

**A Critical Exploration of the Creation, Dissemination, and Reproduction of Formal
Coach Education Policy in English Grassroots Football**

This research programme was carried out in collaboration with The English Football
Association

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of Liverpool John Moores
University for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Abstract

Formal coach education is an important part of a sport system that aspires to offer coaches the opportunity to learn and develop new processes relevant to their own context. Previous research on formal coach education mainly focuses on observations of on-course pedagogic practice to evaluate its effectiveness. This thesis extends this research by offering a novel examination of wider coach education policy. A collective case study approach was taken in collaboration with The English Football Association (The FA). The aim of this research was to critically explore the creation, dissemination and implementation of a formal coach education policy. This research focused on two FA grassroots courses which were released in August 2016 (i.e., level 1 and level 2 courses). Framed by an interpretivist paradigm, three studies were conducted, that included semi-structured interviews with policy makers, course designers, full-time and part-time coach developers, as well as document analysis and on-course observations. A theoretically informed thematic analysis procedure was adopted, connecting the data with the work of sociologist Basil Bernstein. Findings from the three studies bring to the forefront: 1) the processes of a wider system at play when creating coach education policy, 2) how personnel work within a system, 3) ‘what’ content knowledge goes into a curriculum, 4) wider consideration of relevant and applicable curriculum models and 5) empathy towards the role of coach developers in the current formal coach education landscape. This extends existing literature by providing a significant socio-pedagogical analysis of coach education policy. Here, education is not reductively divorced from social and political influences, but considered as a complex system. Recommendations include frameworks for research and evaluation that appreciates the complexity of coach education which is influenced by a range of powerful stakeholders. This thesis therefore offers an original outlook by repositioning coach education as a wider system.

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This research was part of a match-funded project with the English Football Association.

Declaration – Thesis Publications

Some of the work conducted has been presented at national/international conferences, and published within peer-reviewed journals, as listed below:

Journal Articles

Dempsey, N., Cope, E., Richardson, D. J., Littlewood, M. A., & Cronin, C. (2022). An examination of content knowledge in formal coach education curriculum. *Sport, Education and Society*, 1-19. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13573322.2022.2131761>

Dempsey, N., Cope, E., Richardson, D. J., Littlewood, M. A., & Cronin, C. J. (2021). Less may be more: how do coach developers reproduce “learner-centred” policy in practice? *Sports Coaching Review*, 1-22. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21640629.2020.1866851>

Dempsey, N. M., Richardson, D. J., Cope, E., & Cronin, C. J. (2020). Creating and disseminating coach education policy: a case of formal coach education in grassroots football. *Sport, Education and Society*, 1-14. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13573322.2020.1802711>

Book Chapters

Chapman, R., **Dempsey, N.,** Cronin, C., & Richardson, D. (2019a). Developing “the community” through the effective coaching of grassroots football: What's the role of coach education? In L. Gale & B. Ives (Eds.), *Coaching in the community: Developing knowledge and insight*. Manchester: An MMU Cluster for Research into Coaching Publication.

Conference Presentations

Dempsey, N., Cope, E., Richardson, D., Littlewood, M., & Cronin, C. (2019). *Examining formal coach education within the English Football Association (EFA)*. Oral presentation delivered at the International Council for Coaching Excellence (ICCE) Global Coaching Conference, October 2019, Nippon-Seinenkan Hall, Tokyo, Japan.

Dempsey, N., Cope, E., Richardson, D., Littlewood, M., & Cronin, C. (2019). *Examining Formal Coach Education Policy within the English Football Association (FA)*. Oral presentation delivered at the British Educational Research Association (BERA) Conference, September 2019, University of Manchester, UK.

Chapman, R., & **Dempsey, N.** (2019). *The impact of ‘social architects’ on formal coach education policy*. Oral presentation delivered at the Power of Sport Conference, May 2019, Liverpool John Moores University, UK.

Dempsey, N., Richardson, D., Littlewood, M., & Cronin, C. (2018). *An examination of the current policy trajectory of formal coach education provisions within grassroots football - Preliminary Findings*. Oral presentation delivered at the CRiC Coaching in the Community Symposium, April 2018, Manchester Metropolitan University, UK.

