology informs my research questions. Debates about decolonised methodology are:

> […] a complex mix of historical, epistemological, methodological, theoretical, ideological, philosophical, pedagogical, discursive, ethical, and practical concerns. (Pillay, 2017, p. 2)

Decolonised methodology can thus, unlike any other methodology, generate rich, messy knowledge about educational psychology. Though neither I nor trainees are direct victims of colonialism, I promote a narrative of resistance within educational psychology. My *re-search* questions delve into the darkness of colonialism to know participants in a nuanced way which a traditional methodology may not appreciate. Mutua & Swadener (2004) explore personal accounts of indigenous scholars striving to reclaim and represent their research as affiliated university academics. Likewise, my *re-search* explores my personal encounters on placement to capture colonial traces within educational psychology at a micro-level, aiming to recognise macro-level implications. As Miller et al. (2008) state, radical research has the potential to envisage new kinds of educational psychologist/client relationships; my methodological approach may thus exert a positive influence in understanding interactions with children and their families.

Who are decolonised methodologies for?

Given the conflicts within the field of decolonised methodologies, it is unclear who decolonised methodology is for. Some researchers suggest that, as a 'rite of passage', only indigenous persons can engage in indigenous research (Rigney, 1999). This position assumes that researchers who have experienced the pain of colonialism either directly or indirectly are better positioned to conduct indigenous research. Alternatively, Rowe et al. (2015), from a non-indigenous Australian perspective, state that non-indigenous Australian social workers who undertake research should adopt a 'multidimensional reflexivity' that promotes justice and equity for the indigenous populations they work with. In my opinion, there should be scope for non-indigenous researchers to adopt decolonised methodologies within their research, involving understanding of the colonial histories and cultural, political and social situation of the methodologies adopted. There are important distinctions between research by indigenous people (Bessarab & Ng'andu, 2010; Chilisa, 2012; Smith, 2012) and research by other oppressed groups, such as people of colour (Collins, 1991; Nayak, 2015). In settler colonies like Canada and New Zealand, where many marginalised and racialised people are also settlers, they cannot be assumed to have the same experiences or agendas as indigenous people (Riggs & Augoustinos, 2005). As a racialised researcher from the UK, experiencing marginalisation in various forms, I am voicing my unique, unrepresented experiences, which are usually silenced in educational psychology.

Criticisms of decolonised methodology

I do not wish to homogenise indigenous experiences. For LatCrit scholars, decolonised methodologies essentialise disenfranchised people (Dunbar, 2014). The homogenised and romanticised stories produced within decolonised work may not reflect indigenous people's lived experiences, because accounts may be fictionalised for an audience. LatCrit scholars also believe that decolonised methodology does not address wider socioeconomic, political and cultural structures, such as exclusionary and unequal forms of capitalism. However, I would suggest that this depends on the definition of 'decolonise', as many definitions incorporate modernity and capitalism (Mignolo, 2007; Loomba, 2015).

Despite the lack of academic articles or books within the UK on decolonisation, there are active movements on social media: 'Decolonising Our Minds Society' (SOAS, 2017), 'Rhodes must fall' (RMF Oxford, 2017) 'Why is my curriculum white?' (Boyd,

2014; Osborne, 2017) and 'Why isn't my professor black?' (Black, 2014; Jahi, 2014). Such movements critically examine colonial histories in the construction of British imperial curricula/academy, believing that knowledge and participation should encompass perspectives that reflect the diversity of the contemporary world. Such interrogation of knowledge production and teaching helps deconstruct the colonial legacies which are responsible for structural and epistemic violence within society.

Indigenist and racialised perspectives

Developing my arguments from the literature review, I explain how an indigenous research framework helps contextualise my methodology. There are parallels between indigenous frameworks and my *re-search*. 'Indigenist' research decolonises Western research practices to re-frame, re-claim and re-name indigenous research. My *re-search* addresses the need to reframe and reconstruct knowledge production in educational psychology. Indigenous research frameworks are distinguished by the maintenance of reflexivity, which foregrounds indigenous knowledges, relating them to the self and other entities (Martin & Mirraboopa, 2003). Reflexivity in my *re-search* seeks to prompt change in the current unreflective, taken-for-granted forms of knowledge production within educational psychology (Moore, 2005). Rigney (1999) views indigenous research frameworks as a consciousness-raising movement. Writing, and sharing, my stories as a TEP is a liberating act of resisting the status quo. Like indigenous frameworks, my *re-search* evokes discussion within the parameters of resistance, which hopefully allows TEPs to question educational psychology's taken-for-granted truth claims.

Paradigms and philosophy

Decolonised theory is arguably one strand of critical theory (Dunbar, 2014; Rowe et al., 2015). According to Denzin & Lincoln (2000), all theory comprises ethics, epistemology, ontology and methodology, which suggests that traditional academic work carves up research into distinct categories of understanding how humans interact with research. The university demands that these disciplines are reproduced in my doctoral work, when this is a Western construction of what academic work should be. However, indigenous worldviews should not be forced into pre-existing Western categories (realist, social constructionist and so on) (Kovach, 2005). Indigenous epistemologies are not easily explained using Western language, making it hard to translate decolonised forms. Categorisations suggest that humans are transparent, predictable and simple beings, downplaying their complexity in

interactions. My *re-search* is concerned not with cause-effect relationships but with naturalistic, real-life social phenomena, and the negotiation of meaning and textures of experience in a small-scale setting (Willig, 2013). For the links between philosophy and paradigms, see appendix 4.

My methodological choices are congruent with my *postcolonial indigenous research* paradigm. Chilisa & Tsheko (2014, p. 223) articulate such a paradigm as:

> […] informed by a relational epistemology that values communities as knowers, and knowledge as the well-established general beliefs, concepts, and theories of any particular people that are stored in their language, practices, rituals, proverbs, revered traditions, myths, and folktales. Knowing is something that is socially constructed by people who have relationships and connections with each other, the living and the non-living, and the environment. Knowers are seen as beings with connections with other beings, the spirits of the ancestors, and the world around them that informs what they know and how they can know it.

Since we are all connected and relational, we should embark on co-researching with our participants as collaborators. In decolonised methodology, research is relational and contextual, implying an internal coherence of methodology and epistemology. However, this explanation overlooks the impact of the social reality of power, inequality, injustice and oppression. I also position myself within critical realism, because I view language as constitutive of an individual's social reality. As Sims-Schouten et al., (2007, p. 101) put it:

> For critical realists, material practices are given an ontological status that is independent of, but in relation with, discursive practices. The advantage in taking a critical realist, rather than relativist, approach is that analysis can include relationships between people's material conditions and discursive practices.

In sum, there is a reality which exists independently of our thoughts and which is located within wider social as well as psychological mechanisms (Houston, 2001). I prefer to view the social world not through fixed Western categories but as fluid and interchangeable.

Methods

Autoethnography

Autoethnography uses reflexive, biographical data as a means of inquiry (LeFrancois, 2013). Ethnography was traditionally used in cross-cultural anthropological research, where the researcher 'went native' to gain insider knowledge of an unknown society. Smith (2012) describes such work as intrusive, brutal and unethical, because research was often 'done to', not in collaboration with, communities; many indigenous researchers therefore see ethnography as problematic. To avoid recreating colonial practices by casting educational psychologists as 'objects' of study, I place myself as both object and subject within the *re-search*. I adopt a position of naivety and curiosity about educational psychology practice, making the familiar strange and the strange familiar.

Autoethnography values researchers' personal memory (Chang, 2008). 'Auto' refers to the self/bios/individual life (the "I"), while 'ethno' signals the 'culture' of a social group. Autoethnography involves observations, fieldnotes or personal diaries as knowledge collection (Ellis, 2004) and embraces a critical level of reflexivity. Reflexivity 'encourages the qualitative researcher to reflect upon the various ways in which (s)he, as a person and as a researcher, is implicated in the research and its findings' (Willig, 2013 p. 52). Like the methodology of oral history, this *re-search* focuses completely on me as the researcher and object of investigation (Willig, 2013).

Autoethnography has been used in indigenous, indigenist and racialised research to align the personal with the political. Within racialised work, autoethnography allows the examination of the 'self' in relation to social issues in higher education institutions, by contextualising the micro in the macro (Henry, 2015). I also intend to grapple with my racialised position in the *re-search*. Lipe & Lipe (2017), as indigenous researchers, found that critical reflection helped them connect with and understand their Hawaiian ancestral histories, while also reflecting on their roles within contemporary society. Legge's (2013) indigenist autoethnography explored her experience as a European female teaching Maori culture at a New Zealand Higher Education institution. Although Legge (2013) valued Maori knowledge systems and used the Maori language to show respect, she remained an outsider.

For LeFrancois (2013), a Canadian social worker, autoethnography provokes meaning-making through re-enacting stories of struggle and adversity. The parallels

between the storying of autoethnography and that of sharing circles enhance the internal coherence of decolonised methodologies. Storytelling makes autoethnography an inherently 'ethical practice', though one that is also political, resonating with activism (Ellis & Bochner, 2006, p. 111). Adams and Jones (2008) discuss queering autoethnography, that is, amalgamating queer theory and autoethnography to develop a method that disrupts normalising ideologies and advocates for change in how sexuality and gender are discussed. The example of queer theory demonstrates that decolonised methodology can contribute to resistances at the local (micro) level of interactions (Denzin et al., 2008).

I choose evocative autoethnography (Ellis, 2007) over analytical autoethnography (Anderson 2006), because it allows readers to connect with the researcher's experiences (Mendez, 2013, p. 281). My rhetorical style embraces the first person to demonstrate my closeness with participants and reduce power differentials. As I am the subject/object within autoethnography, I provide an account of what is happening from my experiences. Since every TEP/educational psychologist's account would differ, this is a subjective method. A sample extract of my story is shown in appendix 5.

Sharing circles

Sharing circles originated among First Nations tribes. The term 'sharing circle' highlights both talking and listening as fundamental skills to ensure a successful circle (Bazylak, 2002). In sharing circles, a group of people share personal stories about a collective phenomenon, thereby forging relationships. Hence, two purposes are fulfilled: rapport building and information sharing. Traditionally, they are used to make decisions within tribal communities through dialogue, respect and the co-creation of learning/social discourses (Decoloniality Europe, 2013). Recently, sharing circles have been used as a research tool (Bessarab & Ng'andu, 2010) and an educational activity (Collins & Adams, 2002); they have also been deployed for assessments (Bazylak, 2002) and interventions within health, education and social care contexts. In my *re-search*, the sharing circle offers an experimental method for eliciting trainees' responses about educational psychology.

Sharing circles are typically used with groups who are considered 'oppressed' or marginalised (Graveline, 1998), because the principles of everyone being given their turn to speak and of respectful, attentive listening create a rich, inclusive learning atmosphere (Decoloniality Europe, 2013). Although my cohort cannot be categorised

as 'oppressed', I use this method to foster collaboration, a sense of community and connectedness, all of which resonate with decolonised methodology.

It could be argued that focus groups (Braun & Clarke, 2006) or group-interviewing (Watts & Ebbutt, 1987) are similar to sharing circles and produce similar knowledges. However, focus groups involve power differentials between the group facilitator and participants; moreover, the flow of questions and answers is static and linear. I wanted discussions to be organic, holistic and evolving. Unlike focus groups, sharing circles encourage egalitarian manners, because one person can speak for as long as they desire whilst everyone else listens and learns. Conversely, the structure of focus groups suggests that there are right answers, and participants can influence each other's answers (Lavallee, 2009).

It may be difficult to justify sharing circles as a method to scholars, given their unconventional nature and the small evidence base supporting them. Bessarab & Ng'andu (2010) highlight the opposition they encountered from doctoral supervisors in recognising sharing circles as a valid tool, and the dilemma of legitimising their method within the parameters of what constitutes 'good research' within academia. I may face similar dilemmas of meeting academic expectations whilst staying true to the principles of decolonised methodology. Bessarab & Ng'andu (2010), writing from a Western Australian context (one Aboriginal scholar, one from Botswana), argue that since conversation is a major part of communication, sharing circles is evidently a valid, credible and rigorous method in qualitative research. Sharing circles, as a conversational approach, can reduce formality; since participants feel relaxed, they are willing to share their stories.

Like all methods, sharing circles have certain limitations. In stories about lived experiences, the teller may choose what to share and what to omit, so there is a risk that relevant information may be missed (Bessarab & Ng'andu, 2010). However, I would argue that since research occurs in the real world, it should reflect interpersonal interactions and the messiness of our lives. Eloquent, coherent stories would not capture the haphazard and chaotic lives that we lead (Bessarab & Ng'andu, 2010). Sharing circles thus provides a vehicle to capture complexity.

Sharing circles require participants to share their story uninterrupted for any amount of time. Participants may struggle to maintain this given the reciprocal nature of conversations. To mitigate this problem, I emailed the tasks beforehand, which allowed subjects to construct their story in advance. This may go against the

principles of sharing circles, by affecting the creativity of the story. However, given the constraints of time and resources, sacrifices were necessary, making an 'authentic' sharing circles framework impossible. However, sharing circles were not originally intended for research purposes, so these barriers are inevitable.

Quality in *re-search*

Academic institutions prescribe qualitative criteria to maintain rigor and credibility in research. For me, such criteria are aligned with Western ideals about what research ought to be, which are associated with a positivist approach to scientific endeavour – which I reject. Thus, rather than binding myself to the stringent requirements of Yardley (2000) and Tracy (2010), which do not translate to my *re-search* design, I seek internal coherence of theory, methodology and paradigm. I use Smith's (2012, pp. 143-164) description of '25 research projects' which were undertaken by indigenous people to illustrate possible strategies, including: claiming, testimonies, storytelling, remembering, processes, intervening, revitalising, connecting, writing and theory making, representing, envisioning, reframing, restoring and returning. I confront the associated risks of going against institutional guidelines; this is a recurrent theme in my *re-search* as I begin my pursuit of political activism. Furthermore, Smith (2012, p. 121) describes four essential processes for research practices and methodologies: *transformation, decolonisation, healing and mobilisation*. I return to these in the discussion chapter.

Chapter 4 **ANALYSIS: TO RE-VISIT THROUGH *RE-SEARCH***

This chapter explores the translation of stories from the sharing circle and autobiographical accounts into poetic transcriptions as an alternative form of data interpretation. I explain the dilemma of whether to transcribe, and the strengths and limitations of poetic transcriptions, ending with the 'psychopolitical' framework with which I analyse the poems. This analysis is coloured by my worldview and assumptions (Martin & Mirraboopa, 2003), particularly in the decisions about which aspects of trainees' stories to prioritise.

To transcribe or not to transcribe

Transcribing seems theoretically inappropriate for interpreting trainees' stories. While I favour maintaining the cultural authenticity of indigenous perspectives, I feel that by transcribing, I am endorsing Western, academic styles of data

> It took me most of the Christmas holidays to decide whether to transcribe. I feared that not transcribing risked looking lazy. Also, other TEPs were transcribing, suggesting I should follow suit. I wanted to pass the course, but I feared that not transcribing may be held against me. There are pressures to avoid decolonised work simply to pass, and not be radical. I was waiting for someone to tell me what to do – but that wasn't going to happen. When I made the choice not to transcribe, it felt invigorating to care so much about decolonisation – staying authentic to the lifework and myself. This was the start of my journey of resistance.

interpretation. Typically, stories from the oral tradition are not written down or used as a research method (Kovach, 2005). From a decolonised methodology perspective, Young (1996, p. 33) suggests that the 'feeling, phrasing and texture' of oral speech cannot be expressed in written transcription. Similarly, Simonds & Christopher (2013) attempt to reconcile Western and indigenous methodologies when examining a health intervention research project with the Crow community (a Native American community). The Crow communities voiced their concerns about Western deductive forms of qualitative analysis, feeling that transcribing does not suit their traditions. Graveline (1998) argues that, in the interests of cultural authenticity, any move from oral tradition to the written word requires an act of translation. However, little guidance is offered on how to interpret stories in light of decolonised methodology's theoretical foundations. Most sharing circles research uses interview transcripts, coding and categorising (Graveline, 1998; Darryl, 2002; Bessarab & Ng'andu, 2010; Durey, 2016).

Reasons for transcribing include organising and managing the data, providing a written record of the interview (Arksey & Knight, 2011) as well as capture chronologies of a spoken encounter for the sake of objectivity and transparency (Schieffelin, 2005). If this is so, anything that goes on paper is a form of transcription, whether a formalised Conversation Analysis (Jefferson, 2004) or more poetic forms (Glesne, 1997).

Transcribing must be clearly distinguished from translation. Within postcolonial theory, translation has a specific meaning, signifying cultural power during the colonial period, as colonisers constructed meaning for colonised people. According to Simon (2000, p. 11):

> […] translation refers not only to the transfer of specific texts into European languages, but to all the practices whose aim was to compact and reduce an alien reality into the terms imposed by triumphant Western Culture.

Colonisers' translated version of events did not always genuinely describe colonised people. Therefore, translation presented a distorted reality of the constructed other (Cronin, 2000). Conversely, a decolonised approach to translating encounters appreciates constant reflective attention and action, which is impossible within the realms of most qualitative analysis (Simmonds & Christopher, 2013). I wish to give voice to the trainees' stories whilst translating their experiences in a way that is meaningful to readers. I seek a representation that conveys the voice of the storyteller, not that of the researcher; a representation that conserves the story as a whole, rather than reducing stories to codes and categories; a representation that remains close to oral traditions and appreciates the essence of decolonisation. This brings me to poetic transcription.

Poetic transcription

Poetic transcription entails 'the creation of poem-like compositions from the words of interviewees' (Glesne, 1997, p. 202). The process 'involves word reduction while illuminating the wholeness and

> I was shocked to see that many PhDs using decolonised methodology involve transcriptions and codifications. This, I feel, defeats the object. I was disappointed: there seem to be moments in a thesis when decolonised methodology is appropriate and deliverable, and moments when it is not. Despite the temptation to follow my colleagues, I must maintain the authenticity of decolonised methodology. Why can't a piece of *re-search* incorporate decolonised principles throughout? I welcome the beauty of the freedom decolonised methodology affords re-searchers, but internal coherence remains paramount for me.

interconnectedness of thoughts' (Glesne, 1997, p. 183). Poetic transcriptions tend to

be used as a methodology (MacNeil, 2000; Madden et al., 2013), not as an analytical tool, which is how I intend to use them. Poetic forms move away from the traditional, scientific endeavour associated with research and the authoritative approach of the researcher (Richardson, 1994). Therefore, poetic transcription is methodologically appropriate here because its principles of valuing participants align with the postcolonial indigenous research paradigm of working 'with' trainees.

Examples using poetic transcription and experimental forms

Poetic transcription has been utilised as a methodology in the context of Higher Education (Smart, 2014), and to review the barriers and enablers of indigenous educational experiences in Canada (Madden et al., 2013). Glesne (1997), having interviewed an indigenous female academic elder, transformed the transcript into poetic form; since Glesne (1997) used a decolonised methodology, the study resonates with my *re-search*. All these examples explore themes of intersubjectivity, power imbalances, authority and positionality as both researcher and author of the poems; but representing the stories as poems heightens readers' awareness of this oral-to-text translation. In my *re-search*, I am transparent to readers about my presence as the poems' author; with conventional transcription, readers may take for granted what was said in the research.

There have also been postmodern attempts to move away from the discursive notions of text towards material visual compositions of poetry. Boomfield (2016) develops poetry which recovers silenced, seemingly irrecoverable archeological histories, and brings them into the present. In this thesis, I similarly use poetry to trace how coloniality is not only in the past, but has shaped and continues to shape educational psychologists' practice today. In postcolonial terms, this is comparable to Spivak's (1995) notion of excavating the silences of the subaltern to illuminate the gaps within colonial and neo-colonial discourse.

Representing oral communication in an alternative form is long overdue in research. I create a space for multiple meanings by merging various selves (author, writer, researcher and listener) in the poems, and developing the feelings and experiences of the reader (Richardson, 1997). Graveline (1998, p. 145) proposes 'authentic listening' and 'respectfulness' as key ingredients of a pedagogical 'First Voice'. Through 'empathic appreciation', 'self-examination' and 'interrogating the self', the researcher's and participants' voices merge naturally.

Limitations of poetic transcription

Poetic transcription arguably removes the purity of the subject's voice, which may not be heard and may be 'contaminated' by the researcher's views. The conflation of the researcher's and participant's voices obscures who is speaking. However, as Richardson (1994) remarks, our over-sensitivity towards validity, reliability and truth in insisting on knowing the source of the poems can crush creativity. The research can become richer by being aware of such critical questioning of 'whose voice', especially when researcher reflexivity is usually suppressed in traditional transcription processes.

I now demonstrate how knowledges from sharing circles and autoethnography were developed into poetic transcriptions.

Sharing circles, autoethnography and poetic transcriptions

Six poems were constructed from the trainees' sharing circles, including my own:

- *Educational Psychology as Container*
- *Resisting with a Reason*
- *The Elastic Band*
- *Squishy Heart*
- *No Set Shape*
- *I am a Piece of String.*

> It feels refreshing to be able to write so creatively within academia. There was a more natural ebb and flow in my writing, and it felt purposeful and meaningful. I felt more connected to the trainees' story as a listener.

I am a Piece of String is my story from the sharing circle. I have included this story to evidence my participation in the group collective without being different as the researcher. However, this is discussed with my other autoethnographic stories in the interpretation chapter.

Four poetic transcriptions were devised from my autoethnographic diary:

- *The Voice*
- *A Day in the Life of a Trainee Educational Psychologist*
- *Whose Problem is it Anyway?*
- *Power Trip*

These poems provide a varied portrait of my experiences on placement. Each poem captures an episode from the autoethnographic stories and my experiences on placement.

Creating the poetic transcriptions

There is no singular way of producing poetic transcriptions, some begin by transcribing and coding the data (MacNeil, 2000; Pointdexter, 2002 and Madden et al., 2013) but my work incorporates an assemblage of poetry drawing on Richardson (1994), Glesne (1997), Graveline (1998) and Madden et al., (2013) (*see tables 1A-D*).

The same approach was used for both the sharing circle and the autoethnographic stories. My work began with a process of respectfully listening to the audio from the sharing circle and reading of the autoethnographic stories (Graveline, 1998). I made notes and selected parts that a) highlighted educational psychology as a discipline; the kind of work involved, roles, responsibilities and duties b) illustrated any challenges that come with the job and c) captured trainees' personal experiences of enacting educational psychology. For the autoethnography, I selected stories that resonated with me at that moment in time, which I appreciate would vary if it was another day.

Firstly, I drew on Glesne's (1997) protocol of using the words and phrases of the participants (including myself) to create a sense of respecting and honouring participants speaking rhythms. Unlike Glesne (1997), I did not maintain the chronological order as they were listened to because my preference was to keep the topic similarities together to help with the narrative flow and sequencing of the poem. Furthermore, Graveline (1998) believes that experience is multiple and accumulative across historical context and I therefore wanted to capture this multiple flow. Secondly, Richardson's (1997) protocols were used by merging the plurality of voices from the storytellers (myself and the TEPs) and the author (re-searcher) condensing the two. The idea being not having one voice dominating the poem but having multiple voices transcend through the poem. At the end of the poems I have distinctively focused on my resonances with the stories that trainees shared by beginning with '***What is your story***?' this further illuminates my reflexivity in the process of respectful listening. With regards to the autoethnographic stories, *A Day in the Life of a Trainee* aims to amalgamate all the stories as a collective in the diary which aim to capture aspects that stood out from the first reading. *Whose Problem is*

it Anyway? again is an amalgamation of several stories. The other poems were constructed using a particular story from placement.

In the presentation of the poetic transcriptions, I replicated Madden et al., (2013) by including the poems in the main body of the work as opposed to side-lining them within an appendix. Although not customary of poetic transcriptions, I made the decision to constructively analyse the poems rather than allowing the poems to speak *for themselves.* I share these poetic transcriptions not as wanting to retell truths but rather a *retelling* and *remembering* of the stories as they were heard, lived and gifted to me (Madden et al., 2013).

I had reservations about writing poetry as it is not my strength. However, exploring this discomfort and embarking on new methodologies is a primary theme of this thesis.

Tables 1 (A-D): Examples of converting autoethnographic stories and sharing circles into poetic transcriptions

Table 1A: Whose Problem is it Anyway?

Autoethnographic story	Poetic transcription
	Whose Problem is it Anyway?
An educational psychologist returned to the office to talk to me about an Asian family that were in complete denial about an autism diagnosis. My immediate reaction was **startled**. A whole **political and historical past came flooding back**. I sometimes feel I do my duties without looking at the historical past of how these disorders became known. Should we shift the gaze away from the families and look at educational psychology. How often does educational psychology **problematize Children, families and teachers** without looking at our **tools knowledges and assessments.**	An Asian family are in complete denial about an autism diagnosis. I am startled at what I hear! A whole political and historical past flooding back. Whose problem is it anyway? Firstly, we should ask how these disorders have become known as they are today. Secondly, a problematic family or a problematic profession? Our tools, knowledges and assessments are viewed as valid, reliable and robust representations. Whose problem is it anyway?
I was discussing my *re-search* topic with a colleague. She drew my attention to the problems **with looking to inwardly at myself.** We discussed being more outward looking in relation to **conversations with staff, parents and young people.**	Should these be the questions we should ask ourselves? Or am I looking too inwardly at myself? It should be my conversations with staff, parents and young people and families that are the primary and most important relationships I have.
I am sat at a focus group discussion with other psychologists as part of a re-search project. The topic is around the **PREVENT and CHANNEL** agenda. My views immediately became racialised thinking about young Asian boys. **I then got annoyed with myself** thinking radicalisation can exist with white extremism or Christian extremism, not just Islamic views. **I wondered** how much the media shape our views as psychologists. Is there an extent to which we bring racialised notions into the consulting room?	PREVENT, CHANNEL become part of our discourse. I see male, Asian young people as the perpetrator not victims. I get annoyed with myself…. I wonder……. Again, whose problem is it anyway?

Autoethnographic story
At a team meeting when I began sharing my ideas around a thesis topic I expressed an interest in working with ethnic minority groups. This was welcomed as there was a consensus around wanting to work with these families successfully and being culturally sensitive. Particularly around helping ethnic minority families to understand why educational psychologists are wanting to assess their child. Especially, when families do not realise there is a 'problem'.

Table 1B: Power Trip!

Autoethnographic story	Poetic transcript
Today I had peer on peer observation, a colleague had **come to watch** a **consultation** with a teaching assistant that was working with a young boy previously known to me (this writing is sounding like an educational psychology report!). As I sat in the staff room **drinking strong tea from another teacher's cup** there was that **awkward projected feeling from the teaching assistant (TA) of what am I doing here anyway.** I immediately responded to this **over compensating, over justifying and being over apologetic** about the consultation by **making it seem worth her while. I can help, want to help** but also want to hear how the boy is getting on. As the consultation progressed it seemed to feel more like an **interview format**. The TA was answering my questions to **convey a sense of proving she knows what she is doing**. I **got dragged into** this by asking more and more **'checking up on her' questions**. When I finally came across an area that seemed to be **presenting as a problem** for her I **homed in** on this. As the problem exploration went on all the suggestions I was giving were **batted back across** course to me. **Harder and harder and harder**. I could feel my **increased annoyance**	**Power Trip!** As I sit in the stillness of the staffroom drinking strong tea from another teacher's cup. School staff frantically rush around me. Who are you here to see again? Which child? About what? Consultation Observation Information is pieced together like fine patchwork of a quilt or tiles on a mosaic. The teaching assistant enters the room. That awkward projected feeling from her of - what am I doing here anyway? And 'I know how to do my job perfectly well already!' Not forgetting, 'There's nothing that you can tell me that I already don't know' I absorb it up like a wet sponge. Over compensating Over justifying Over apologetic. Now I'm thinking how I can make it worth her while. I can always help and always willing to help. I begin…. question…. answer……. question answer. What is this interview dance we are entering into? She knows what she's doing and boy is she going to let me know this. The dance goes on….as I continue my 'checking up questions' about the boy she is supporting in class. The boy is drowned out now and this consultation becomes about her. I pick out a cherry of a problem, that's not a problem she implies. I

of her, **getting under my skin**. All simply because she would not take on my ideas! Oh no, does that mean I had a **power trip!** As much as I do not want to be positioned as expert I was getting annoyed that she wasn't appreciating my position as expert. This got me frustrated, annoyed and outraged. So, there it is, I have been 'educational psychologised'.	reflect back another juicy problem "which she feels isn't a problem either. Stuck! She gets the biggest bat and hits my ideas out of the pitch perimeter. Way beyond a six! I feel annoyed I get frustrated Come over onto my side, I try and slowly coax her. But she isn't having any of it. The more she resists the more annoyed I get. Under my skin. I can resist, but others aren't allowed to resist me. Power trip!

Table 1C: I am a Piece of String

My sharing circle story	Poetic transcript
I have chosen a piece of string. I feel like the job is about **tying people down.** So, tying people down to **meet with them.** Tying people down for **request for involvement.** Tying people down for **consent forms**. Tying people down for **assessment and interventions**. Especially young people. Do they **genuinely** want to be there and be with us? Yes, they say they don't mind being with us but how sincere is that. Tying people down, **parents to meetings.** I guess I've used this piece of string as a metaphor for controlling people. Trying to get **control over people**. Tying them up and get them to give me pieces of information that I would like.	**I am a Piece of String** I am a piece of string How long can I go? How thick do I need to be? It all depends on the task at hand. Tying people down. This suggests that they were once up, free. Tying people down Request for involvement; Meeting with people; Consent forms. Tying people down Assessments; Interventions; Young people. Tying people down. Are young people, families and schools genuinely participating and if it isn't how do we know? Tying people down Parents to meetings; Pieces of information Control over people. Tying them up!

Table 1D: The Voice

Autoethnographic story	Poetic transcription
	The Voice
Writing a **report** and reading the **content** which looks completely **psychologised**. It is a **young boy with autism who requires an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan**. The **language** I use seems completely psychologised and I am **writing** in a way to **support the school to help him get an EHC.** I am a **gatekeeper** by being able to **allocate funding to children** but also contributing to the psychologisation of children. I'm using language that feels uncomfortable – looking at other educational psychologists' reports to ensure I **get the tone right**. I am **persuading the panel**. I am painting a picture of a boy who is **untypical**, **doesn't fit the norm** and is 'abnormal', **mad, bad or sad**. Which one? I am part of the **civilising project**! This boy needs money, so he can fit in with the rest of society and go on to be a fully **functioning**, fully **contributing member of society**. I am **demonising** this boy as different and this label may stay with him forever!	Colluding with school, writing supporting evidence in my report to appease the panel. These are just some of the contentions and dilemmas I consider as an educational psychologist. I read my reports: the language, content and tone strike me as being authoritative and directive. Pathologising and psychologising a young boy who could be described as having autism. Spelling out his difficulties. Using medical jargon and formal language to make myself known as a professional. It sucks! I cringe every time I write formulations or my professional opinion. Yet still I crave to master the voice and get the tone right. I seek other psychologists' reports. To sound like them. The report continues, I outline what he needs to function as a contributing member of society. I am enacting a civilising project. Wanted! Children who are untypical, mad, bad or sad and do not fit the norm. Rest assured, I will help you to be normal. All I want to do is to be speculative and tentative. I don't have the answers – I am simply one voice!

I now outline the psychopolitical framework I used to interpret the poetic transcriptions, which fits the theoretical assumptions of this *re-search*.

A 'psychopolitical' analysis framework

Decolonised work has been analysed through poetic transcription (Glesne, 1997; Madden et al., 2013), the Medicine Wheel (Graveline, 1998) and grounded theory (Lavallee, 2009). However, grounded theory fragments stories instead of valuing their circularity and evolution. Psychopolitics describes the 'psychic life of colonial power' in the application of racism in social psychology (Hook, 2013b, p. 116). Psychopolitics involves a constant 'to- and fro- movement' between the socio-political and the psychological (Hook, 2005, p. 480). The political is continually brought into the psychological and vice versa. Hook (2005) explains that this is not an amalgamation of the two, nor is either more important. Rather, the political and the psychological are mutually dependent and in tension. While Fanon (1967) shows colonialism's role in the individual's formation, Hook (2005) also sees socio-political context as implicated in selfhood. The framework seeks a new language of critique in which:

> […] forms of discrimination and disempowerment that would have otherwise remained effectively invisible, indiscernible, 'naturalised' within society, come to be bought into sharp relief. (Hook, 2013b, p. 119)

My analysis has two aims. Firstly, I examine how I am shaped by the profession, especially how the complexities of racialisation, professional identity and subjectivity are navigated and negotiated (Shah, 2010). I draw on Fanon's (1967) 'white mask psychology', which can capture colonised people's subjectivity by focusing on the oppressed. This framework is useful for exploring how educational psychology may 'other' certain groups through assessment tools, practices and language. Secondly, whereas Fanon (1967) is interested in the relationships between the white-black races in colonial contexts, I address the colonial hauntings implicit in the methodological practices of educational psychology. To achieve this, I identify 'colonial traces' by examining the thoughts and behaviours typically associated with educational psychology. For Desai (2014, p. 59), 'Fanonian investigations' are characterised by 'experience, concrete examples, evidence, meaning, unprejudiced seeing from multiple perspectives, delineation of essential structure, and critical and liberating praxis'. Such 'Fanonian investigations' can help illuminate the colonial traces within educational psychology. Biko's (1987) notion of the turning 'inside out', of the psychological into the political, and the turning 'outside in' (Hook, 2005, p488),

of the political into psychological experience, also helps expose the traces within educational psychology practice (assessments and language) and its external influences (BPS, governmental agendas). Furthermore, Biko's (1987) notion of conscientisation shows the strategic resistances possible in educational psychology. I use the trainees' stories (including my own) to recognise the complicity within educational psychology, whereby our daily interactions with school staff, families and children are permeated with privilege, power, subjugation and resistance.

Riggs & Augoustinos (2005) provide an example of a psychopolitical framework, using 'the psychic life of colonial power' to examine racism in Australia, where colonial power has maintained white subjectivities' sense of belonging (to land and property). A further example is Mills' (2014) exploration of health professionals' interactions with patients described as having psychosis in India. She shows how psychotic patients are viewed within a political framework of global mental health policies imposed by Global North countries.

Caution must be taken with Fanon's (1967) account of Eurocentric notions of mind, power and knowledge, which assume 'real' objects rather than constructions. His strategic employment of these terms reformulates psychology and psychoanalysis to a resistant critical end (Hook, 2013b). Similarly, I reformulate the terms used in educational psychology from a psychological to a political context.

See appendix 6 for a 'psychopolitical' framework.

Chapter 5 **INTERPRETATION OF KNOWLEDGES**

This chapter begins by analysing my personal poetic transcriptions through the psychopolitical framework. I then represent the assemblage of voices within the sharing circle, as well as the individual stories shared. Poetic transcriptions are interspersed with analysis.

Laing's (1970) *Knots* suggests how psychiatry can be bought to life through poetry and how the reader may resonate with aspects of practice. Laing's (1970) 'insider' portrayal of psychiatry and working with patients is set out in a satirical, repetitive, confusing manner, which reveals the 'messiness' of psychiatry. I also follow a similar approach. My psychopolitical writing style always connects what appears personal/individual to larger political structures, refusing to write in an individualised, psychological manner. As Mills (2015, p. 26) states 'if you feel discomfort in reading it, then know that I share it in writing it'. Writing these poems is not an expression of anti-psychology, nor a criticism of educational psychologist's work or the profession. I appreciate that there are idiographic ways of working in educational psychology, but my framework articulates a positioning concerned with putting psychology to political work (Hook, 2005; 2013b).

When analysing the poems, Fanon's (1967) 'colonial encounter' is not directly applicable to the trainees, the majority of whom were white. Moreover, while the identity of the clients in their stories are unknown, assuming that the children, families and staff are mainly white, this presents a problem, because Fanon (1967) referred to black/white encounters rather than encounters with white subjects. It is unlikely that families and schools have experienced the forms of oppression Fanon describes. Interestingly, there are no published statistics of the demographics of educational psychologists or the client population in relation to race, although there are for gender and age (Truong & Ellam, 2014). This may be a deliberate attempt to obscure the underrepresentation of minority ethnic groups in the profession. However, such information may be obtainable from Local Authorities. My analysis therefore places less emphasis on racial encounters in racist/colonial contexts and more on the problems of the methodologies used in educational psychology.

Autoethnographic accounts

These poems are constructed from my autoethnographic diary. I wanted to include another poem from the diary, but this involved a team meeting, so, since it risked including non-consenting participants, I omitted it from my collections for ethical reasons. I have taken each section from my psychopolitical framework in chronological order, to demonstrate how the poems relate to it.

My story

I used to work with children and their families as a primary school learning mentor. I enjoyed seeing children blossom and become unique individuals. Later, when I worked as an assistant psychologist, I began to question the function of educational psychology and my work with children. I joined the educational psychology training course in 2014 because of the joy of working with children and my desire to make a difference to their lives.

A Day in the Life of a Trainee Educational Psychologist

Team meetings, conferences, development days, person-centred review meetings, Special Educational Needs panels. I meet different people and learn new knowledge. Consultations, assessments, observations – I am needed to look at what is going on with a child…any advice or strategies are welcomed by the teachers in school.

As an educational psychologist, influence is the aim of the game. Having influence in meetings…shaping schools and Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators in how to work in a particular way. I have the power to dictate how to work and impose my way of thinking on teachers, teaching assistants, parents and children. I can manipulate and be strategic in how I shape work and people but only in the interests of the schools, children and families. How I think things should be or could work better.

The immense amount of work out there. Children, families and schools believe we can make a difference. Problems exist out there. Me here, I am the rational, objective, reasonable one.

There is nothing wrong with me – so I cast my rod with the best bait…like I am fishing for the finest catch.

What is it about people's problems? I get a buzz every time the next problem comes my way. The thrill, excitement, the challenge. Reminding me how ok I am and that there are people 'out there' who need me to intervene with them.

But not any help, Educational Psychologist help – as I ride on my horse, the trumpets sound.

Making the personal political: viewing children as objects

The deployment of psychological concepts in psychology is a consequence of the socio-political context. It is therefore necessary to be critically aware of how the psychological is political, that is, how political factors such as power relations are instrumental within the domain of the psychological (Hook, 2005; 2013b). The words cited below resonate strongly with me, as I feel this is a daily practice that I do and others, such as teachers, perceive me doing.

'A Day in the Life of a Trainee Educational Psychologist' describes my role as looking at children and what individual psychological disturbances a child has; my understanding of these disturbances comes from the training course, time on placement, school staff's perceptions of my role and the legacy of educational psychology. The concept of 'object' links to an ideology of individualism and internal states. Children become entities to look at, with educational psychologists isolating the variables which cause their behaviour, underachievement or mental illness. The quest for causal explanations for a child's behaviour drives my formulations, suggesting that humans behave in patterned ways, which further helps the psychologist search for meaning. My use of 'looking' in this poem is a consequence of a teacher, school or parent feeling that this child does not fit their ideals of normality. The scientific practitioner model which I have been taught on the course limits the scope for addressing how politics affects the child's psychological register. Tools such as psychometrics, consultation and problem-solving models further reinforce the notion of psychological explanations. These tools help 'look' for the problems in children and provide detailed psychological formulations for his/her behaviour. In this poem, viewing individualised notions of 'disability' distracts attention from the political ills of disadvantage, deprivation and oppression,

perpetuating the notion that individuals are responsible for their condition, and that children and families must act upon this.