Support Documentation

The letter below is presented as recognition of the support offered to Sport Scotland after being invited to present and discuss some of my work undertaken as part of my PhD. I appreciate Sport Scotland providing me with a platform to present my work, illustrating some impact of the work that has been undertaken.



01/12/2021

To Whom It May Concern,

Firstly, we would like to commend the contribution Noel has made toward the area of coach education. A contribution that has found its way into mainstream thinking and conversations in the context of our coach education reforms in Scotland. We were the first home country in the UK to openly retire UKCC and establish our own framework of coach education in partnership with Scottish Governing Bodies of Sport, the Scottish Qualifications Authority, and the Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport & Physical Activity.

We recognise there are several independent yet interrelated considerations and decisions that need to be negotiated and made on the macro and meso level of the sporting system which have a direct impact on coach developer practice and learner experience on a micro level. Nesting Noel's work at the heart of some of our conversations with individual sports facilitated a common frame of reference through which we could navigate this complexity together. This was further enhanced when Noel accepted our invitation to speak to upward of 50 colleagues who are responsible for the development of the coaching system here in Scotland.

We are sensitive to the need to better connect policy to practice and our interpretation and understanding of Noel's work has enabled us to make some strides toward those aspirations and we look forward to furthering collaborations with Noel in the future.

Kind Regards

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Thesis Abbreviations

APA:	American Psychological Association
CCF:	Coach Competency Framework
CD:	Coach Developer
CCD:	County Coach Developer
CIMSPA:	Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity
CoP:	Communities of Practice
DCMS:	Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport
DR:	Distributive Rule
FA:	Football Association
GR:	Grassroots
LJMU:	Liverpool John Moores University
NGB:	National Governing Body
RR:	Recontextualisation Rule
TA:	Thematic Analysis
UEFA:	Union of European Football Associations
UK:	United Kingdom

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Really not sure where to begin when trying to convey the immense gratitude I have for a whole host of people and organisations in getting to this point, but let's give it a go...

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Chapter I

Introduction

1.1 An introduction to my research

I began my PhD back in June 2017, following a successful application of a jointly funded project between Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU) and the English Football Association (The FA). The FA had a broad aim to explore the effectiveness of their formal coach education provisions. In order to contribute to this, within my thesis, I critically explore how The FA created, disseminated, and reproduced coach education policy (i.e., in their level 1 and level 2 courses). These level 1 and level 2 courses support coaches within the participation domain (i.e., grassroots football) of coaching. Throughout the PhD I was also employed by The FA as a part-time coach developer¹ and coach mentor within the North-West of England. This gave me a partial insight into the policy itself, having experienced these policies in practice. The overall aim of my research never changed (i.e., critically explore the creation, dissemination and implementation of formal coach education policy in The FA). However, during the process of my thesis, I explored gaps in current academic literature. These ‘gaps’ were explored using a range of methods (e.g., semi-structured interviews, document analysis, observations) that provided findings that I believe have moved the field of coach education research forward, a little. In turn each question raised more research questions. This iterative process of research occurred up until the writing and editing of my thesis. Therefore, my thesis is the culmination of the extensive

¹ Coach developer is a broad term recognised by the International Council for Coaching Excellence (ICCE) and includes those who work in formal and nonformal contexts. Coach educator is a term also used when referring to them in formal coach education.

fieldwork I conducted, as well as the reflective discussions and debates I had with my supervisory team and external colleagues over the last five years.