Psychology and coloniality: psychologisation and the making of the psychologist

The relationship between psychology and coloniality suggests that what is typically understood in a psychological framework is better explained in sociogenic terms (Fanon, 1967). For Fanon (1967), focusing on sociogenic factors – the

> I remember using cognitive behavioural therapy techniques when working with a young boy with anxieties. When evaluating the work at the end his response was: "It would have been good to talk about some of the good stuff instead of reminding me all about the bad stuff." Even he had noticed my pathologising language!

socio-political context of colonialism – helps illuminate colonial violence, power and subordination of colonised people; colonial oppression directly makes psychological explanations of colonised people possible.

My observations in the poem above centre on my fascination with problems, which sparked my career interest in educational psychology. The affirmation of myself as stable and normal confirms my sense of humanism in contrast to children and families who are unstable. The need to identify what is wrong with children forms most of my role. Similarly, psychologists seek to explore problems that exist 'out there' in the world, with children and families seeming more interesting to study than educational psychologists, whose practice, sense of self and discipline do not need interrogating. Children are thus viewed as 'problems to be solved', with psychological traits that are evident in their external behaviours; thus, children's behaviour becomes de-contextualised from the environment. Moreover, the difference between psychologist and child through the identification of psychologisation marks further a disparity between superior children who already fit the status quo and less empowered children who become empowered internally through the medium of educational psychology. The socio-political current psychologists are working within aims for children to achieve a similar 'status quo' identity to the psychologist – well-behaved, high-achieving, contributing to the economy and sane. Educational psychology creates children who are 'almost the same' as educational psychologists, yet psychologists are still marked by a difference: the psychologist possesses something the children (and most adults) lack – psychological knowledge and expertise. My reference to Bhabha's (1994) 'almost the same' of the colonial encounter, which marks the qualitative differences between colonisers and colonised people, shows the parallels between educational psychology and the colonial

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condition. Educational psychology is haunted by this 'almost the same' discourse when we consider the parallel contrasts between psychologist/child and coloniser/colonised.

I am a Piece of String

I am a piece of string.

How long can I go? How thick do I need to be?

It all depends on the task at hand.

Tying people down.

This suggests that they were once up, free.

Tying people down.

Request for involvement;

Meeting with people;

Consent forms.

Tying people down.

Assessments;

Interventions;

Young people.

Tying people down.

Are young people, families and schools genuinely participating, and if they aren't how do we know?

Tying people down.

Parents to meetings;

Pieces of information;

Control over people.

Tying them up!

In 'I am a Piece of String', I continue to explore the link between psychology and coloniality, using the word 'string' metaphorically to signify educational psychologists' ethical duty to gain consent from children. The poem addresses consent as a psychological concept used to regulate children and adults' 'choice' when engaging with educational psychology.

The string ensures that people or things do not go astray. I thus capture clients' lack of agency when psychologists use educational psychology. The reference to tying people down suggests the inconvenience to child/parents, or implies their unwillingness, possibly in the form of resistance to psychology. Although the profession may argue that it values parental/child choice and client autonomy, certain aspects of the profession may be invasive or manipulative. For example, I shape school staff to apply my preferred version of psychology through acts of complicit persuasion that serve my own ideological gains, particularly in gaining consent from children and adults. The idea of genuine consent is a contested area, although consent is part of our ethical duty towards children and families. Psychologists are working within a context where psychologisation overrides individuals' free will. Although psychologists seem to present individuals with the choice of whether or not to engage, agreement may not be genuine. When children or adults grant consent, they are conforming to be psychologised. Those who resist or demonstrate signs of resistance risk being further pathologised. Consent is thus used as a weapon to legitimise the involvement of educational psychologists. Such legitimisation of educational psychologists' need to 'psychologise' mirrors colonial justifications of the colonisers' need to 'civilise'.

Colonising of the mind: white souls in a racialised body

For Fanon (1967), colonialism had stark effects on colonised peoples by questioning their selfhood, identity and sense of nationalism. Colonised people were forced to emulate their 'superiors', discarding their own language, religion and culture. This part of the psychopolitical framework captures my embodiment of enacting educational psychology and its effects on my selfhood as a racialised psychologist.

Collectively, the poems capture a variety of encounters where I use educational psychology either willingly or unwillingly. My embodiment of educational psychology

involves internalising the culture and language of a white, Western profession. As a racialised educational psychologist, I am subjectively and intellectually behaving, thinking and speaking in a way that is closer to whiteness than blackness. While I am sometimes aware of this, at other times I am delusional, and sometimes I engage in wilful denial. When I enact educational psychology, I am divorcing myself from my 'blackness'. This blackness is embodied in the way I speak, behave and think, which may not be welcomed by the discipline. I slip into a binary where whiteness, including psychology, is good and anything associated with black is bad. Whiteness appears to hold a privileged position as morally good, and is therefore something to strive for. I am in danger of dislocating my blackness, but want to bring it with me into the profession, having the two operating alongside each other. This leads me to ask whether I could, at an unconscious level, be a black body with a white psychological soul (Fanon, 1967; Hook, 2005). Adopting a white mask enables survival in educational psychology, so whiteness becomes a default way to behave. Or does educational psychology exclude black souls?

Whose Problem is it Anyway?

An Asian family are in complete denial about an autism diagnosis.

I am startled at what I hear!

A whole political and historical past flooding back.

Whose problem is it anyway?

Firstly, we should ask how these disorders have become known as they are today.

Secondly, a problematic family or a problematic profession?

Our tools, knowledges and assessments are viewed as valid, reliable and robust representations.

Whose problem is it anyway?

Should these be the questions we should ask ourselves?

Or am I looking too inwardly at myself?

It should be my conversations with staff, parents and young people and

families that are the primary and most important relationships I have.

PREVENT, CHANNEL become part of our discourse.

I see male, Asian young people as the perpetrators, not victims.

I get annoyed with myself…

I wonder…

Again, whose problem is it anyway?

Strategic work: resistances to power

Biko (1987) suggests that collective solidarity can bring about social change to resist oppression and inequality. Strategic work requires a political movement which transcends individual activism, freeing the minds of the oppressed through a collective force. I recognise opportunities within educational psychology where strategic work seems capable of resisting the psychologisation of children and families, and forms of practice which promote an individual, psychological way of working. In 'Whose Problem is it Anyway?', I ask what types of questions educational psychologists should be asking themselves. A reflexive, critical approach to psychology ensures an internal checking system where I reflect on whether my behaviour is aligned with my values. Instead of the profession stigmatising families, I propose tracing the history of educational psychology to uncover how our identity is formed, depending on an understanding of psychology as an idealised, polished form of knowledge. In this poem, I refer to diagnosis, assessment tools, formulation and interventions. However, within a psychopolitical framework, we go beyond asking questions and reflexivity, and instead act through collective social change. Reflexivity is crucial to my enactment of educational psychology, which is foregrounded in the poems, but this individualised form of resistance has no place in Biko's (1987) vision.

Colonial violence: slyly helping individuals through the good of psychology

Colonial violence describes colonisers' subjugation, oppression and racism towards colonised people. The eradication of land, language, artefacts and indigenous sovereignty served to create a sense of inferiority and lost selfhood. In educational psychology, *violence* may be committed by educational psychologists who evoke

feelings of inadequacy amongst children and families. Consequently, our selfhood as psychologists, as well as the selfhood of the child/family, may be affected in the interaction.

In the poem 'Whose Problem is it Anyway', I explore the educational psychologist's criticism of the Asian family for not accepting an autism diagnosis. In this encounter, two communities come together, resulting in the defining of identities. The comment that the Asian family are 'in denial' suggests that the family become racialised when the white psychologist criticises their resistance to the psychological way of working. The choice of the word 'denial' implies that one person (educational psychologist) is right while the others (Asian family) are wrong, whereas 'resistance' would imply the potential acknowledgement of a different way of understanding autism.

Educational psychology may also resist the family's disapproval of psychology, because to acknowledge that different cultures have different explanatory models from psychological models is to question the validity of Western models as universal, the very models that underpin educational psychology training and practice. Like the mimicry displayed by colonised people in the colonial environment, psychopolitics reveals that racialised subjects expose the cracks within educational psychology (as seen later in Jeffery's story). Such opposition challenges the style of practice that we trust. This act of violence goes beyond 'cultural sensitivity': it is a deliberate attempt to uphold Western hegemony of science and psychology.

Power Trip!

As I sit in the stillness of the staffroom drinking strong tea from another teacher's cup. School staff frantically rush around me. Who are you here to see again? Which child? About what?

Consultation.

Observation.

Information is pieced together like fine patchwork on a quilt or tiles on a mosaic.

The teaching assistant enters the room. That awkward projected feeling from her of – what am I doing here anyway? And 'I know how to do my job

perfectly well already!' Not forgetting, 'There's nothing that you can tell me that I already don't know.' I soak it up like a wet sponge.

Over-compensating;

Over-justifying;

Over-apologetic.

Now I'm thinking how I can make it worth her while.

I can always help and I'm willing to help.

I begin…question…answer…question…answer…to and fro. What is this interview dance we are entering into? She knows what she's doing, and boy is she going to make sure I know this too. The dance goes on…I continue my 'checking up questions' about the boy she is supporting in class. The boy is drowned out now and this consultation becomes about her. I pick out a cherry of a problem, this is my cue! That's not a problem she implies. I reflect back another juicy problem which she feels isn't a problem either.

Stuck!

She gets the biggest bat and hits my ideas out of the pitch perimeter. Way beyond a six!

I feel annoyed,

I get frustrated.

Come over onto my side, I try and slowly coax her. But she isn't having any of it. The more she resists the more annoyed I get.

Under my skin.

I can resist, but others aren't allowed to resist me.

Power trip!

Resistance to colonial power: acts of mimicry

Resisting colonial power involved behaviour that revealed cracks in the colonial system. Resistance ranged from exposing colonisers' insecurities through mimicking their ideals, values and beliefs, to acts of physical and verbal aggression. 'Power Trip' captures various feelings and emotions I experienced during a consultation with a teaching assistant. At first, I relished the power of offering strategies for her to use with the 'problem' child. Despite her resistance, expressed in her assertions of her competence, I see this encounter as forcing the client over to the dark side – that is, to accept my psychological formulations as the only explanation. This situation shows how psychological theory, discourse and ideology are viewed as the Holy Grail, providing unquestionable truths. My use of psychological theory rested on the assumption that everyone shares a common idea of normality. In this interaction, I was being resisted, yet I persevered with the consultation. In educational psychology, there is a tendency to counter resistance through various strategies: mirroring the client's non-verbal signs, entering the terrain they are beginning from or validating their competence and experience to make them feel good. These strategies are implicit modes of coercion: by 'sweet-talking' the client, the psychologist seeks to gain consent for psychology.

The Voice

Colluding with school, writing supporting evidence in my report to appease the panel. These are just some of the contentions and dilemmas I consider as an educational psychologist.

I read my reports: the language, content and tone strike me as being authoritative and directive.

Pathologising and psychologising a young boy who could be described as having autism. Spelling out his difficulties. Using medical jargon and formal language to make myself known as a professional.

It sucks!

I cringe every time I write formulations or my professional opinion.

Yet still I crave to master the voice and get the tone right. I seek other psychologists' reports. To sound like them.

The report continues, I outline what he needs to function as a contributing member of society.

I am enacting a civilising project.

Wanted! Children who are untypical, mad, bad or sad and do not fit the norm. Rest assured, I will help you to be normal.

All I want to do is to be speculative and tentative. I don't have the answers – I am simply one voice!

Blanking out: the wilful denial of educational psychology

'The Voice' epitomises the act of denial and disavowal, which, in psychopolitical terms, conveniently refutes claims about someone or something. It captures the authoritarianism in educational psychology of report-writing and psychological formulation, whereby medicalised, psychologised jargon is used to 'hail' (Althusser, 1971) children into categories such as autism to access resource funding. Superficially, report-writing seems to provide psychological knowledge, the formulation of ideas leading to firm conclusions and recommendations. However, although educational psychologist reports or Psychological Advice appears helpful, psychologising a child could be deemed a form of violence. For example, using jargon and psychological concepts in a report is justified by telling ourselves this will help a child access resources. Therefore, adopting blanking out practices through disavowal renders practising educational psychology more bearable, but it also demonstrates how ingrained psychological ideology and discourse are as legitimate practices. A further example of blanking out would be a report adopting a social model of autism as opposed to the medical model. Although such a report would favour less medicalised versions of autism, it would still discuss autism as something 'real' and existing 'out there' for discovery.

I now move onto the trainees' poetic transcriptions taken from the sharing circle.

Poetic transcriptions from TEPs

The analysis of these stories uses various aspects of a psychopolitical framework in no particular order.

Adam's story

Adam, in his late 30s, previously worked as an assistant psychologist at a psychiatric unit. He has a teaching background and became interested in educational psychology as a way of making a difference early in a child's life.

Educational Psychologist as Container

I am a container…I come to life through the relationships that I have.

What's inside? Well…I contain emotions…people bring their emotions to me as problems.

Emotions…problems…two separate things or part of the same thing I help people see problems in different ways. Problems exist outside of the container too.

I envisage all humans as capable beings…the professional is capable too. I take a step back…to avoid being locked up in the situation…creating a distance between the person and the problem.

Problems are not located in people, people are the problem…so let's try and get them to see this. It is this coming together of Educational Psychologist and Capable Human where positive relations occur and I feel better about the problem.

To think I get paid to separate the problem and people. Paid by those White, 'educated', middle-class professionals who make the decisions and run schools. Thanks for paying my salary! I'd better bring you along with me. But wait! What if I don't want to do it your way and do it my own way instead? Right, I'm fully armed – a tonne of confidence, an ounce of arrogance…resistance here I come!

Crash! I have my hands tied only for certain work dictated by my salary payer. And oh, when I do resist, I can kiss goodbye to any relationships I have…I don't want to diagnose dyslexia anyway.

Psychology and psychiatry have many descriptions for disorders. What's that? What are you whispering to me Mr Pharmaceutical Company? 'Illness is universal and applicable to all cultures'. Cha-ching! There goes the sound of the dollar signs as your drug sales rocket through the roof. Pull the other one…disorders are defined by our Western culture – is this a useful description for other cultures? I have questions, not the answers.

Questions…I have so many of these. The more I delve into psychology the more confused I become. What does wellbeing mean? Who defines it? What does it matter that I look like a guitar teacher and not an Educational Psychologist? Is that a thing anyway? Offended!!!!!! Far from it.

I am an Educational Psychologist, don't impose any hierarchal expectations on me. I'm just me. One of many existing within our diverse bunch amongst an abundance of differing views.

Talking of views, where do children and young people get their views from? Most likely imposed by the adults around them. That's why I always tread carefully, with caution, before making any assumptions.

What is your story? Meta-thinker? Impartial speaker…but I hear some filtering. Some caution in what is being said. What is your story? A binary thinker…a desire to see the role as positive but yet saturated with cynicism. Both sides speaking to each other, in conversation before my very own eyes. Our stories resonate here…I'm captivated…some desire for resistance…maybe?

Do no harm!!

I was struck by the resonances between Adam's concerns about educational psychology and my own views. Educational psychology is viewed in relation to interaction with others, the notion of problem-holders and the location of problems. The relationality of psychology is highlighted in the idea of the educational psychologist coming to life through the interactions with others, whether teachers, special educational needs coordinators (SENCOs) or teaching assistants.

Psychological concepts tend to exacerbate individual explanations, which reveals the power imbalances in psychology. The relationship between psychology and coloniality becomes evident in Adam's story when a more individualised way of viewing the role is articulated. Psychological explanations are viewed as residing within the individual instead of elsewhere. Although Adam is willing to help those who request psychological help through consultation, he contends that it is not the children who possess the problem; it is the adults' emotional response to these problems that matters. He therefore locates the problem in the adult consultee, the aim being to help the consultee feel better at managing the problem. Adam has highlighted something that is problematic in educational psychology – wanting people to see problems as psychological, existing within themselves as an internalised fixed state. The idea of people having 'states' implies that these thoughts can and should be shifted, that problematic thoughts can be altered through psychological actions such as consultation. Adam used the word 'containment', possibly referring to the psychologist as a figure who explores, interrogates and looks for stories, contradictions or anxieties within the consultee by bringing these to the surface and helping them feel emotionally resilient in dealing with the problem.

> I experience an ethical obligation towards trainees as I use a psychopolitical framework to analyse their stories. The closeness I have with the trainees after studying with them for three years heightens this obligation not to misrepresent the meanings conveyed; as they are my peers, I am obligated to consider their feelings.

Employing a psychological framework may be a result of the tools taught on the course: consultation and problem-solving models (BPS, 2015). These tools are premised on psychological explanations of phenomena. Perhaps the tools Adam has been disciplined to use are readily available in educational psychology to make sense of phenomenon and interactions through psychological means. Adam's interaction as a trainee is based on his expertise in dealing with problems, which suggests to me that consultation models in educational psychology are set up solely for psychological problems. Adam may have wanted to introduce socio-political explanations of the problem into consultation, but I wonder if the very tools available to him limit his practice. The poem thus captures how problematic it is to bind educational psychology to the configuration of the individual.

When I shared the poem with Adam, he wanted to develop his point about problems being located in individuals. He was aware that this could be interpreted as a Westernised view, so wanted to communicate his nuanced understanding of the

question by exploring within systems, between systems and also in relation to social, political, cultural and economic explanations. Adam reported that locating problems within individuals or certain groups may perpetuate their oppressed position and exacerbate their difficulties. He believes that in our work, when people such as teaching assistants are struggling, they think, within Western, individualistic worldviews, that people are problems. Children, who are deemed to possess least power, are often seen as the problem. His role is thus to contain and reduce the need for problem-holders to defend their position, working towards ways forward which are not just beneficial for the most powerful but also for the powerless in a given situation. Adam's reflections after the sharing circle seem closely aligned to a psychopolitical viewpoint of politicising the psychological, but he did not articulate how he might include these politicised discourses in consultation. Arguably, this suggests that, despite Adam's awareness of the strategic implications of the political, he is working within the limited Western parameters of constructions of the child (Burman, 2008). Is Adam communicating a resistance to how schools construct notions of the child?

I enjoyed hearing Adam's story: it resonated with my own practice in terms of the awareness of the benefits of educational psychology and desire to do the job, as well as an understanding of how problematic it can be. During the sharing circle, an internal struggle seemed to play out, evident in Adam's cautious, filtered speech. He seemed to be grappling with contradictory desires to fulfil his role in the real world with various constructions of children, psychology and problems, and to resist schools' view of educational psychology and educational psychologists. It gave me a sense of not being alone on this sense-making journey of educational psychology, as Adam was also aware of the individual explanations of children. Nevertheless, our resistances may differ according to our personal journeys into the profession. When I shared the poem with Adam, he was interested in my observation of his conflating emotions and problems, which he had previously been unaware of.

Lisa's story

Lisa has been a primary school teacher for over 20 years; for seven years before starting educational psychology training, she worked as a Local Authority advisory teacher for SEN children. Working as an educational psychologist was a long-term aim. She loves sharing and applying psychology, and undertook educational psychology training in order to maximise her beneficial impact towards improving the outcomes for children.

Resisting with a reason

My dear, precious, darling diary…it is glued to my hand: not enough time, not enough space, fitting people in. Spreading myself evenly like butter on bread.

Low aspiration, domestic violence, poverty: this equates to deprivation. Staff on one side, families on the other, as I try to be the bridge or shield as power is shot from one side to the other. Children needing their parents, parents reverting back to childhood… 'Please don't take me back to school days!'

Just call me Wellbeing Improver, Child-Centred, Agent for Change, Child Champion. Spending time with me to feel better away from that oppressive school. Shouted at…threatened…crying…'Naughty boy' just call me comforter.

Resistance is better with a reason… 'University said…' 'A tutor said…' 'We've been taught this way…' I will be selective with the British Abilities Scale whether you like it or not! Observations of rebel educational psychologists asking: 'Why do it that way?' and 'What about this way?' Educational psychologists are eclectic and many do challenge.