1.2 Introduction to sport policy, national governing bodies, and coach education

Sport coaching policy in the UK is seen as integral to fulfilling broader objectives set by government and subsequent affiliated bodies (e.g., Sport England, UK Sport, UK Coaching) (Duffy et al., 2013; Green, 2009; Widdop et al., 2018). For example, sport is used to address issues of health and wellbeing through active participation (Sport England, 2021a), and coaches are important contributors to these agendas. Indeed, sport agencies and national governing bodies (NGBs) have been expected to contribute to solving these wider social and economic ‘problems’ at the local, regional, and national levels (Green, 2006; May et al., 2013; Widdop et al., 2018). This is evidenced in the allocation of funding from UK government departments, such as the Department for Digital, Culture, Media, and Sport (DCMS). Sport policy, and the subsequent infrastructure built to support them (e.g., coaches) are therefore part of a wider sport system. These policies are however contested, as different stakeholders within the system will have their own aims and objectives to fulfil. A potential problem with this is that, at any given moment, numerous stakeholders within the UK sport system will vie for funding allocation, or advocate for their approach to sport to be heard and implemented into policy (Green, 2009; Houlihan & Green, 2009; Weed et al., 2015; Weed et al., 2017). Therefore, sport policy in the UK is a socially constructed process influenced by a myriad of multi-level stakeholders (Bowe, Ball, & Gold, 1992; Culver et al., 2019; Griffiths et al., 2018). For example, the prioritisation of ‘increasing participation’ by wider government departments (i.e., DCMS) affects how Sport England may choose to allocate specific funding (e.g., funds to deal with increasing sport participation in marginalised communities). In turn, this may impact how NGBs (e.g., The FA) develop and deploy future

coach education and player pathways. As part of a chain, this then affects how coach developers support coaches and may influence what coaches deliver in community sport settings.

Through this chain, multiple stakeholders act in a complex and nonlinear fashion (Ball, 2015). The complexity comes from understanding that stakeholder influence in this case is neither explicitly hierarchical vertically, or collaborative horizontally. What this means is that no stakeholder (e.g., DCMS, Sport England, The FA) has absolute power and ‘say’ over another, or work exclusively with one another to fulfil policy objectives together. This presents a non-linear process of working, up and down, and side to side with numerous personnel, departments and organisations. Bernstein (2000) further illustrates this as he highlights that stakeholders in positions of power can have an influence at different levels of the policy making process. For example, objectives set by some stakeholders may influence the design of policy, but others within the policy process, may also influence how a specific policy is developed and enacted (Penney & Evans, 1995; Priestley & Humes, 2010). Therefore, policy, from its inception, can be a dynamic and often compromised process (Bernstein, 2000; Houlihan, 1997). On this basis sport coaching policy in the UK is part of a socially constructed and negotiated landscape.

As identified above, NGBs are one part of the UK’s contested sport landscape. Along with other sport agencies (e.g., Sport England, UK Coaching, UK Sport) NGBs are tasked with both increasing physical activity and developing athletes to win medals and titles at major championships (e.g., Olympics, World Cup, etc.). Sport coaches play an integral role in fulfilling these objectives. Indeed, coaching, which Lara-Bercial and colleagues (2016, p. 14) define as “a process of guided improvement and development in a single sport and at identifiable stages of development” has the potential to provide safe and effective activities. This development of coaches is therefore important to offer the necessary guidance and

support for athletes across a range of sports and contexts (Jones, 2006; Lyle & Cushion, 2017). The combination of objectives set at both ends of the sporting spectrum (i.e., participation and performance), also means that coaching is relevant to numerous stakeholders (e.g., government, NGBs, sport agencies, schools, local authorities, community clubs, etc.) (Houlihan & Green, 2009). Related to this, Watts and Cushion (2017) comment that coaching is interwoven in the social structures and coaching environments in which coaches reside. Therefore, coaching may look different in an elite football youth academy that focuses on performance of individual players, compared to coaching in a community programme focused on mass participation. Even within a single domain of coaching however (e.g., a community programme), the needs of learners, the relationships with stakeholders such as parents or employers, and the wider social, economic, and political influences on sport participation or performance will evolve continuously (Jones & Corsby, 2015; Miller & Cronin, 2012). Subsequently, coaches must contend with an ever-changing nature of sport and recreation contexts and a variety of participants needs. Therefore, in order to realise policy objectives, there is a need for policy makers to support coaches with their demanding activity.