What is your story? Diffuser, harmoniser, one that looks at the dynamics of relationships in schools. But wait…there's something else. Parental empathy…I hear resonances between you and the parents. You are them and are defending them. PARENTAL EMPOWERMENT. I struggle to feel our resonances until I hear it, like the sound of pointless bureaucratic discussions at a team meeting. The internalisation of political discourses. 'Promoting the wellbeing of children, young people and their families'. Takes me back to a familiar story, which has a previous life.

According to Lisa's narration, educational psychology involves working with a particular clientele. She sees her role as mediator, listening to both sides and settling differences, which suggests there can be tensions between families and schools. Educational psychology is read here in terms of the strategic work of parental resistance to power, psychological explanations and subjugation. A psychopolitical reading of this encounter may highlight the educational psychologist's role in mobilising change for marginalised voices. Lisa also discussed some of the benevolent discourses educational psychology reproduces about wellbeing and empowerment. I commented above on my internalisation of these metanarratives in enacting educational psychology, arguing that a psychopolitical reading of blanking out illuminates my complicity in suppressing political agendas.

Lisa's story captures the typical clientele that educational psychologists are expected to work with (high rates of social deprivation, domestic abuse and poverty). Defining the social conditions of the 'problematic' group creates an 'us'/ 'them' dichotomy to emphasise the difference between school staff and parents. Lisa interprets this difference as opposing ideologies; there is a sense that parents are constantly fed messages from staff that are devaluing, critical and hostile of their choices and behaviours. Parents' strategic work in resisting the power imposed on them by schools is evident in their non-attendance at meetings, avoidance of school or refusal to cooperate with staff. Such resistance epitomises parents' rejection of 'psychologisation' or subjugation.

> In my interpretation, I am aware that I may be attaching psy-discourses onto school staff, parents and Lisa. Has my embodiment of educational psychology saturated my way of viewing the world and individuals?

Within a psychopolitical framework, there is a question as to whether educational psychologists can be instrumental in acting on parental resistance and liberating parents to combat structural inequalities, or whether they instead collude with schools in scapegoating parents (see further below). Lisa opts to facilitate open dialogue between school and families so as to work towards change and productive relationships.

Lisa used a narrative of benevolent practice to describe educational psychology. I was struck by her self-descriptions as 'Wellbeing Improver, Child-Centred, Agent for Change, Child Champion'. Similarly, I am drawn to Lisa's version of psychologist as 'diffuser, harmoniser and one that looks at the dynamics of relationships in schools'. Superficially, this seems to define the strategic work of educational psychology as

transformational, emancipatory and liberating, granting agency to the disempowered. By evoking autonomy, she suggests that children/families can lead successful lives. This rhetoric of successful lives is commonplace in educational psychology and seen as a definition of selfhood. Children with unsuccessful lives, whether through low academic grades, poor behaviour or mental health, are deemed not to comply with the narrative of wellbeing. Though there are stringent definitions of wellbeing, the notion may differ for each child and family. Psychological goals of wellbeing evidently focus primarily on the individual's psyche, described through resilience or letting children/families be the owners of their happiness. A form of power is exerted on children/families to be well, normal and happy as the ultimate endeavour. Within the colonial experience, colonised people were forced to emulate values and ideals of 'European nationalism' to enrich their lives. The sociohistorical external reality of colonialism became assimilated as part of the 'natives'' subjective reality. Similarly, the promotion of educational psychology's notions of wellbeing may also establish ideals for selfhood.

Lisa's story made me aware of how I internalise political discourses about improving children's wellbeing or providing psychological wellness. I have become entrenched in taken-for-granted metanarratives of empowerment and transformation, which are sociohistorical in nature. I am convinced that the dominant narratives about wellbeing, positive mental health and emotional resilience are necessary and justifiable ways for us to support children and their families. Consequently, I embody this professional agenda and ignore the wider political endeavours of control, reductionism and depoliticisation. My realisation that I have succumbed to a dominant discourse of assimilation evokes discomfort and disapproval. It demonstrates that, despite my efforts to be critical, I also engage in acts of 'blanking out' (discussed in Jeffery's story) by ignoring crucial political contexts.

Carmen's story

Carmen previously worked as a secondary school teacher and SENCO. She has a background in teaching young offender's literacy. Carmen became interested in educational psychology because she wanted to make a difference in the lives of children, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

The Elastic Band

The elastic band…if you pull too hard aaaannnnd SNAP! Stretched here, stretched there, stretched everywhere like the tug of *my* clothes when a child is trying to escape my questioning and cognitive test bashing. People are demanding my time!

Schools symbolise 'little empires' re-enacting hierarchal structures – us and them. Senior leaders at the top and teaching assistants at the bottom of the pile. This classification is based on insider knowledge.

As for the children…seen but not spoken to…utterly powerless. Done to or on. As I listen, consider and hear their voice, I seek to empower. Yet I am fragile, 'just a trainee!!', I say, 'We'd prefer a proper Educational Psychologist please' – said the school. Which I internalise and slump! As I grow two feet taller I remember that I am *Miss Educational Psychology*. Parents listen to me, powerful, all-mighty – as parents are label seeking. This child does not have Autism, they have Social, Communication and Interaction difficulties. There is a difference. I look at what they need, not the label.

As a former teacher, I now deem myself not oppressive. How powerful retrospective looking can be! I am not ready to step out and look into Educational Psychology. Fast forward…twenty years…'Just go along with the flow', but reluctant to follow this flow. Now your ideals, beliefs and views are entrenched and part of your core. Against assessment, against diagnosis, well that's just tough! Hmmm…what to do? Become a rebel? Or sacrifice the job?

What is your story? Disagreeing with the perceived hierarchical positions in schools? Previous pains of working in a school. Echoes of historical narratives

flash before me like a forgotten dream. I feel a resonance…not everyone is happy to see an Educational Psychologist.

Assumed consent.

Carmen's story suggests the echoes of colonialism in educational psychology, highlighting the 'psychology and colonialism' element of psychopolitics. The analogy of an 'elastic band' expresses how busy an educational psychologist can be. This may be read psychopolitically in relation to demand, supply and marketing of educational psychologists' services – particularly the dependencies that educational psychology creates. The poem explores Carmen's past life as a teacher and her embarking on educational psychology as something different, which she interprets as less oppressive than schools.

The analogy of the elastic band illustrates the growing demand for educational psychologists to deliver SEN work, which outstrips supply. For example, there are statutory requirements for psychological advice for education, health and care plans (statutory resource funding). Many educational psychologists are overwhelmed by the volume of requests for extra funding for children through statutory channels, since allocation of funding is ultimately the educational psychologist's decision. Being the 'gatekeepers' for funding affects how schools view educational psychologists' role – as a means to an end. The power of giving Psychological Advice legitimises the educational psychologist's role and further encourages psychologising children with different pathologies. Furthermore, educational psychologists become governmental agents of social control, deciding who presents sufficient psychological 'symptoms' to warrant funding. A dependency market is created: schools depend on educational psychologists' services, demanding that they reproduce a pathologised discourse. That is, the very money that funds the role of educational psychologists requires us to view children through psychological means. Furthermore, this demand for psychologists validates the need for psychology in schools; the number of statutory funding requests and plans issued evidences that educational psychologists are doing a good job. Educational psychology dependencies parallel colonial co-dependency, whereby the development of sustainable markets ensured that colonised people were dependent on European colonisers.

Another feature of Carmen's poem is 'blanking out'. Carmen reported that she is not ready to interrogate educational psychology as a discipline to the extent that she can interrogate teaching, her previous

Again, is this my urge to attach psy-discourse in interpreting the poems? There are other ways of reading Carmen's relationship with educational psychology. However, my psychopolitical analysis necessitates a to- and fro- movement between the psychological and political, so beginning with psychic explanations is necessary.

profession. Now she has left teaching, Carmen observes the limitations of the profession. She implies that she is not ready to engage in the same level of scrutiny of educational psychology for fear of what she might uncover. It suggests a repression of an emotion that she is not ready to confront or that may not have entered her awareness. Such blanking out may represent not being ready to face the possible shortfalls or problems of educational psychology. A further example of blanking out is Carmen's preference for 'social, communication and interaction difficulties' over autism. This shifting of terminology may be a frequent behaviour in educational psychology, where the legitimisation of disorders is made to appear more politically correct. Instead of worrying about what to call disorders, the focus should be on how these conditions first arose in Western psychology, and why these clusters of behaviours are viewed as socially problematic. Psychologists often change the label to a more 'empowering' terminology, which could be a way of making ourselves feel better about how we talk of disorders with teachers, parents and children.

Carmen believes that strategic resistances to power carry consequences. Resistance figures as an act of rebellion that jeopardises the job. Such thinking demonstrates fear of the possibilities of resisting educational psychology practices: the risk of losing the job trumps fighting inequality. True resistance, for Biko (1987) and Fanon (1967), involves disregarding the repercussions and being dedicated to the struggle. Carmen highlights that resistance requires courage, which may be hard to embrace at the start of her career; she must establish herself in the profession before embarking on activism.

Jeffery's story

Jeffery, in his early 40s, previously worked in a primary school as a learning mentor. He applied for the doctorate to support his son, with SEN, so he can learn more and apply his knowledge. He hopes to help his son, and has a natural instinct to help others too.

Squishy Heart

I am a squishy heart. I care and I want to help, to the point where I get stressed because I care so much! Who do I care about? The parents and the children.

I am an advocate for parents. They depend on me to survive those meetings. I am a parent…three excluded sons…I have special educational needs myself…so I emphasise again, I side with parents. I owe it to my personal background and still I care…I am a squishy heart.

The children…on the path to exclusion…starting in the 'inclusion room' and ending at the exclusion meeting. Oh, and how schools talk of the children. Fascinating, fantastic! The language I hear…I listen to these descriptions given by teachers. But still it hurts. I feel it personally…oh, the pain, the fear, the anxiety. That could be my child!

The missionary educational psychologist…has the power to diagnose and order. Parents and children are expected to comply and accept these labels. A civilising act, ready to command the next orders, and still I care because I have a squishy heart.

The cultural differences that exist…assimilating one into one way of being or making accommodations for their ways…is there a right way? Making children become normal, or get others to open up and accept the children for who they are. Which Educational Psychologist will I be?

Labels create long-term repercussions in the cultural community, marriage…family life…the implications are rife! Does the educational psychologist think of the cultural differences?

As Educational Psychologists we do assessments and tests…BUT…the children have a say in this too. If they don't want it…I won't do it because I have a squishy heart. Challenges from my supervisor are listened to but not heard. I back up my argument with lessons from university, the British Psychological Society and ethical practice…my heart remains squishy.

What is your story? A former pain which builds a compassionate heart, an empathy. If there is no acceptance, your heart crumbles. You feel those pains as if it was you being targeted. These personal struggles…revealing of the self… is a resonance we share. Giving back to the educational psychology and ethnic minority community. Your facilitation skills playing out before me, questioning…prompting…challenging…assertiveness directed towards your peers. Then there is that self as parent…father…Special Educational Needs subject…ethnic minority community member and educational psychologist. Negotiating many selves simultaneously and in parallel. I hear and feel your burden.

I am drawn to Jeffery's openness about his experiences of SEN. This revealing of himself places him in a vulnerable position and he must be aware of his reflexivity as an educational psychologist. His discussion of negotiating many selves within practice resonates with my struggles in the journey towards establishing a professional identity as a racialised psychologist. Jeffery connects with his past and current self when practising educational psychology, an ambition I share. A psychopolitical reading of Jeffery's story highlights the 'violence' of educational psychology's subjugation of racialised groups, and its denial and disavowal through scapegoating, projection and blame.

Jeffery's poem can be read through Fanon's notion of the 'White Man's Burden': 'The white man slaves to reach a human level'; 'There is a fact: white men consider themselves superior to black men' (Fanon, 1967, pp. 11, 12). Fanon here exposes the fragility of European colonisers' selfhood, which is presented in the guise of hyper-masculinity, necessitated by the need to maintain authority, responsibility, psychological security, self-esteem and hierarchy (Nandy, 1983). Similarly, Jeffery brings many aspects of himself, many 'selves', into his trainee interactions and enactments of educational psychology: father, SEN subject, ethnic minority member. The prominence of these 'selves' varies according to nature of the interaction with children and families. Occupying these positions can be helpful, but can also cause

confusion, as they may be either complementary or contradictory. He also describes his hyper-awareness as a parent, especially at meetings with school staff and families. Jeffery realises that certain aspects of the profession do not match his positionalities. Though he tries to align his position with his practice, he seems dissatisfied with his progress. Here, colonial instabilities of selfhood can be related to Jeffery's instability, or the burden of negotiating many selves in professional interactions (Shah, 2010).

Although Jeffery's story is not an instance of colonial violence specifically, it is suggestive of other forms of violence within the profession. Like the creation of guilt through colonial violence, educational psychology is also responsible for projecting guilt onto racialised groups.

Jeffery's story contains a sense of 'cultural diversity' and seeking cultural explanations, which implies a well-meaning desire for fairness and equality in educational psychology. Jeffery gives the example of communities' cultural expectations of SEN and diagnoses. He identifies the problems in educational psychology's expectations that racialised subjects should change their cultural practices to accommodate these labels. To counteract the claim that educational psychology is a racist practice, the terms 'cultural diversity' or 'cultural sensitivity' are often used to suggest equality. However, such terms may be seen as wilful denial of educational psychology practices' accountability for subjugating racialised people. Educational psychology has years of accumulated evidence, experimentation and scientific tools to validate its disciplinary credibility in applying individualised explanations. Rather than boycotting, questioning or critiquing Western psychological models of educational psychology, racialised families are expected to alter their thoughts, actions or behaviours. Again, as in Lisa's story of parental resistance and scapegoating in the colonial encounter is useful here. Projecting blame onto racialised groups for not fitting Western scientific frameworks reject the need for psychologists to admit guilt or responsibility. To avoid feeling emotional about the inadequateness of educational psychology and its psychological formulations, we may repress emotive material: it is easier to scapegoat the racialised group than to deem our assessment tools inadequate. In sum, educational psychology externalises feelings of guilt through unconscious projection and scapegoating, which makes us defensive at a conscious level (Fanon, 1967).

Monica's story

Monica, a former primary school learning mentor, has a keen interest in using the arts to empower marginalised voices.

No Set Shape

Squish me, squash me, mould me, shape me, I change. I am fluid, changeable, not fixed nor ridged. I'm just like plasticine. I mould myself, but others do too – Educational Psychologists, Special Educational Needs Coordinators, Local Authorities, I am in relation to.

I begin with the DSM tool…individuals deemed as possessing consistent personalities. Not flexible nor mouldable but fixed. What a challenge to my belief system. If you're not a set way – White, Western, male – then the power and dominance cannot be challenged. Individuals cannot be too radical for fear of being categorised, boxed and labelled. And so how should Educational Psychologists deal with labelling? – What would you like to see happen? Families to accept or reject labelling? Always looking for the best outcome. I change and mould to what the family bring to a situation.

Scenario…School have a construct of a boy as 'naughty' doing things like dancing, being angry and what they describe as inappropriate behaviour. But I see it as non-conformist behaviour of school expectations. An imposed identity on him. Crushing his sense of self. No room in schools for quirkiness, difference or being eclectic. I am asked to 'therapise' him. I see him as being oppressed, I hear and feel his story as I was once not understood too.

What is your story? One of inequalities and injustice. An imposed way of being. Not for everyone. There's a resonance. A collusion with school…'therapised'…'psychiatrised'...'psychologised' children. Is this what he needs? A marked divide between 'the norm' and 'sad, mad or bad'. This is power and dominance all gone wrong. Deep down we don't always agree. I hear the inner resistance knocking on the door. But I turn the other cheek as there is work to be done.

> I, as the Educational Psychologist, am the problem-holder now – what a powerful, influential position. Do I show them the mirror? Reveal the location of the problem. Who defines the problem? Pressure covers me like a bad rash that won't go away. The more I scratch the worse and bigger it becomes.

Monica's story suggests various readings. Firstly, there is a refusal to engage in psychological explanations of children through therapy. Secondly, there is blanking out through wilful denial of psychologising a boy described as 'naughty' by school staff. Finally, there are strategic resistances and colonising of the mind in the disciplining of Monica to embody psychological explanations and fulfil her duty as a psychologist. Monica's story is one of ambivalence in delivering an educational psychologist that suits schools' requirements. Monica shows how educational psychology is perceived outside the profession by school staff, perceptions we sometimes collude in.

Monica describes being asked by school staff to use a therapeutic approach with a young boy to help his behaviour. The boy does not fit the staff's ideal behaviours, so Monica's involvement is requested to make sense of him through psychologised means. While the issue could be seen to lie in staff's preference for predictable, conformist, successful children, instead, the child is ostracised as different. Staff expect Monica to offer psychologised explanations of his behaviour, and expect a therapeutic intervention. Monica, however, feels that he is quirky, reminding her of herself growing up; she thus deems her educational psychology unnecessary and interprets the boy's behaviour as an expression of resistance with the school system perhaps being dysfunctional. Her ambivalence results from her conflicting needs to meet staff demands and to avoid perpetuating psychological labels. Monica thus describes a pressure to collude with schools by offering the type of educational psychology they deem appropriate for children. Mirroring the violence inflicted on colonised peoples through exploitation, belittling and humiliation, Monica's encounter evokes a form of violence in the exorcism of the boy's selfhood. Within the colonial environment, systemic racism, colonial violence and dehumanisation made the colonial condition possible. Here, the therapised condition has colonial hauntings in how educational psychology comes to know/understand children.

Pleasing schools by agreeing to undertake psychologised work seems wholly opposed to ethical practice in Monica's story. Perhaps the conflation of individualised work and unethical practice are two sides of the same coin. Monica seems to lack

opportunities to present alternative, less psychological, explanations of the boy's behaviour. Indeed, this reflects a wider lack of possibilities for educational psychologists to challenge school staff's psychologised notions of children. While staff seek ways of psychologising children, psychologists seem to perpetuate this by agreeing to deliver a service. Given Monica's need to meet certain demands as a trainee, she may feel less assertive in articulating her views. I wonder whether it is possible to dismantle psychologised explanations in educational psychology, or whether these are so entrenched in our practice that we have become disillusioned and lost sight of the socio-political climate surrounding us.

I was struck by Monica's ambivalence in delivering therapeutic work to schools. Monica had experienced being quirky and standing out in her childhood, yet she still performed the therapeutic approach with the child. Some irresistible force made her willingly perform 'therapeutically'. In psychopolitical terms, I view this collusion as wilful disavowal of the knowledge that therapising is unsuitable for this child; despite Monica's awareness of this, she continued to enact such forms of violence. It is too painful to resist or cast doubt on therapeutic approaches, so their potential damage is blanked out. Collusion helps make psychological life possible, as psychologists are expected to assess or intervene at a psychological level.

Overall feelings about the poems

Different types of resistance

In the psychopolitical framework, strategic resistance is a collectivist and self-affirming discourse. However, trainees discussed resistance to forms of practice as an individualistic endeavour, requiring justification. In the stories of trainees grappling with educational psychology, it is unclear whether trainees are aware of the conditions they are working in. The small attempts they demonstrate to resist psychological explanations may well imply a critique of educational psychology. While the trainees discussed educational psychology's aspirations to empower young people at an individual level, there was little discussion of liberation and transformative movements at a strategic level. This may suggest that the trainees perceive educational psychology as distinct from political movements. I believe that educational psychologists are well-positioned to partake in raising consciousness to reconstruct educational psychology by incorporating socio-political contexts. Moreover, as our poems show, educational psychologists can use critical reflection to query the pathologising of children and search for socio-political explanations in our personal formulations. Resistance may thus be mobilised at an individual level, not solely at a strategic level.

Collective themes

To represent the assemblage of stories and their commonalities, I devised a 'Medicine Wheel' (see Fig. 1). Graveline (1998) used a similar representation to bring Aboriginal traditions into Western classrooms and aid data analysis of her teaching. Within indigenous research, the model's circular shape indicates the interrelatedness of experiences, values and spiritual beliefs about the natural world and ancestors (Chilisa, 2012). This method suits the ontology of decolonised methodology by stressing the interconnections between research participants, the research community, the academic institution and my own reflexivity.
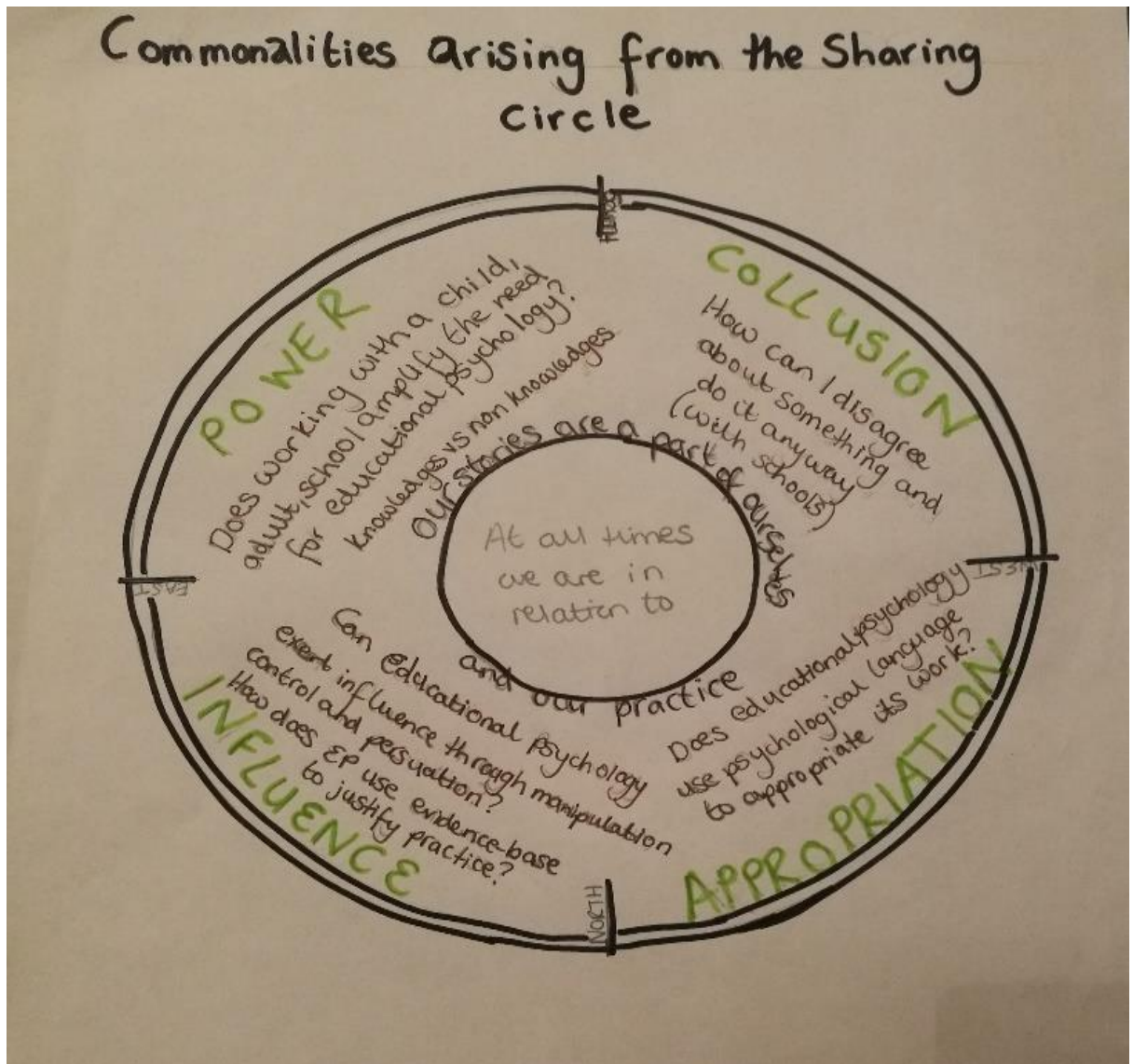
Figure 1. Commonalities and questions arising from the analysis

Reflections on the process of sharing circles

The trainees' reflections

The trainees enjoyed reading the poems, and thought they reflected their stories well. Lisa described the sharing circle method as 'strange', possibly because of the differences from Western research. I was pleased that Lisa, finding the method beneficial, helped her reflect on her thought processes, wished to use it in her practice. Carmen felt the sharing circle had heightened her awareness of the power differentials in our interactions with families, schools and children. Adam felt he had moved on since the stories they had shared. He felt the poem did not convey his stories' nuances, so explained at length what he had meant. Member checking could be a drawback of qualitative research methods because the method only captures a

person's views at a particular time and in a particular space. Sharing the poems demonstrated that the real-world changes over time, which qualitative research sometimes ignores.

My reflections

I was struck by my need to maintain my participants' comfort (see appendix 7). I ascribe this to my hyper-awareness of race as a sensitive topic with strong historical connotations and of my racialised body in the sharing circle space (Shah, 2010; Paulraj, 2016). This need to ensure the comfort of my participants, who were predominantly white, 'educated' and in positions of power, possibly derives from a therapeutic urge to contain emotions. Offering containment to people is part of an educational psychologist's style and is considered as ethical working. My behaviours may have differed with non-white participants.

Figure 2 shows my reflections on the process of the sharing circles with trainees.
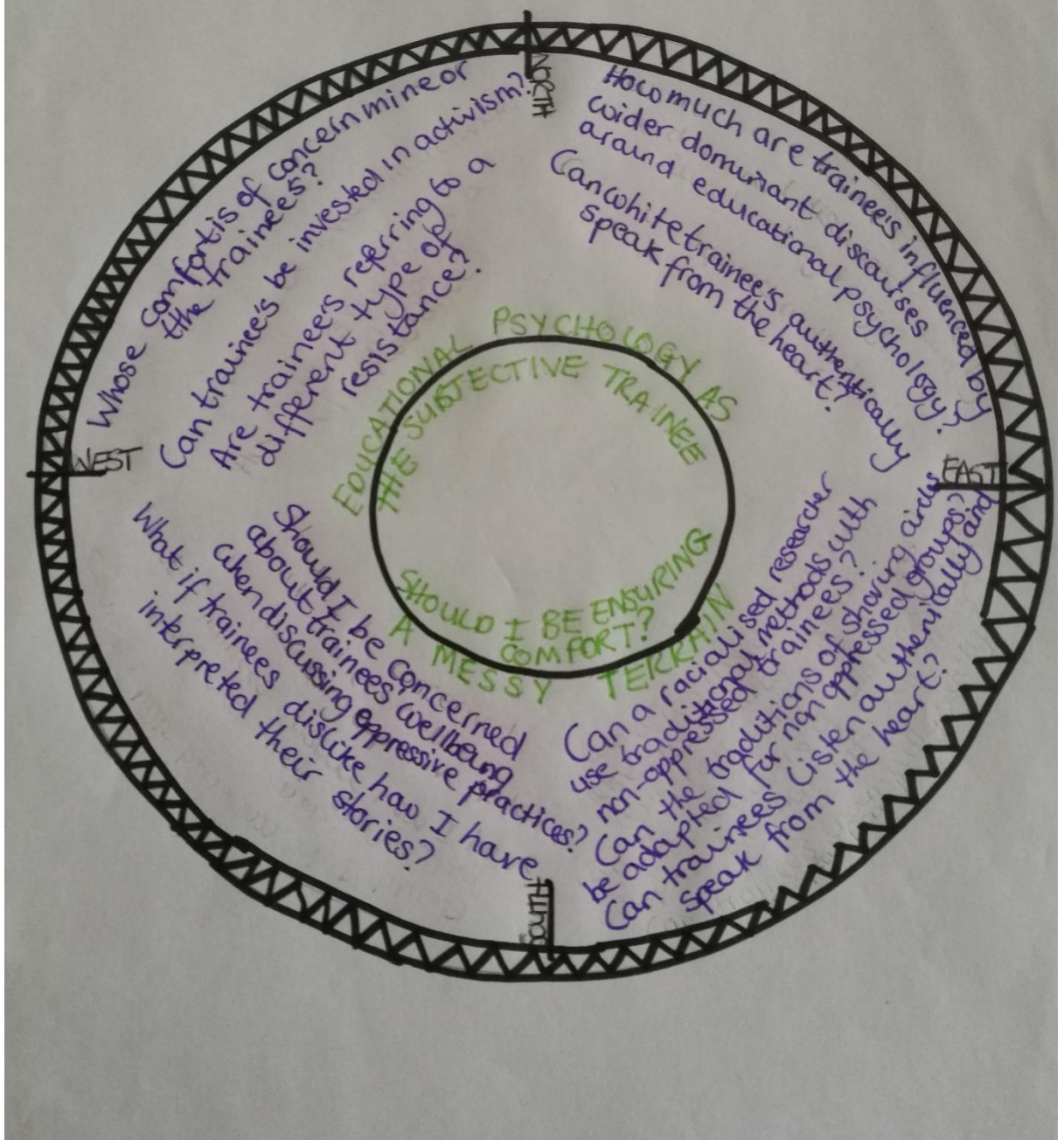
REFLECTIONS FROM THE SHARING CIRCLE

Figure 2. Reflections on the sharing circle.

Summary

In my portrayal of educational psychology, I am aware of my cynicism. Educational psychologists reading this may contest, disagree or be in uproar about how I perceive the profession. I describe educational psychology's association with scientific endeavours, its participation in oppressive practices, its appropriation of psychological tools and the varied emotions embodied in practice. These stories serve to unravel the identity politics of the educational psychologist. The poems display the contradictions, complicity and complexity of our identities, which all affect our enacting of educational psychology. The telling of these stories highlights that we may not fully know ourselves, our practice or our clients, particularly without examining the interaction of social structures; leaving questions unanswered is therefore reasonable (LeFrancois, 2013). Similarly, within educational psychology, maintaining a position of 'not knowing' through curiosity and naivety should be embraced.

The trainees' poems further reveal that educational psychology and colonialism are co-constitutive, as is evident in our pathologising language, scapegoating of 'othered' groups and justifying psychology through persuasion. I thus ask: if we were to decolonise educational psychology, would there be anything left?

Chapter 6 **DISCUSSION: TO RE-CONNECT THROUGH RE-SEARCH**

At the start of the thesis, I invited readers on an uncomfortable journey of re-imagining educational psychology away from how we currently know it. I begin this chapter by directly addressing the *re-search* questions; I consider the underlying assumptions and embodiment of educational psychology. As I asked in the previous chapter, if we were to decolonise educational psychology would there be anything left? I then offer reflections on the research methodology and outline the thesis's limitations. Finally, I propose my manifesto, possibilities for a 'third space educational psychology', and directions for future research.

To foreground my indigenous epistemology, this chapter *re-connects* through *re-search* (Martin & Mirraboopa, 2003). I must play an active role in reconnecting to the patterns captured from the stories about the self, community and wider structures. This chapter is personal, but written in a politicised style.

Can educational psychology be seen as a colonial practice?

This section looks at how colonialism continues to 'haunt' (Frosh, 2012) educational psychology in the form of contemporary coloniality and colonial legacies. This question is best answered by addressing the formal links between educational psychology and colonialism, and enactments of colonialism through educational psychology methodological practices.

While psychology is a diverse discipline (Burden, 1978; Gillham, 1978; Burden, 1999; Wagner, 2000; Baxter & Frederickson, 2005; Moore, 2005; Gaskell & Leadbetter, 2009; Fallon et al., 2010), it is arguably, rooted in the oppressive practices of scientific racism, eugenics and psychometric testing (Bulhan, 1985; Gutherie, 1998; Okazaki et al., 2008). Racism and oppression continue in the form of institutional racism (Fernando, 1988; McInnis, 2002), which pathologises minority ethnic communities, perpetuates psychological discourses (Rose, 1985, Ingleby, 1988) and maintains the dominant ideals of Western psychology as a privileged scientific endeavour (Bhatia, 2002; MacLeod & Bhatia, 2008). Like the 'civilising' of colonised people with European values, educational psychology is also complicit by imposing ideals of normality.

Trainees' examples of psychological explanations of children's behaviour included: pathologising children as dyslexic or autistic; believing that children require therapy;

locating problems within the child; and psychometric testing. For example, Lisa discussed selecting subtests from the British Abilities Scale psychometric test when working with children. Lisa described how educational psychologists can use tools strategically to 'know' the child. Children thus figure as 'problems to be solved' through psychology. This corresponds with the literature about scientific tools as 'a way in' to understand children both in educational psychology (Department of Education and Science, 1968; Gillham, 1976; Farrell, 2010) and in social work (LeFrancois, 2013; Nayak, 2015). There is an issue here about the administrators' subjectivity in selecting the test, which relies solely on interpretation. Such interpretation is based on our current limited understanding of intelligence as a physical entity that children possess (Gillham, 1978). Furthermore, interpretations should be scrutinised because our formulations are influenced by racist assumptions within society (Fernando, 1988) or the political climate of subjugating people on the basis of race (Gould, 1981; McCulloch, 1995). The measuring of skulls was flawed because it was based not on 'robust scientific measurement' but on unquestionable 'scientific' truths and colonialist socio-historical constructions (Gould, 1981). Likewise, educational psychologists' strategic use of tests involves methodological biases similar to the flaws of 17th-century polygenists' measurements of African, Asian and European skulls. Our interpretations, formulations and hypotheses are coloured by wider social, political and historical beliefs.

Scientific endeavours were key to the colonial project, subjugating colonised people by marking their differences from Europeans (McCulloch, 1995). Trainees' stories refer to scientific truth claims in assessing individual differences and psychometric testing, which demonstrates the centrality of such tools to enact educational psychology. Given its associations with scientific truth claims, educational psychology tends to go unchallenged, because it is hard to critique a discipline that relies on knowledgeable people's empirical observations (Fernando, 1988; Sewell, 2016). This demonstrates the credibility, prestige and status that educational psychology has accrued by aligning itself with scientific truth claims. Upholding the status of educational psychology was mentioned by trainees: while sharing a well-meaning desire to help children and their families, they upheld the benevolence of the institution (LeFrancois, 2013) through promoting the positive wellbeing of children in accordance with the status quo (Ingleby, 1988; Teo, 2015). Therefore, the methodology of educational psychology practice is based on taken-for-granted truth claims, systems of logical thinking and the intuition of Eurocentric knowledge (Armistead, 1974; Teo & Febbraro, 2003). This logic can be seen when, for example,

educational psychologists apply normative differences and statistical significance as objective measures (Williams & Goodley, 2017). Consequently, reflexivity, subjectivity, critique and challenge of the discipline become difficult to embed. Removing the colonial from educational psychology may also involve discarding the scientific truth claims which educational psychology depends on.

A further example of how psychology is constituted through colonialism is evident in Carmen's stories. Carmen mentioned that it is better to focus on the child's need than on their deficits. This separation of need and deficit marks bodies as 'disordered'. Appropriating children's bodies as disabled through benevolent language legitimises the recognition of differences from the norm. The categorising and classifying of young people's bodies as different further validates the need for educational psychology (Williams & Goodley, 2017). This resonates with Li's (2007) notion of 'the will to improve', whereby colonised people are perceived as backward and in need of improvement in colonial and neo-colonial regimes. The idea that some people require improvement, intervention, training or development, whereas others are uneducable, implies that individuals cannot improve their own conditions. Instead of addressing broad structural determinants of people's positions, a social engineering approach is favoured to modify people's behaviour according to government prescriptions (Kanu 2003, 2007; Li, 2007). The notion of 'decolonising the mind' (Thiong'o, 1986) captures the psychological effects of colonialism. Similarly, trainees' stories showed how educational psychology creates psychological effects by marking children as SEN or non-SEN (Billington, 2006; Frederickson & Miller, 2008; Miller et al., 2008). Given the connections between individualisation and pathologisation of children and historical legacies of colonialism and racism, it is questionable whether the discipline's continued existence is morally justifiable, especially in light of the oppression caused by educational psychology's propagation of definitions of intelligence and individual differences. At the same time, trainees reported that children and families wanted to be labelled, which thus perpetuates psychology's power (Parker, 2005).

The trainees also discussed justifications for their involvement with children, families, teachers and teaching assistants. Many characterised educational psychology as recognising difference in children's educational achievement, emotional wellbeing and behaviour in the classroom or playground. Trainees commented on the need for educational psychology to help the school make sense of a 'messy' situation involving a child's particularities. Trainees saw their roles variously: Lisa viewed

herself as 'Wellbeing Improver' and 'Agent for Change'; Adam described helping staff members relate problems and emotions; my own poem 'Power Trip' described my authoritative tone and truth claims in a consultation. The trainees (including me) presented our embodiment of psy-expertise, that is, using scientific discourses and formulating psychological explanations, as our distinct, unique contribution to the situation (Ashton & Roberts, 2006; Cameron, 2006). This unique contribution implies that educational psychology can detect abnormality because of our knowledge about 'normal minds' (Rose, 1985). Possessing psy-expertise seems integral to the trainees' identities. Psy-expertise is a form of 'epistemological oppression' (Sewell, 2016): trainees' possession of psychological knowledge about a child or problem justifies their involvement. This echoes colonial justifications whereby colonised people were seen as psychologically deviating from the European norm.

This thesis began with a speech act about an Asian child's autism diagnosis, heard at an educational psychology service. The educational psychologist reformulated parental disagreement or resistance as 'denial', thus echoing the colonial use of psychology and psychiatry to mark resistance to colonialism as mental pathology (Fernando, 1988; Metzl, 2009; Lennox,

> 'Denial' and 'scapegoats' are psychoanalytical terms, which are applied as psy-discourses. I thus enact the very behaviour I criticise in the opening of the thesis. Like Fanon, I use psychoanalytical terms to make the personal political, while remaining aware that both psychology and psychoanalytical theory are individualising.

2013). Furthermore, assuming that one person is right and the other wrong casts the family as 'scapegoats'. When the educational psychologist projects blame onto the Asian family, she is guilty of disapproval of the family's resistance to labelling. Displacing this guilt may make the educational psychologist feel better about her professional insecurities, or may be a subconscious defence mechanism. This exemplifies how far we are from confronting our actions, given the taken-for-granted trust that we as educational psychologists place in our knowledge, concepts, language and tools, mirroring the 'European collective unconscious' (Fanon, 1967). Gillham (1978) also comments on educational psychologists' faith in psychometric (and other) assessments and their failure to question the validity of the constructs they measure. However, educational psychology is of course varied and cannot be essentialised: some educational psychology services, including Nottinghamshire, avoid normative assessments. The emphasis on psychometrics as educational psychology identity echoes colonial rulers' attempts to instil European values in identities of colonised people (Bhabha, 1994). Not confronting the 'cracks' in the system helps protect the profession, and allows us not to see any limitations. This

disavowal protects our professional identities and the status of educational psychology.

Not only is colonialism enacted in practice; colonialism arguably also haunts the educational psychology training curriculum, which is depoliticised and ahistorical. Within my poems and throughout this thesis, I have recognised the over-reliance on Western scholars in the curriculum and the lack of decolonised methodologies taught on the course. By asking the questions 'Why is my curriculum white?' and 'Why isn't my professor black?' (Jahi, 2014; UCL, 2017), we can integrate more non-white thinkers and appreciate what literatures from the Global South can offer educational psychology (Mkhize, 2013; Mandhai, 2017). This should not be tokenistic, nor should it involve comparing Global South and Global North scholars. Instead, fundamental change at the strategic level of the BPS, HCPC and Higher Education overseeing bodies is necessary, as decisions are made by these bodies, not course directors and institutions. BPS officials should ask themselves: What is being taught? Why is it being taught? Is there a hidden curriculum? (Pillay, 2017). Such critical questioning acknowledges that universities are spaces where progressive thought and knowledge production occur. The inclusion of postcolonial theory and indigenous perspectives can contribute to the methodology of educational psychology practice, moving beyond current methodological logic and assumptions. As a starting-point, teaching could use 'Global Social Theory' as an online resource to introduce key thinkers, topics and readings (Global Social Theory, 2017).