Formal coach education² providers within NGBs have often been tasked with supporting coaches in different settings to achieve different outcomes. Typically, NGBs have devised formal courses with the aim of informing and shaping coach behaviour, such that coaches who are successfully accredited, leave courses better at plying their process within a given domain (Lyle & Cushion, 2017; Stodter & Cushion, 2014). Unfortunately, previous research demonstrates that formal coach education has had limited impact in terms of developing coaches practice (Piggott, 2012; Stodter & Cushion, 2014; Stodter & Cushion,

² Formal coach education is just one part of the way coaches learn and may not be the most impactful (Stoszowski & Collins, 2014). For example, Nelson et al. (2006) identify that learners can learn through formal, informal, and nonformal means (please see Chapter 2, section 2.2).

2019). Specifically, Piggott (2015) identified formal coach education as both ‘isolated’ and ‘decontextualized’ from the realities of coaches and their environments. Others have also described formal coach education as prescriptive, rigid, and out-dated, providing very little relevance to coaches and their development (Cassidy et al., 2006; Nelson & Cushion, 2006). However, caution should be taken here, as research has often been based on retrospective and subjective accounts post course. Nonetheless, courses may not include key aspects of the coaching process e.g., recognition of environment and context, adaptability, holistic development, etc. (Cooper & Allen, 2018; Cushion, 2007). Nor may they consider the biographical and contextual influences on an individual coach’s practice (Stodter & Cushion, 2017). This often short episodic approach to courses has been seen to offer little in the way of supporting the long-term journey many coaches engage with within a given context (e.g., grassroots football) (Cushion et al., 2010; Griffiths & Armour, 2013; Piggott, 2012). That said, many NGBs have constraints placed upon them in terms of time, funding, and resources in policy cycles (Piggott, 2012). Therefore, the difficulty for any NGB, is to create a coach education pathway that economically and efficiently supports the individualised and nuanced development of the coaches that they come into contact with.

1.2.1 Implementing change in NGB formal coach education

In order to meet coaches individualised and contextually specific learning needs, Paquette and Trudel (2018a, 2018b) have advocated for NGBs to embrace constructivist³ approaches to learning. Constructivist informed approaches (e.g., cognitive constructivism, social constructivism, etc.) value the experiences of what people (i.e., coaches) bring with them during episodes of learning. Broadly speaking, constructivism therefore rejects the

³ Constructivism is discussed further in Chapter 4, section 4.4 but is introduced here.

notion of an objective reality, and instead acknowledges that learning is an interpretative process that helps individuals construct their own versions of reality (Light & Wallian, 2008). The use of a constructivist approach to learning is not new to coaching and wider education provisions. For example, constructivist approaches to teaching and learning have been seen in studies on teaching swimming (Light & Wallian, 2008), during action research of an international shooting team (Ollis & Sproule, 2007), and within teacher training of physical education (Rovegno, 1998). More contemporary research (e.g., Paquette and Trudel, 2018a, 2018b) has offered processes to implement such an approach by suggesting ‘best practice’ ideas for designing constructivist-led coach education provisions (Paquette & Trudel, 2018b). Specifically, Paquette and Trudel (2018b) advocated for coach education to use a holistic, or ‘learner-centred’ approach that helps and challenges coaches to construct learning within the relevant context in which they practice. More recently, Chapman and colleagues (2019b) discussed how constructivist approaches to teaching and learning must allow sufficient time to trial and practice elements of coaching that is relevant to the learner on and away from courses. These designed courses must also include relevant content (e.g., psychology, physiology, etc.) to support and stretch the learner on elements of their practice. In turn, it is suggested that placing the learner at the centre of the learning process, where their experiences can help shape what is taught, how, and when, is likely to create more meaningful change in a coach’s approach to planning, delivery, and reflection.

Paquette and Trudel (2018b) also emphasised that the role of a coach developer was to be a facilitator of learning. From my professional experience, I believe this to mean coach developers offering knowledge and processes when and where it may be required to support each learner on their journey. This could include recognising when to directly instruct, or offer challenging questions or supportive feedback. Therefore, it is acknowledged that coach developers play a crucial role in delivering what NGBs set out to do. This role could include

enhancing a coach's skill and knowledge to be able to plan, deliver, and review their own practice (Cooper & Allen, 2018; Galatti & dos Santos, 2019; Kidman & Hanrahan, 2011). For example, support for coaches could include providing different multidisciplinary content knowledge. This could be content from disciplines such as: psychology, physiology, or pedagogy for example (Armour, 2014; Armour & Chambers, 2014). Stoszkowski et al. (2020) comment on the need for this information to come from evidence informed work in order to offer coaches suitable and reliable content. Alternatively, coach developers could support coaches to learn from previous experiences (Cronin & Lowes, 2016; Cushion, Stodter, & Clarke, 2021; Jones & Turner, 2006) through reflective practice (Downham & Cushion, 2021; Knowles et al., 2006; Kuklick, Gearity, Thompson, 2015), and through developing communities of practice (Culver, Duarte, & Vinson, 2021; Stoszkowski & Collins, 2014). Although each of these approaches have limitations, nonetheless, they may allow coaches to develop their understanding of different topics (i.e., the what), and how these are then put into practice. That said, as described above, pedagogical practices are part of a negotiated and contested process within wider systems (Culver et al., 2019). Therefore, in order to understand how to improve coach education, there is a need not only to consider how coach developers enact on-course methods, but also, how policies that influence coach developers are devised, disseminated and implemented.

1.3 Statement of the problem

Formal coach education is an important part of the sport system that aims to enhance participation and experience. However, previous research has mainly examined formal coach education through an on-course pedagogical perspective (e.g., Stodter & Cushion, 2014), or by focusing on coach developer practice (e.g., Downham & Cushion, 2020), rather than examining the wider coach education system. This critique is not stated as a means of

discouraging pedagogical or coach developer research, which actually has provided a basis to build my thesis upon. Rather, I recognise that to further understand how formal coach education exists and how it could be improved there is a need to examine the broader policy, alongside the pedagogical perspectives. One study which has addressed this was conducted by Culver and colleagues (2019) who highlighted how coach developers' practice is often ingrained within a wider system of influence from the policy itself. In simple terms, coach developer practice is shaped by what has often been created for them to deliver. Through viewing coach education from a systemic perspective, Culver et al. (2019) recognised that coach developers often struggle to meet the needs of their learners. Similarly, Cushion et al. (2019) suggested that coach developers' practice often reproduced current policy, as opposed to meeting the needs of the specific learners on the ground. This is because, according to Stodter and Cushion (2019), coach developer training has traditionally been generic and its effect on coach developers' ability to support coaches in an individualised and nuanced manner is unclear. This demonstrates that policy is an important, yet under examined influence on coach education practices. As mentioned above, however, policy is also subject to wider social and economic influences from powerful stakeholders. What is needed therefore is an examination of the contributing factors impacting on broader coach education policy and subsequent coach developer practice (Griffiths et al., 2018; Williams and Bush, 2019). Although recent research has begun to appreciate the influence of wider stakeholders (Culver et al., 2019), there still appears a significant gap in understanding how formal coach education policy is created, disseminated, and reproduced in practice.

1.4 Research aim and questions guiding my Thesis

The overarching aim of my research was to:

critically explore the creation, dissemination and implementation of formal coach education policy.

In doing so, this will open up and document the landscape of coach education policy making and illustrate how formal coach education courses have come to be, and are delivered. To achieve this, I have worked *with* The English Football Association (The FA). This collective case study approach will illuminate the processes, curriculum, systems and stakeholders that influence formal coach education in England, and provide a more complete understanding than currently exists.

With the above aim in mind, four research questions inform my thesis:

- 1) What was created by The FA as part of its 2016-2020 coach education policy?
(Study one)
- 2) How was the policy disseminated and perceived across the organisation (e.g., from strategic apex (policy maker) to delivery (coach developer))? (Study one)
- 3) What content knowledge was included in formal coach education courses, and how was this content structured? (Study two)
- 4) How did coach developers reproduce the 2016-2020 formal coach education policy in practice? (Study three)