> At the university TEPs had a session on 'race and racism'. What was interesting was that I suddenly became the hyper racialised body in that session. I was aware that trainees were aware of my presence in the room and they were cautious of not wanting to say anything offensive. This was communicated through their frequent eye contact with me, filtered speech and other non-verbal communications of wanting to seek my approval of their comments. It is these tensions between 'othered' and the 'gazer' that interrogates 'whiteness' in psychology.

If colonialism could be removed from educational psychology, would educational psychology exist anymore? Would anything be left? In the literature review, I argued that psychology is directly implicated in the knowledge production of promoting racial differences (Gould, 1981; Bulhan, 1985; Gutherie, 1998), promoting inferiority through assimilation (Fernando, 1988), and subjugating criminals, children, disabled people, women and minority ethnic groups (Richards, 2012). It is thus unsurprising that the trainees' stories portray a discipline premised on Eurocentric, Western scientific logic and truth claims.

What kinds of subjectivities and embodiments does educational psychology make possible?

In this section, I demonstrate how governmental bodies that oversee educational psychology directly affect trainees' embodiment of the profession. Themes from the BPS (2015, 2016) Educational Psychology Training Standards were echoed in the trainees' discourses about enacting educational psychology. I also explore my own embodiment of how I enact educational psychology through a racialised body.

In addition to educational psychology's colonial roots, the profession today is directly affiliated to governmentality (Foucault, 1977, 2006). The governmental bodies that oversee educational psychology (the HCPC, BPS and the Association of Educational Psychology [AEP]) collectively prescribe a specific form of educational psychology.

Within the poems, trainees grappled with enacting educational psychology and tried to navigate a performance of 'psychology of excellence' (BPS, 2015). Trainees are disciplined to adhere to the standards stipulated in the core competencies such as 'therapeutic interventions' (BPS, 2015). Examples of resisting this disciplining include recognising an authoritative voice in reports, not wanting to diagnose dyslexia, avoiding the use of therapy but conforming to schools' expectations. Having to enact forms of what the BPS describe as psychology appeared to trouble trainees, challenging their beliefs, values, ethics and moral principles. There is an evident disparity between performing what the competencies demand, and wanting to perform a psychology which is meaningful and consistent with trainees' own value systems. Despite their significant sense of disconnect from what the LA or school required, trainees felt compelled to conform with the standards. Monica's story captures this sense of collusion: despite her reservations, she went along with a therapeutic intervention to satisfy the school. Trainees collude with schools and LAs by succumbing to their requirements, which are also regulated by the government that sets the standards we live by in defining psychology (Rose 1985; Ingleby 1988). The trainees' ambivalence suggests that they recognise the governmental regulation of their practice but are unable to resist governmentality for fear of the repercussions of not enacting 'excellence in psychology'. This further creates a sense of subordination for trainees about the types of psychology they should be using but are in fact resisting. Such resistance leads them to question whether the educational psychologist they are becoming matches the BPS (2015, 2016) standards.

In the trainees' stories, examples of scientific inquiry included their need to talk to the problem-holder or work directly with children to enable formulations and conclusions by accessing thoughts and cognitions. However, there was also an underlying theme of trainees bringing their own personal experiences, emotions and beliefs into their practice and interactions with staff and children. Trainees explained how their experiences of being a parent, an ethnic minority or having a quirky character helped them make sense of the client. Trainees were thus aware of the subjectivities they used in practice, which are usually excluded from the objectivity of scientific truth (Parker, 2005; Willig, 2013). These are therefore instances of non-scientific principles being used by trainees; such reflexivity was seen to be helpful in practice (Gillham, 1978; Moore, 2005; Teo, 2015). Moore (2005) discusses the importance of using reflexivity in educational psychology, by stepping back and examining how our practice is directly associated with our belief systems. Some trainees already seemed established in using subjectivity to inform their knowledge production.

Adam, one of the sharing circles participants, described using consultation in helping the problem holder (teacher, teaching assistant or SENCO) separate the problem from their personal emotions. 'Power Trip' also captures the use of psychological models as a 'required core competency' for performing educational psychology. These stories showed how individualised Western psychology separates individuals from socio-political structures. Consultation as a tool reinforces the idea that problems exist in individuals and are psychological, failing to explore the wider systems around the child (Burden, 1999; Teo, 2015; Williams & Goodley, 2017). The consultation model is mandatory in educational psychology training, which suggests that the BPS is directly involved in the constitution of the profession. This leaves little agency for educational psychologists or course tutors to reform the discipline away from locating problems in individuals. Thus, I am disciplined to use psychological models with children and staff which understand people, problems and contexts through psychological means.

While there are narratives of cultural competence and diversity within educational psychology, Jeffery felt that educational psychologists do not understand the cultural practices of ethnic minority groups, which he deemed key to developing successful relationships with clients to make formulations. Similarly, the literature on the white normalising gaze of psychology (Nandy, 1983; Fernando, 1988; Hook and Howarth, 2001; Abdi, 2015) describes the 'one-size-fits-all' approach of some forms of psychology. Jeffery reported differences within the culture of educational psychology

and the cultures of minority ethnic groups. To make accommodations for minority ethnic communities, culturally sensitive tools (HCPC, 2015) have been developed to assimilate minority ethnic communities into a Western psychological paradigm (Fernando, 1988). These practices of assimilation suggest a unified psychology that can make scientific truth claims about all people regardless of their cultural background (Fernando, 1988; Bhatia, 2002). This places educational psychology in the superior position of 'knowing' and being right (Sewell, 2016), while anything outside is deemed inferior and forced to conform to the ideals of Western psychology. Educational psychology is thus haunted (Frosh, 2012) by the assimilation agenda which was used in settler colonies in the guise of 'education' and 'betterment' (Kanu, 2003; Li, 2007).

My embodiment of educational psychology helps me realise the emotional work involved in practising educational psychology, leading me to question where my loyalties lie – with a Westernised white profession or with my racialised identity. Within educational psychology, the methodology of knowledge production is evidently informed by a largely Western, imperial framework (Bulhan, 1985; Gutherie, 1998; Moore, 2005; Richards, 2012; Mkhize, 2013; Parker, 2015). Accordingly, paradigms from Global South nations and decolonised methodologies have been marginalised (Smith, 2012; Mkhize, 2013).

By exploring the 'white mask psychology' of educational psychology, this *re-search* has revealed various cracks in the profession. During formal colonialism, colonised people's mimicry of European rulers made colonial rulers feel insecure and questioned their sense of superiority (Bhabha, 1994). In a similar vein, by the trainees discussing and exploring their own practises in the sharing circle, it illuminated to them the pitfalls and limitations of educational psychology. Utilising internal reflection helped trainees consider their resistances to educational psychology – for example, Lisa felt more able to resist when she had evidence to support her claims, whereas Carmen avoided resisting, fearing the repercussions of not completing the course or her supervisor's disapproval. Most strikingly, some trainees knowingly and unknowingly repressed emotional material which was more than they could handle. For example, being at the start of her career, Carmen did not feel ready to confront her profession's potential wrongdoings. Such distancing makes me feel a sense of empathy when describing denial or defensiveness (particularly in reference to the opening speech act about the Asian family). Such defensiveness could be an emotional response to feeling a psychological attachment to the

profession. This attachment makes people uncritical and unable to engage in reflexivity. Carmen's defensiveness involves not wanting to examine any problems associated with educational psychology in fear of what she might find. For the educational psychologist who said the Asian family were 'in denial', her use of psy-discourses demonstrates how self-scrutiny is impossible when such denial has become a habitual part of our practice. The sharing circle and psychopolitical framework elicited emotional responses which may otherwise have been inaccessible. New methodological approaches are thus needed to overcome the current limitations of psychological knowledge production for understanding children and their families.

Can, then, educational psychology exist as a decolonised discipline? Or must educational psychology be abolished altogether? Is it a question of revolution, whereby traditional educational psychology is dismantled and a new discipline created? Or should we rather reform how we work and make fundamental changes to methodology and research? I ask these questions here to summarise my thinking about what educational psychology currently is and to clarify the direction the thesis is taking. I align myself with Fanon (1967)'s contention that, while psychiatry should exist as a practice, it neither could nor should be applied in the colonial environment. Similarly, perhaps a 'psychopolitical educational psychology' could decouple the profession from governmental agencies such as the BPS and make it independent. I return to these issues below, after reflecting on the methods and limitations of the *re-search*.

> Again, is the psychoanalytical terminology of defensiveness and repression my imposition of psy-discourses on the trainees? I have used psychoanalytical discourse throughout the thesis to know the other. Am I mimicking my complicity of imposing psy-discourses on children and parents? Am I no different from the educational psychologist in the opening speech act? Or is this just an attempt to make the personal political in the to- and fro- movement of psychopolitics?

Reflections on methods

This section explores the benefits and challenges of using decolonised methodologies in Western spaces and with mainly white trainees, and addresses the research methodologies whereby knowledge is produced in educational psychology, especially concerning the 'other' (children and families).

Psychological knowledge production within university spaces seems to represent scientific truths. Generalisability, credibility, rigour, reliability, dependency and validity together ensure quality in qualitative research (Yardley, 2000; Tracy, 2010). These

criteria are deemed essential to high-quality research. Although research quality and methodology of knowledge production did not emerge as themes in the stories, in writing my thesis, I seek to highlight the limitations of some mainstream psychological knowledge which privileges Western forms of knowledge production (Smith, 2012). This thesis explicitly rejects the scientific truths associated with mainstream psychology and attempts to create a platform for decolonised work within academia.

Using decolonised methodologies in my research captured the lived experiences, emotions and heartfelt stories of trainees. It enabled a new form of analysis, representation and interpretation as a way into their world. The poetic transcriptions helped make reconstructing educational psychology less of an academic debate among leading educational psychologists, by instead focusing on the lived experiences of the next generation of educational psychologists. Decolonised methodologies render my presence as researcher, author and trainee visible. This was evident in writing the poems and articulating the dilemmas I faced throughout the thesis. Exposure to these experiences makes research experiential and makes me understand educational psychology as a messy terrain. More importantly, these questions arose from a methodology which welcomes the use of reflexive questioning.

Returning to Smith's (2012) qualities in research (see methodology chapter), this *re-search* has been a transformative process, where I have learned about my embodiment of a racialised, oppressive educational psychology, and also about the BPS's influence in regulating educational psychology. I have reformed educational psychology through my words and work, and feel this methodology has provoked enthusiasm about understanding people and the socio-political climate. The internal healing of having a voice in the profession as a racialised practitioner, and using the thesis as a platform to narrate my experiences has helped me enter the educational psychology world with confidence and dignity. I have provoked a debate and will share my findings with educational psychology services, and, at a strategic level, at conferences and in journal publications.

Working on the margins carries risks that are not typically associated with educational psychology (Kovach, 2005; Smith, 2012). Decolonised methodology has received little attention from educational psychologists, possibly because it is considered radical research with a 'soft' philosophy. Presenting work from the margins has allowed me to be provocative in my approach and present trainees' stories as valid at that point in time. Decolonised methodology pushes the

boundaries of conventional methodologies, presenting an honest voice and promoting a shared sense of struggle (Smith, 2012). Given the origin of decolonised research in the oppression of colonised people, it can, unlike conventional methodologies, cast a spotlight on hidden, uncomfortable actions. The honesty that emerged in all our stories was achieved through decolonised methodologies. Kaomea (2004) discusses her difficulties of negotiating her positionality, as loyal to Hawaiian communities as an insider, but also as an insider of the university. Honesty in knowledge production offers educational psychologists new horizons to question taken-for-granted assumptions (Moore, 2005). Purging worldly thoughts and entering a reflective space requires strength, confidence and, especially, honesty. This may be difficult when educational psychologists are immersed in their day job (Gillham, 1978). I feel that my extra layer of personal narratives in conducting decolonised methodologies offers an insight into multiple perspectives as author, researcher and practitioner.

Engaging with methodology from the margins is unfamiliar and strange to educational psychologists who may be more familiar with conventional methodologies of knowledge production. I observed how trainees in the sharing circle struggled to let one person share their story uninterrupted (a requirement of the method). This unfamiliar decolonised methodology, stepping away from the reciprocal conversations they are familiar with, engendered mistrust. The trainees' ability to engage in Western-style conversations highlights the difficulties of discarding a way of being that is fundamental to interaction. This impedes the introduction of new methodological forms; it is easier for educational psychologists to gravitate back towards the familiar territory of scientism, which seems to have offered educational psychology credible, trustworthy truths about children and their families. Gillham (1978) too identifies how educational psychologists can become too comfortable in their methodological practices and resist new approaches. After 40 years of trying to reconstruct educational psychology, why have we still not moved beyond our comfort zone?

Using decolonised methodologies with white trainees, a non-oppressed group, presented various ethical dilemmas (Graveline, 1998). While I wished to protect trainees' wellbeing when discussing emotive topics for ethical reasons, this seemed inappropriate, particularly as educational psychologists often ask young people to share traumatic stories about their lives. Hence, this methodology revealed our over-reliance on traditional methodologies to 'know' the 'other', suggesting we should find

new ways of gathering information from children (Miller et al., 2008) which are ethical and do not close down conversations in fear of confronting oppression or subjugation.

My *re-search* studied mainly white trainees, who seem the opposite to the typical oppressed, marginalised and unheard subjects of decolonised research. My results echo Graveline's (1998) difficulties in using sharing circles in an ethnically diverse Canadian classroom: she found that white students were unable to uphold the method's core principles. Although trainees reported largely positive experiences of participating in the circle, the expectation to use 'heart-felt' speaking and authentic listening perhaps differed from their epistemological beliefs (Graveline, 1998). This disparity between methodological epistemologies and participants' epistemologies necessitates attention from the researcher when using methodologies with certain participants. Unlike the unquestionable status of conventional educational psychology knowledge production, reflexivity entails sensitivity towards participants, rather than imposing a method which may not fit the context of the research/interaction (Moore, 2005). I hope that lessons can be learned for educational psychologists to be explicit about discrepancies between participants (or children and families) and methodologies when considering the most useful method for knowledge production.

Limitations of the study

This section presents the methodological and theoretical limitations of my thesis. As the stories relied on my decisions about what to include, there was a strong researcher presence in constructing, interpreting and analysing the poems (Glesne, 1997; Martin & Mirraboopa, 2003). Since the *re-search* was reflective, I selected parts which resonated emotionally with my experiences. This demonstrates the interconnectedness of decolonised methodologies. Although selecting information through emotional resonances may seem limiting, it may also reflect real-world behaviours: we all share a human desire to connect with people. The subjective nature of this *re-search* is a general limitation of all qualitative research.

The sample of trainees in the study was small and representative of only one university. A wider range of trainees from different university training programmes may have ensured a more representative sample and a more diverse range of experiences, since different training courses offer different flavours of educational psychology. Moreover, I acknowledge that the trainees' stories may not offer a

holistic insight into educational psychology, as many are incomplete or do not capture the nuances that trainees sought to communicate. However, the smaller sample size fits the aims of avoiding generalisation or truth claims. Instead, I was concerned with the idiosyncratic experiences of particular trainees at this point in time.

It was difficult to disentangle my focus on colonialism from other distinct but connected projects such as racialisation, governmentality and imperialism. Although the concept of intersectionality helped show how various projects are aligned (Crenshaw, 1991), it also raises the question of whether I have used decolonisation as a metaphor (Tuck & Yang, 2012). Decolonisation is distinctly associated with colonialism and its economic, socio-political and psychological effects on people. Therefore, is it inappropriate to align my work with decolonisation, as I have made references to epistemological violence (Sewell, 2015), governmental agendas (Billington, 2006) and other racial violence in educational psychology.

Conducting *re-search* about myself may be cast as an instance of the current popular culture of self-indulgent 'me-search' (Pickles, 2017). By using 'me-search' in an academic space, I risk my *re-search* not being taken seriously or appearing 'unscientific', because I have not abided by the stringent principles of high-quality qualitative research (Yardley, 2000). However, my autobiographical accounts have provided a first-hand account through honesty and transparency about my own practices and my outsider status within the discipline.

I now proceed to imagine educational psychology anew, asking what it could look like and negotiating my personal tensions with the profession.

Is it possible to decolonise educational psychology?

To decolonise educational psychology assumes that we can somehow remove the 'colonial' from psychology and education. However, the stories from the trainees and myself have demonstrated that colonialism is deeply implicated in educational psychology, forming its historical legacy. Given these findings, I here address the possibility for a decolonised educational psychology.

A discipline rooted in, and still influenced by, 'white mask psychology' (Fanon, 1967; Hook, 2005), racism and colonialism are not for me. It leaves me wondering where to go next. As I near completion of my doctoral training in educational psychology, I cannot abandon the discipline: that would signify defeat. Instead, there needs to be a

radical change in the profession. This does not entail reconstructing educational psychology, as that has can be ineffective given how varied the profession is (Burden, 1978; Gillham, 1978; Loxley, 1978; Burden, 1999; Gersch, 2004; Ashton & Roberts, 2006; Fallon et al., 2010; Farrell, 2010; Wicks, 2013). Rather, reform should address both the dominance of Western research methodologies (like grounded theory), and the discipline's methodological limitations that stem from racist and oppressive practice (such as justifying involvement through possessing knowledge). I must now create an authentic identity for myself within educational psychology.

Many of the experiences shared throughout the thesis involve practising a psychology that does not match my selfhood, history or culture. This has created a feeling of alienation or 'internal oppression' both on the training course and when using psychological tools (Shah, 2010). This corresponds with an 'outsider within position' (Collins, 1991; Hendrix, 2002; Shah, 2010; Henry, 2015), which was briefly mentioned in Jeffery's story too. Managing many selves in interactions is complex. Although I feel part of the educational psychologist community (undergoing similar training, being a member of the AEP and enjoying working with children), I am also very different in that I am black. Similarly, clinical psychology trainees discussed a disconnection between learning Western theories and the hardship of not being white in a majority white profession (Shah, 2010; McInnis, 2002). Therefore, I seek a path that both reflects myself and allows me to politicise, historicise and contextualise my work.

My feeling of being a black body possessing a 'white soul' (Fanon, 1967) stems from a disconnection between my black body and educational psychology's colonial and racial historical legacies, echoing other work on minority ethnic professionals' identities (McInnis, 2002; Shah, 2010; Badwall, 2014). However, my *re-search* is unique in its focus on the methodologies of educational psychology. The need to practise a type of psychology which is associated with whiteness and therefore perceived as superior often leaves racialised psychologists feeling they must fit into this Westernised culture (Fanon, 1967; Shah, 2010). This is evident in many of my poems, including 'The Voice', which addresses the expectation to write reports in an authoritative voice. These enactments of educational psychology together illustrate the 'white mask psychology' (Hook, 2005) I have been disciplined to deliver as I, like my trainee counterparts, strive for 'excellence in psychology'. Within colonialism, the assimilation agenda affected colonised people's selfhood as the education system promoted the emulation of European values (Thiong'o, 1986; Kanu, 2003, 2007).

My emulation of educational psychology can also be seen as a need to approach the 'whiteness' of Western educational psychology. I internalise the power and status afforded to practising educational psychology, and strive to emulate superior educational psychology (Fanon, 1967). Emulating white mask psychology is evident in discussions of the 'brown sahib' (Nandy, 1983). Brown sahibs occupied the ambivalent space 'in-between': Indian, but also pro-imperialist. The idea of turning away from my 'blackness' to deliver a 'white' version of educational psychology creates a sense of being in two places at once. Negotiating these two selves can be emotionally draining and also self-destructive, as I am constantly making sense of my behaviour and the practice I enact in light of 'whiteness'.

I now return to reimagining educational psychology. Decolonised work discusses dismantling the colonial structures which are guilty of colonial violence (Lorde, 1984; Pillay, 2017). However, the notion of dismantling suggests that psychology and colonialism can somehow be teased apart. Dismantling the colonial would also destroy the 'education' and 'psychology' elements of the discipline, leaving nothing! However, 'decolonial' is characterised, educational psychologists face a choice: they can refuse to use the assessments, language and tools currently used in educational psychology, asserting, 'I am not going to practice educational psychology and it should not exist as a discipline because it is constituted by colonialism'; or they can seek ways to reform the current colonial aspects of educational psychology. I thus ask if decolonising is a matter of revolution (Biko 1987; Fanon 1967) or reform (Fernando, 1988).

For those still committed to a less oppressive educational psychology practice, it might be possible to envisage educational psychology anew. Kessi (2016) views decolonised psychology as a transformation in the discipline's thinking and practice. If educational psychology is to be transformed, decolonisation cannot be characterised as a 'separation' but must involve an entirely new form. Returning to Tuck & Yang (2012), decolonisation is not a metaphor: I must therefore avoid substituting decolonisation for other projects associated with critical psychology, such as emancipation, social justice, anti-oppression or transformative psychology (Teo, 2015). Decolonisation and critical psychology contain many incommensurable concepts and practices that impede cooperation.

Not all psychologists share my quest for agency. As I have demonstrated throughout the thesis, colonialism and racism go much deeper than the BPS, so decolonising should begin with the individual educational psychologist. Within the stories, trainees and I give examples of attempts to resist, but our default position is to satisfy the BPS's needs; we thus collude with the government (Billington, 1996, 2006). Evidently, then, agency begins away from the BPS; the decolonisation of educational psychology (if it is possible) involves radical pedagogies that enable people, including professionals, to see their complicity in racism (Fernando, 1988). This may involve fighting against categorising, normative measurements or pathologising differences.

> The overthrowing of the BPS is the more cynical Rebecca who wants an independent educational psychology. I feel educational psychology is only salvageable through systemic revolution, as proposed by Biko and Fanon. This takes me to a conversation with a relative where I shared my love/hate relationship with educational psychology. He remarked that abandoning textbook knowledge for my own values is a tenuous position, but nevertheless worth holding onto!

Progressive reform could involve maintaining the BPS but moving away from taken-for-granted knowledge, scientific truth claims and systems of logic. Fallon et al. (2010) conclude that educational psychologists are scientific practitioners, who should thus use evidence-based practice as well as psychological models. This attachment to the sciences is promoted as educational psychology's distinct contribution (Gersch, 2004; Ashton & Roberts, 2006; Cameron, 2006; Fallon et al., 2010; Wicks, 2013). Trainees and educational psychologists may find comfort or reassurance by clinging on to the limited methodological practices and self-assured certainty of our current Western epistemology (Moore, 2005; Sewell, 2016). I thus lay out a manifesto for educational psychologists' practice (table 2), paralleling Fernando's (1988) blueprint for a reformed psychiatry. This manifesto aims for a less oppressive educational psychology that is flexible for children and their families, and is interchangeable and inter-relational, drawing on the very foundations of indigenous epistemological knowledge (Kovach, 2005). Reformed educational psychology combines reflections on problems rooted in the discipline's historical, political and economic context, with imagining a future that intersects experiences with these histories. The manifesto is not 'prescriptive' but rather provides a taste of what a reformed educational psychology could offer. My contention that change should begin within the minds of educational psychologist's parallels Biko's (1987) notion of 'conscientisation' - liberation beginning with individual subjectivity.

TABLE 2: EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY MANIFESTO

What we currently do in educational psychology	Reformed educational psychology
Psychopathologise children based on normative difference.	Confront the need to categorise difference and locate it within the child.
Hold conversations with SENCOs/teachers/teaching assistants because we feel problems are located through interacting with problem-holders.	Talk about the socio-political context of working in schools and the potential barrier this presents to enabling children.
Remain objective and use psychological frameworks for problem solving.	Bring our own stories into our practice. Be reflexive and constantly critique our research methods, methodologies and theoretical frameworks for understanding how psychological disorders are created.
Use methods such as grounded theory and interviews.	Apply alternative, decolonised methodologies in 'knowing' children and families.
Use theories from Global North nations to understand how individuals, think, act and behave.	Apply theories from indigenous methodologies which see individuals as relational (to people and entities) and multi-vocal. Enable children and families to strive for self-determination.
Maintain a 'logic of system' based on unquestionable knowledge about the world, as in the speech act in the introduction.	Be aware of the logic of educational psychology methodologies and appreciate that multiple alternative logics also exist.
Uses phrases and normative comparisons such as 'wellbeing' or 'age-related expectations'.	Be aware of the political therapeutic agenda which promotes resilience, self-help skills and emotional wellbeing, removing responsibilities from the state. Be transparent in conversations with staff and parents that 'wellbeing' or 'autism' are social constructions.
Apply culturally sensitive tools when working with racialised groups and adapt	Be transparent when working with racialised groups about using psychological concepts and acknowledging how psychology has

assessments to suit all cultures.	understood people and the notion of 'disorders'.
Write reports with psychological formulations and state professional opinions.	Write reports accessibly: be poetic and less formal. Strive for a tentative, speculative position that appreciates a multi-voiced approach. Maintain a stance of curiosity and naivety about children and families. Feel reassured in 'not knowing'!
Educational psychology 'equality and diversity' is not about attending race awareness courses or cultural issues that perpetuate racialisation as a problem.	Consider historical and political discourses which may explain our thinking in how we come to know and understand racialised people.

I end the chapter by exploring how this manifesto speaks to the idea of a 'third space' in educational psychology and prompts future research.

Third space educational psychology

This section explores how I, as a racialised educational psychologist, can begin my career in a renewed educational psychology. The 'third space' signifies that where there are two competing, seemingly binary identities, it can be helpful to explore the ambiguous space between them to create a hybrid form (Kaomea, 2004; Sonn & Green, 2006).

Within the colonial condition, colonisers and colonised people were so implicated in one another that it became difficult, though always possible, to distinguish between them, hence Bhabha's (1994) 'almost the same' but not quite white/'normal'. Within educational psychology, it is important to recognise the colonial legacies in the emergence of psychology (Bulhan, 1985; Gutherie, 1998; Richards, 2012). Colonial histories, coloniality and psychology thus need each other. However, I hold onto the new forms of knowledge that this thesis has enlightened me with: poetic transcriptions, sharing circles, interconnectivity, reflexivity and inter-relational *re-search*. Bearing in mind these two forms of psychology, I outline a hybridised, third space, in-between version of educational psychology (Bhabha, 1994; Kaomea, 2004; Sonn & Green 2006; Kanu, 2007). Drawing on the historical legacies of racialisation, colonialism and the psy-complex, I formulate a new type of educational psychology in terms of knowledge production (epistemology), ways of doing (methodology) and ways of being (ontology).

The third space avoids using decolonisation as a metaphor, because it amalgamates the old psychology (colonial and racial histories) with the new (decolonised perspectives), avoiding seeing them as binary positions. One consequence of colonial history was that colonisers and colonised people appeared essentialised, binary and normalised identities (Bhabha, 1994). Instead, identity formation should be a continuous process of hybridity, whereby old and new psychology can negotiate meaning rather than being in conflict. Third space is not about a new educational psychology overriding Western forms, in the way that Martin & Mirraboopa (2003) and Smith (2012) propose that decolonised methodologies should supersede Western methodologies. Instead, I recognise the contentions, contradictions and ambivalences of current educational psychology and integrate them into the reformed educational psychology, thus avoiding the 'old wine in new bottles' debate about reconstructing educational psychology. If a rich plurality of discourses and conversations (Kanu, 2003, 2007) are involved in reforming educational psychology, the discipline can overcome the limitations of Westernised methodological and theoretical lenses that understand children and families in psychological ways.

The proposed third space educational psychology can be used alongside strategic resistance, which in the psychopolitical framework involves solidarity to effect social change. Although the trainees' descriptions of resistance did not align with Biko's (1987) strategic resistance, their idea of resistance was possibly understood at an individual level through their attempts to challenge individuals, or adapt the way they work to please schools. The trainees were concerned that resistance might risk repercussions from the school, affect relationships with clients/supervisor or jeopardise their chances of completing the course. Resistance thus encountered fear; trainees sensed a position of powerlessness because they were not fully qualified and experienced discomfort in their inability to resist. Resistance, they implied, requires power, experience and boldness. Their resistance was prompted by their expectations of educational psychology, or by children/families' or colleagues' beliefs clashing with their belief systems, as opposed to the macro-level strategic changes which Biko (1987) and Fanon (1967) sought.

At an individual level, the third space allows me to take action in my own practice (such as by embracing reflexivity) and helps me consider the potential changes to educational psychology's promotion of psy-expertise and epistemological oppression. However, reform may also involve collective solidarity movements from within the profession, maintaining momentum through recruiting more tutors and educational

psychologists oriented to decolonised methodologies at universities (Wood & Patel, 2017) and within educational psychology services (Pillay, 2017). Third space educational psychology should continue at a strategic level within the AEP and BPS, which should be held accountable for the current restricted parameters of methodology and knowledge production, especially statutory assessments and SEN duties (Burden, 1976; Baxter & Frederickson, 2005; Cameron, 2006).

Future research

Possibilities for future research could examine black and minority ethnic trainees' experiences of completing the educational psychology training course. Though not in the guise of 'equality and diversity', this would create a platform for honest conversations. Topics to consider may include curriculum content, interactions with tutors, teaching styles and aspects of the placement. Additionally, alternative explanations and ways of thinking could be introduced by gathering the views of black and minority ethnic children and their families about their experiences, as 'othered' groups, of working with educational psychologists. For example, with the Asian family in the introduction, it would be helpful to explore alternative meanings and explanations of 'disorders' as constructs, which may critique psychological explanations.

To return to the speech act in the introduction, I am working towards a kind of educational psychology practice where statements of logic about an Asian family being in 'denial' over a diagnosis are an impossibility, a kind of psychology where we are socialised to practise in a way that does not 'other' groups. Within a third space educational psychology, the educational psychologist would say:

I don't think the psychology that I am using works for this family. How can I discard my psychological attachment to psychology, what social practices am I entangled in and how am I conceptualising people's behaviour through a particular lens?

Chapter 7 REFERENCES

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CHAPTER 8: APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Ethical documentation for sharing circles

BRIEFING

Sharing Circle (Aboriginal or First Nations people) is from the Cherokee tradition of Donelawega community. The coming together of people for a special purpose. Used by Native American communities to bring people together to discuss matters important to them. A way of connecting people, earth, moon and sun and so it has some spiritual foundations. I was drawn to the principles of interconnectedness, collaborative, sense of community which brings us all together as trainees. People come together to discuss their own personal stories about a shared collective phenomenon- relationships are forged as a result. Our shared experiences of doing the doctorate and our placements.

- SC (sharing circles) is discussion not therapy
- Explain ground rules
- I will be using some of the principles from the SC which may feel a bit weird and spiritual.
- Please bear with me and give it a go and I would welcome your feedback at the end, as I may want to use elements of this in my practise.

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this research. May I take the opportunity to remind you that you are free to withdraw from the research at any point without giving an explanation. I would like you to feel as comfortable as possible during the sharing circle so in a moment I will ask you to throw any burdens you have in the burden basket to empty your minds and feel a bit freer.

Firstly, I think it would help to provide a context of my research, to illuminate my motivations and then I will discuss your involvement in the sharing circle.

My motivations towards research (Identifying myself within the research)

I am being very clear and transparent about my position in this research! Going through this process of becoming an educational psychologist I have noticed more and more things that shocked, perplexed, scared or worry me. I worry about what kind of messages I am portraying to children, young people and their families but

also beginning to question the wider project of educational psychology as a discipline. There have been moments whilst on placement where a certain uncomfortableness around doing the job has left me questioning the type of psychologist I want to be. I am aware of my presence in the research a black female, engaged in political activism and also aware of my colonial history with my parents being from a former colony. I am wanting to share some of these stories within the sharing circle. I have jotted down a few of my motivations for this research.

- *Feeling like I am persuading families, schools and young people in practice, delivering a style of educational psychology practice that is immersed in control and power.*
- *A desire to move away from Eurocentric research towards indigenous methodologies and what contributions this can make in mainstream psychology.*
- *The way I am being trained feels Eurocentric (racialised groups, queer research etc. is silenced).*
- *A desire to engage in critical research from a postcolonial and indigenous paradigm and see what contributions this can make to educational psychology*

<u>Your role</u>

As you may be already aware, I have an interest in postcolonial theory and this will form part of my thesis. This data collection is an opportunity for you to share your stories. Please do not feel I am trying to catch you out or that you have to be cautions of how you word/frame things. It is important to me that I do not re-enact any of the behaviours/actions associated with colonialism of dishonesty, deceiving or secretiveness. For me, it is important that you feel at ease to speak. Here are some things that will help the sharing circle work smoothly:

- Please turn off your mobile phone.
- You are free to leave the room for water or the toilet
- Try not to interrupt the person telling their story. Once everyone has shared their story, there will be an opportunity to comment
- This is a safe space – challenge is welcome but please be sensitive of people's personal stories/beliefs
- Although I am wanting to create a relaxed atmosphere, time is restricted so I may be pretty ridged with the timings to ensure we cover all aspects within

the sharing circle. Please do not be offended if I ask you to summarise your point or interrupt you.

- Be mindful of confidentiality
- Respect and listen to others.
- Be non-judgmental, helpful, and supportive.
- Share your information, spirituality, and emotionality

The research is in two major parts, the first part is more discussion based (30 minutes) and the second part will be using the sharing circle (1 hour). The sharing circle works by the group telling their story without interruption whilst other group members listen. Once everyone has shared their story comments are welcome. You may want to jot things down as the person speaks so you don't forget what you wanted to say. Just to remind you that this is a discussion not therapy so please do me mindful of how you engage with the tasks and questions. If you do not feel like answering a question you are not obligated to comment.

Is everyone clear about the sharing circle?

Finally, this research is not about individuals, blaming or catching people out. I am interested in the collective and how we as a collective engage in discussions around educational psychology. It is about interrogating the practice of educational psychology, the practises we may embark on and how we are trained to do the job. I will then be analysing our discussions on educational psychology using a psychopolitical analysis. I am interested in the links of micro level interactions and the wider structural influences on our profession.

I have a clear view and position in this research and I would also welcome you to interrogate my position and critique my interpretations of these stories too.

Does everyone feel like they have been fully informed about the research aims and objectives? Any questions?

**COMPLETE CONSENT FORMS

DEBRIEF

The SC is now complete. How would you like to proceed now? Sharing themes? Member checking? Best way of contacting people? Would it be helpful to meet again on a date to discuss the themes that emerged to check they were in line with what you were wanting to communicate?

Thanks once again for your participation in this study. I hope you found it fruitful and worthwhile. I hope you found this opportunity useful in reflecting on your own practise and also the field of educational psychology. I hope that we can continue to use each other as an informal network of support, as peers, to share our thoughts, reflections and queries.

I am aware that some of the topics we might have discussed are heavy and emotive. It is important that you are able to look after yourself and own psychological wellbeing. If you require supervision as a result of this research, please seek out support from your pastoral tutors but bear in mind the confidentiality of what others shared and therefore content should only be about yourself.

If during the sharing circle you did not feel like you could answer a question or share something then please speak to me afterwards or give me a ring at some point. In addition, if someone wanted to meet with me individually after the circle to share something in confidence, this can be arranged. Again, if you are wanting to withdraw from the study, your right to do so remains now and beyond, so please contact me immediately if necessary.

Just to remind you that this recording will be stored safely, and any transcriptions will be password protected. You will remain anonymous in the write up of this research and pseudonyms will be used.

Could I ask you to complete the post reflection forms –I would like you to think about two things:
1. Methodology - talking stick, burden basket, and storytelling.
2. Content and topic discussed.
Is there anything else you need from me?

Please contact me on ############ or rwright5@sheffield.ac.uk to discuss anything further.

Thank You.

Consent Form

<u>**Sharing Circle**</u>

<u>Exploring Educational Psychology practice using an anti-oppressive framework</u>

Rebecca Wright, Trainee Educational Psychologist (Researcher)

Dr China Mills, Lecturer in Critical Educational Psychology (Supervisor)

Participant Identification Number for this project: **Please initial box**

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet explaining the above research project and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the project.

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences. In addition, should I not wish to answer any question or questions, I am free to decline. *I can contact the researcher on ############ to do so.*

3. I understand that my responses will be kept strictly confidential. I give permission for members of the research team to have access to my anonymised responses and quotes. I understand that my name will not be linked with the research materials, and I will not be identified or identifiable in the report(s) or journal publications that result from the research.

    4. I agree to take part in the above research project.

_____   _____
_____
Name of Participant   Date   Signature

_____   _____   _____
 Lead Researcher   Date   Signature

To be signed and dated in presence of the participant

Copies:
Once this has been signed by all parties the participant should receive a copy of the signed and dated participant consent form, the letter/pre-written script/information sheet and any other written information provided to the participants. A copy of the signed and dated consent form should be placed in the project's main record (e.g. a site file), which must be kept in a secure location.

Post Reflections

I am keen to get your views on using sharing circle as a method, the group process and also how it felt talking about the content within the circle. Please take a few minutes to answer the following questions.

How do I feel about this?

What do I think about this?

What have I learnt from this?

What action will I take as a result of my lessons learned?

Thank You.

Outline of Sharing circle session

Ice breaker – The talking stick (the stick doesn't talk!)

Objective – to ease TEPS into this discussion using a talking stick.

Brainstorm activity – what words come to mind when you think of colonialism?

How might colonialism shape your practises?

What kind of world is maintained by the professional activities of educational psychologists?

(What professional activities do you do?)

(How do these activities relate to the kind of world we are trying to promote?)

Part 1: Sacred objects

Objective – the sharing of sacred objects

Task - TEPs to spend two minutes talking about their object

**Please bring with you an object or picture of something that you feel relates to or encapsulates educational psychology. If you cannot do this maybe tell us what you would choose.

Questions – What is your object? Why did you choose it? What does it mean in relation to Educational Psychology?

Part 2: Telling my story

Objective – To share and hear my stories, discover resonances, differences, struggles and to highlight my values and beliefs.

Task - I will present one or two stories to the group form my practise and ask TEPs to comment, reflect and analyse my story.

Questions: What are your thoughts after hearing this story? Is there anything that struck you? (refer to Box 1)

Part 3: TEPs' stories

Objective: For the group to share their own stories of practise or observations from their service.

Task - For TEPs to describe a moment or an encounter with a parent, young person, teacher or colleague that relates to some of the words we used to describe colonialism.

OR

Are there any times when you have had an emotional response in an encounter because of a social or historical past that is important to or resonates with you?

Questions: Use prompt questions from Box 1.

Part 4: Acts of resistance

Objective: For me to share and get TEPs to share times of difficulty or challenge whilst on placement.

Task: Describe a time when you have wanted to, came close to or successfully resisted a thought, behaviour, action, principle or value of somebody else when on placement to stand your ground to promote your own beliefs.

Questions: What did you do? How were you perceived? Would you do it again? What were you resisting from? What were you wanting to promote?

   a) My story – Share my story with TEPs then get people to discuss and
      comment on.

b) TEPs' stories – the group comments and reflects on what they have heard AFTER everyone has shared their story (give TEPs notepads to jot things down they want to comment on).

Use prompt questions from Box 1

Part 6: Promoting our beliefs, values, principles and philosophies

Objective: For the group to collectively think of ways to safely promote their professional values in their everyday practise, and the wider profession of educational psychology.

Questions: How might we promote wider change and transformation within educational psychology away from some of the things we originally talked about?

How are you able to be 'X' [insert professional principle/value] practitioner? How does this relate to the wider aims of educational psychology as a profession?

Please note there is no expectation for you to prepare for the session but thought it might be helpful to provide an overview of the sharing circle prior to your participation.

Useful terms

Terms	Definitions
Sharing circles	A Native American tradition whereby people come together to discuss their own personal stories about a shared collective phenomenon - relationships are forged as a result. It embraces healing and spirituality.
Decolonising methodologies	Looks at privileging indigenous and colonised people's knowledge which were previously misrepresented, silenced, invisible or absent.
Indigenous people	Indigenous peoples are seen as 'The Other' e.g. Native American Indians of America, The Aboriginals of Australia and the Maori's of New Zealand who were believed to be the first settlers on these lands. Also referred to as 'First People's' or 'First Nations'.
Indigenous research	Indigenous research is believed to offer an alternative from 'Western' research to be representative of and privilege indigenous peoples without attempting to homogenise individual and distinctive cultures. Indigenous research paradigms and methodologies recognise that knowledge is relational and people have multiple relations with the living and non-living universe.
Colonialism	The physical, material and typically violent practice of dispossessing people of their native territory, culture, spirituality, sovereignty and beliefs. Colonialism refers to typically Europeans (metropolis) traveling to a colony to possess land, goods and people. There can be different types of colonialism such as civilising, genocide or settler colonialism.
Racialisation	The process of ascribing racial identities to bodies, a relationship, social practice or to a group of people who may not have self-identified in this way. It could be said that 'race' has been defined and imposed on by society.
Postcolonialism	Post colonialism is believed to be a by-product of colonialism and there is an argument that many inequalities still remain as a result of colonialism e.g. racism.

Resistance	Political activism for change within the micro level of the individual but also the broader institutional obstacles that exist in society. "…An assertion of presence—or voice—that had been previously muted and not given the space in which to speak" (Hook, 2005 p496).

Appendix 2 – Audit Trail

Audit trail

Below I have mapped out a clear audit trail of the methods used within the re-search design. This provides a helpful chronological

timeline of data collection.

Table 3: THE CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER OF DATA COLLECTION

Date	Who/Participant	What	Where	Why	What data was produced?	Connections to re-search question	Problems/issues	Proposed Analysis
September 2016-June 2016, December 2016 – February 2017	Myself	Autoethnography– collecting stories of my experiences on placement, tasks, encounters, interactions. Tasks that I do as part of	EPS, conferences in schools.	I aim to story my experiences, so I can research myself.	Written data. Recorded on an ad hoc basis.	RQ 1, 2 & 3	Sometimes writing my daily tasks was hard to keep on top of. Knowing what style to write in: interpretation;	Psychopolitical Analysis – (Hook, 2005)

		the job, meetings I attended. These were often written in response to specific encounters or noteworthy interactions during my working day					recounting; storying.	
December 2016	TEPs	Sharing circle	At the university after a seminar	I want TEPs to hear, offer validation and challenge my stories.	Verbal stories, anecdotes and statements. Flipchart visual.	RQ 2 &3	Closeness to participants. Few reflection sheets returned.	Medicine Wheel

| February 2017 | BPS/DECP | Documentation analysis | Policy documents | Looking at the macro structural positioning of educational psychology | Written data for the literature review | RQ1 & RQ3 | The analysis of these documents could have equally formed part of the analysis chapter. | Psychopolitical analysis |

Pilot study

Telephone conversation with Chloe (pseudonym) Year 3 Sheffield TEP (July 2016)

Aim of conversation

I wanted to gain an insight into Chloe's experience of conducting her research so that I can learn any lessons for my research and take advice from someone who has recently been along the research journey. I also took the opportunity to share aspects of my methodology and proposed 'sharing circles' method with TEPs.

Discussion

Chloe's encounters at university

Chloe shared a little about her research looking at the subject of 'whiteness' and power as an ideology. She interviewed three mixed heritage young people to understand their experiences of being mixed race.

Chloe shared a story about her research which was based on an interaction whilst studying at Sheffield University. This particular interaction led her to question what it means for a person of colour to be interacting with a white institution. When she shared her experience of this interaction with her peers she felt that they misunderstood and did not appreciate her struggle and perplexes about this interaction. She felt this story needed to be appreciated which is why she set out to embark on her research.

I explored further about Chloe's experience of being at university and she shared an experience of the 'Race and Racism' session at the university which she found particularly interesting and pertinent as a mixed heritage student. However, she felt an uneasiness in the room, her colleagues were very cautious and mindful of how they made contributions in the session because of her presence as the only non-white individual. She also mentioned wanting to say much more in the session which she felt unable to do as she needed 'permission' to do so as well as acceptance from her colleagues. How can we create permission in a situation like this? Chloe felt very aware of being the only person of colour in the room which made her feel uncomfortable.

Chloe's research

Chloe felt her research revealed certain themes about being mixed race in today's society:

- People can take offense to being called mixed race and have other terminology which they prefer such as half/quarter 'caste' of mixed heritage. This challenged Chloe as she found it hard to understand why individuals would want to affiliate with a certain label.
- It is people outside of the mixed-race community that decide how mixed-race people should be defined. There are few decisions made from within the mixed-race community with labels being imposed and dictated to these individuals.

Chloe felt positioning in her research was very important and had to write at length about what kind of mixed race position she was coming from. Also, aspects of

insider/outsider views as to whether or not Chloe's participants saw her as part of their community or not. This is something she felt would be pertinent to my research too if questioning TEPs who are mainly white.

My research

I shared with Chloe that a central theme within my research is colonialism within educational psychology. She felt it would be particularly interesting to bring out:

- TEPs experiences within different Local Authorities (LA)– do TEPs find LAs oppressive?
- The ethos and principles of Sheffield TEPs is distinct and may come from a critical psychology perspective. How have TEPs navigated their way around this on placement? Have they struggled?
- She thought it was a good idea working with Sheffield TEPs who may have principles and values closely aligned with myself.

I finally shared my method of sharing circles and Chloe thought that:

- The use of stories is a good way of people talking about their first-hand experiences.
- Give consideration and be clear about what theme I am wanting to attach to each story.
- Some caution may be needed when sharing my stories. I may be opening myself up to a particular set of values which could make me vulnerable and that TEPs may not connect with. Analyse what values may be connected to each story.

Reflections following our discussion

What do I think?

I was struck by Chloe's story of the 'Race and Racism' university session and her increased awareness of being the only non-white person in the room and the uncomfortableness surrounding this. It is this 'uneasiness' and 'permission' that I feel warrants further exploration and should be talked about more on the course in a self-reflective manner.

There were resonances from Chloe about the idea of resistance in her interaction at University as well as during the University sessions. This appears to be a pertinent theme within Chloe's stories and experiences.

What do I feel?

- Stories can be a cathartic process
- Resonance in stories can bring people closer
- People like to share their experiences, interactions and encounters.

What I have learned?

- My stories may reveal a lot about me, my values and how I work as a TEP/Practitioner
- Chloe's findings of mixed race people having labels imposed on them from outside the community may suggest that there are larger forces at play here

with regards to macro structures and institutions as well as who decides the rules.

How I will use this new learning in my research?

- I will write clearly about my positionality within the research as an insider/outsider as part of my autoethnography but also for the sharing circles too.
- I will consider being explicit about my values for each story I share but also allow TEPs to explore and label that particular value or other values they endeavour to recreate in their practise.
- I will use micro interactions from my fieldnotes as well as the sharing circles to find out how micro and macro structures can be influential.
- Hearing about the micro level of interactions has made me want to look at colonialism even more as it appears through Chloe's stories, 'hauntings' of colonialism may be present. Therefore, I want to delve deeper into the echoes of colonialism within educational psychology.

Appendix 4 – Paradigms table

Table 4: THE LINKS BETWEEN PHILOSOPHY AND METHODOLOGY

Epistemology	Ontology	Axiology	Paradigm	Theory	Methodology	Re-search Methods	Ethics
Transactional Relational Interconnectedness Interrelatedness Owned by and done for Indigenous Peoples/Historically oppressed/ Colonised Other	Historical critical realism	Embedded within indigenous values. Transfers control to indigenous people.	Postcolonial indigenous paradigm	Postcolonial Theory Indigenous research Black Feminism Critical race theory	Performative Dialogic Dialectical Participatory Liberating Drawing on Indigenous knowledge systems Decolonised (Smith, 2012)	Sharing circles, Autoethnography.	Re-searching back and Sharing Knowledge (Smith, 2012) Black re-searcher working with white participants

Source: Adapted from Chilisa (2012)

## Appendix 5 – Autoethnography: storying approach

March 2016

Writing a report and reading the content which looks completely psychologised. It is a young boy with autism who requires an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan. The language I use seems completely psychologised and I am writing in a way to support the school to help him get an EHC. I am a gatekeeper by being able to allocate funding to children but also contributing to the psychologisation of children. I'm using language that feels uncomfortable – looking at other educational psychologists' reports to ensure I get the tone right. I am persuading the panel. I am painting a picture of a boy who is untypical, doesn't fit the norm and is 'abnormal', mad, bad or sad. Which one? I am part of the civilising project! This boy needs money, so he can fit in with the rest of society and go on to be a fully functioning, fully contributing member of society. I am demonising this boy as different and this label may stay with him forever!

April 2016

We had a service development day with a team of psychologists at the Local Authority. The agenda was looking at diversifying our work as there are concerns that the nature of our work is becoming narrower in school. It was great to get away from the office and be in more comfortable clothes! There were discussions around protecting work that we as psychologists should be doing and that a certain team within the LA were also delivering training on attachment, autism and working memory. From what I gleaned, there was concerns that this team were positioning themselves as experts, especially on areas that have a psychology knowledge base. I wondered that within our profession if there are external threats from other professionals doing our work or claiming our knowledge. By having access to this knowledge, it could help maintain our professional identity thus we are positioned as important people. The consensus within the room was that psychologists should be present at more strategic decision-making meetings such as post 16 placements and EHCP panel meetings. So that the right decisions can be made. It makes me feel uncomfortable being in such positions of power and authority. Also, I am rejecting wanting this responsibility which does not seem to be a good fit of what educational psychology is about. I have a fear around dominance.

February 2017

Today I had peer on peer observation, a colleague had come to watch a consultation with a teaching assistant (TA) based on a young boy previously known to me (this writing is sounding like an educational psychology report!). As I sat in the staff room drinking strong tea from another teacher's cup there was that awkward projected feeling from the TA of - what am I doing here anyway? I immediately responded to her reaction by over compensating, over justifying and being over apologetic about the consultation by making it seem worth her while. I can help, want to help but also want to hear how the boy is getting on. As the consultation progressed it seemed to feel more like an interview format. The TA was answering my questions to convey a sense of proving she knows what she is doing. I got dragged into this 'battle' by asking more and more 'checking up on her' questions. When I finally came across an area that seemed to be presenting as a problem for her, I homed in on this. As the problem exploration went on, all the suggestions I was giving were batted back across the table to me. Harder and harder and harder. I could feel my increased annoyance of her, getting under my skin. All simply because she would not take on my ideas! Oh no, does that mean I had a power trip?! As much as I do not want to be positioned as expert I was getting annoyed that she wasn't appreciating my position as expert. This got me frustrated, annoyed and outraged. So, there it is, I have been educational psychologised.
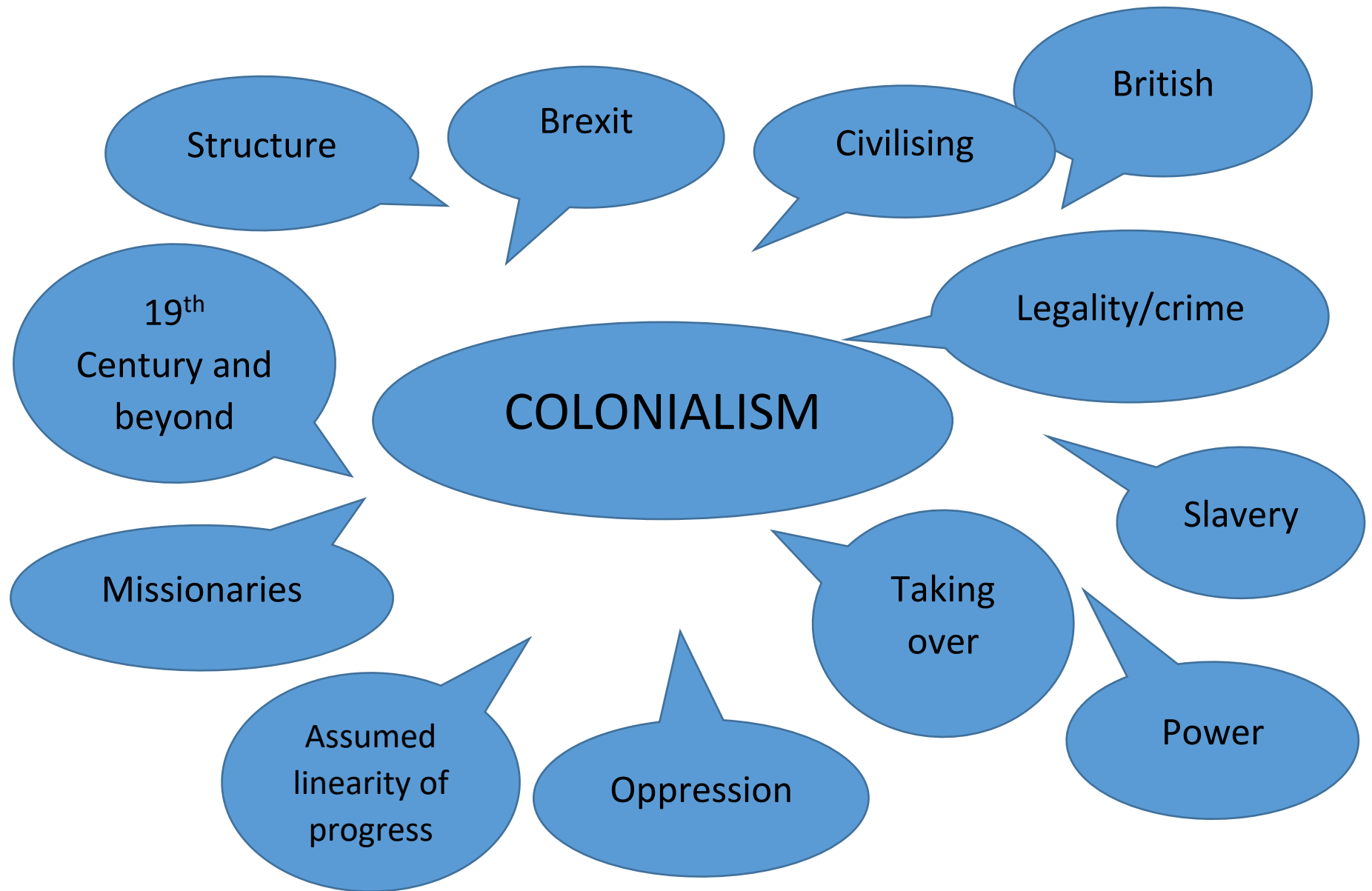
Appendix 6 – Psychopolitical analysis framework

Table 5: A PSYCHOPOLITICAL FRAMEWORK USED TO ANALYSE POETIC TRANSCRIPTIONS

Trace	Focus	Indicators
1.Making the personal political	Politicisation of the psychological (Hook 2005, p480)	How does certain knowledge/phenomenon come to be known as psychological? What or whose rationale/purposes does this serve?
2. Psychology and coloniality	Deploying psychological concepts in understanding the workings of power (Hook 2005, p480). Exploring how psy-disciplines are used as a tool of colonialism.	Does colonialism shape and make 'psychic life' possible? How does the process of 'psychologisation' come about? How do individuals come to be 'psychologised'?
3. Strategic work - resistance to colonial power	Putting psychological concepts to work politically *and* the actual terms of psychological experience as 'a means of consolidating resistances to power' (*Biko, 1987;* Hook, 2005 p481).	How is the psychological used to explore workings of colonial power? How can we begin to intervene in the 'life' of power? Do psychologist's embrace resistances to power? (Biko, 1987, p77)
4. Blanking out	Denial and disavowal (Hook, 2013)	Does educational psychology refute claims of or blank out colonial violence? Wilful denial and forgetfulness of ongoing acts of colonisation? Does educational psychology use evidence to refute claims of colonial violence? How is psychology appropriated through its concepts and approaches?
6. 'Colonising of the mind' (Ngugi wa Thing'o, 1986)	Looking at the subject of cultural oppression whereby 'the native' is constantly fed messages that are hostile and devaluing of themselves (Hook 2005 p482).	In what ways are 'white mask psychology' applied to educational psychology? Does educational psychology project inferiority? Does educational psychology instil a compulsion to be white? Does psychology enter into slippages of colonial authority?

7. Colonial violence	The eradication of 'the natives' cultural resources by the cultural imperialism of the coloniser (Hook, 2005 p481)	Does educational psychology execute cultural imperialism? When does educational psychology enter into the 'return effect' of colonial desire?

Appendix 7 – Reflections from sharing circles

<u>Trainees' post reflections</u>

Lisa "loved" and was "blown away" reading the poem particularly my interpretations of the views presented but also the source of her feelings. She believes it has raised a number of points regarding her practice and professional identity which she will share with her supervisor.

Carmen liked the elastic band analogy and voicing her thoughts through the storying approach. She felt parts of the stories shared were still relevant particularly being part of the autism diagnostic pathway which she described as an emotive part of her role.

<u>Researcher's post sharing circle reflections</u>

How do I feel about this?

I felt aware of how others may have interpreted the questions as a lot of what I was asking may be deemed sensitive. I felt I had to ask the questions in a safe way that wouldn't disrupt the harmony of relationships or cause offense. I often find, when discussing subjects such as race, that I feel a need to sugar coat things or use language in a safe way to make 'the other' Whiteness feel accepted and comfortable. I found this to be an interesting proposition given that typically in research it would be a non-indigenous researcher working with indigenous groups, but my research does in fact the opposite. As I have identified myself as an indigenous researcher conducting a sharing circle alongside a non-indigenous group there appeared to be a shift in the anthropological gaze which would be worth exploring further in my thesis. Whilst conducting the SC I was aware that I was speaking to a majority white group but felt I had to still create a sense of equality by stipulating that I am not looking to individualise comments and portray individuals to have a racist demeanour.

To enhance feelings of making them feel comfortable I explained that the research is about the discipline of psychology not themselves. I did not want people to think that I would be recreating aspects of anthropological research by taking their responses and doing something differently with it.

I felt myself within the research going between two parts of myself. I often felt a closeness to the trainees when they explored exchanges on placements but yet I felt a detachment from their experience as I am caught up in notions of racialisation and felt distanced from them as a black person. Therefore, I felt that my encounter was 'heavier' or 'more oppressive' than what they were describing.

What do I think about this?

I think the interesting dynamic here of me as a black researcher and my participants who were mainly white is an interesting aspect to write about. I felt the need to excuse and justify my topic as being important and used the fact it could be an emotional response which has triggered my interest. This overwhelming feeling of being uncomfortable about talking on the subject of race is something that I am trying to make sense of. This need to sugar coat questions and statements for it to be more accessible to them and not being direct with questioning is something that appears to be a habit for me in my discussions on race. Almost like there is a feeling of guilt for uncovering such histories. I would have thought it should be the other way around. What could be happening is a projection of my feelings onto the subjects which I am internalising and putting my anxieties onto others.

What have I learnt from this?

Those feelings inside me which are embodied require listening to. The words that I use and the way I represent things are done with caution and care. I wondered if some of my projections onto the participants were noticed? Each person brings into the room an embodied experience of themselves. This is at play in the interactions and effects our actions, thoughts and behaviours. I bring to my interactions an emotional representation of myself which is entrenched in historical, political and social elements which effects my attitudes and behaviours. I tend to feel more or less comfortable to reveal that self at different degrees depending on who I am interacting with. The way I am with young, white, critically minded trainees may be very different in comparison to presenting ethnic minorities trainees.

Creating spaces where people feel safe and comfortable are important to me. I like to reduce any threat or risks in social situations which results in me taking on a lot of my embodied experiences.

What action will I take as a result of my lessons learned?

Be reflexive about my embodied experiences and any projections.

Allow people to be aware of their embodied experiences they are bringing to a circle.

If I feel safe share some of these emotions/anxieties I am experiencing. If right, also pick up on any anxieties or tensions in the room.

Hold on to any unconscious thought processes.

Outcome:

I can reflect and be reflexive after an encounter. It is important to hold onto my beliefs and seek allies, so I do not lose sight of my moral grounding.