These questions provide a broader and more complete understanding of formal coach education policy than we currently have. Although previous research has taken on a range of theoretical lenses to examine the influences that impact formal coach education (e.g., Bourdieu (Townsend & Cushion, 2017), Foucault (Avner, Markula, & Denison, 2017)), few researchers have gone back to the initial creation of the policies themselves. Such an approach is required given the socially constructed nature of policy and the influence of policy on coach education provision (Culver et al., 2019). Although I do recognise that due to vastness and complexity no thesis can ever offer a complete picture of policy making and coach education. Nevertheless, developing an understanding of The FA 2016-2020 coach education policy construction, dissemination, and implementation within a specific social, political, and cultural organisation makes my research significant for those involved in FA education. Additionally, the information and findings throughout the forthcoming chapters present a level of transferability (Smith, 2018) and relatability towards other NGBs and wider education institutions. For example, this research offers insights for other policy makers, course designers, and coach developers that could prove useful outside of The English FA, such as other NGBs and even wider educational institutions. Therefore, the work included within my thesis could help stimulate further discussions and research around the creation of formal coach education provisions.

1.5 The Case: The English Football Association (The FA) and grassroots football

The English Football Association (The FA) is the national governing body for football in England. The FA are responsible for the continued development, safeguarding and progress of the game of football across the elite and participation formats. The FA present an excellent case to explore coach education provisions as they service around 13.5 million people who regularly play football, and have a projected contribution of just over £10 billion

per year to English society (The FA, 2021c). More specifically, The FA have continued to develop their formal coach education courses and wider coach development approach within grassroots football (Chapman et al., 2019b).

Grassroots (GR) football coaching aims to offer players of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds the opportunity to engage, participate and feel safe when playing football (The FA, 2018b; The FA, 2021a). GR football therefore is encouraged to be diverse, inclusive and ultimately ‘for all’ (The FA, 2018b). Despite the size and scope of catering to the 13.5 million people regularly undertaking some form of football (The FA, 2021c), GR football coaches are often volunteers (The FA, 2021c). O’Gorman (2016) commented that very little is known about the nature of GR football, including the work of volunteers. These volunteers i.e., mums, dads, relatives of players, those who just want to help run a team, typically take on the responsibility of delivering a training session and a game across a 9–10-month season. This endeavour, which in my opinion, is incredibly selfless, often brings about numerous challenges (Potrac, Nelson, & O’Gorman, 2016). For example, volunteer coaches must aim to engage players, each of whom have their own needs, in environments that can often be chaotic (multiple teams playing/training all at once), while also managing other key relationships (i.e., parents, club officials, opposition managers, etc.) in the course of an evening or match day. These realities reflect the complex and ambiguous nature of sport coaching (Potrac, Nelson, & O’Gorman, 2016). It requires coaches to not only navigate their space, but ultimately, to orchestrate it (Jones & Wallace, 2006).

In order to support coaches to navigate the challenging environments of GR football, The FA have continually offered coach development programmes. Chapman and colleagues (2019b) offered a comprehensive list of documents analysed as part of their study, which demonstrated the evolution of FA coach education over the past fifty years. Specifically, Chapman and colleagues (2019b) described a recent move amongst FA coach education

policy to value the individual learner rather than merely providing information about ‘the game’. Consistent with the evolution of these strategies, The FA created an FA learning strategy (2016, internal document) that informed the release of the reformed level 1 and level 2 coaching courses in August 2016. These are the focus on my thesis. This learning strategy sought to impact coach education by focusing on the learner (i.e., coach) and their development, rather than merely ensuring coaches ‘pass the test’. A key driver for this change was The FA Chairman’s Commission Reports (May and October, 2014). Amongst a number of key findings (e.g., lack of English players in the professional game, lack of suitable facilities/pitches in GR football) both reports identified a lack of suitably qualified coaches across the game (namely up to UEFA B/Level 3). In the May (2014) report, it was stated that “volunteer GR coaches are not of a high enough standard to develop skilful young players” (p. 48) in relation to developing future professional players and there being a lack of courses above what was (at the time) the current level 1. From both reports, a need to (re)develop course pathways was identified and actioned for future policy within The FA, which saw considerable change within the organisation.

In order to service these reformed courses and from the findings of the May and October report’s above, The FA undertook an organisational restructure in 2015. The effects of this change are currently unknown and requires further exploration beyond my thesis. When beginning this project in 2017, The FA organisational chart looked as follows:

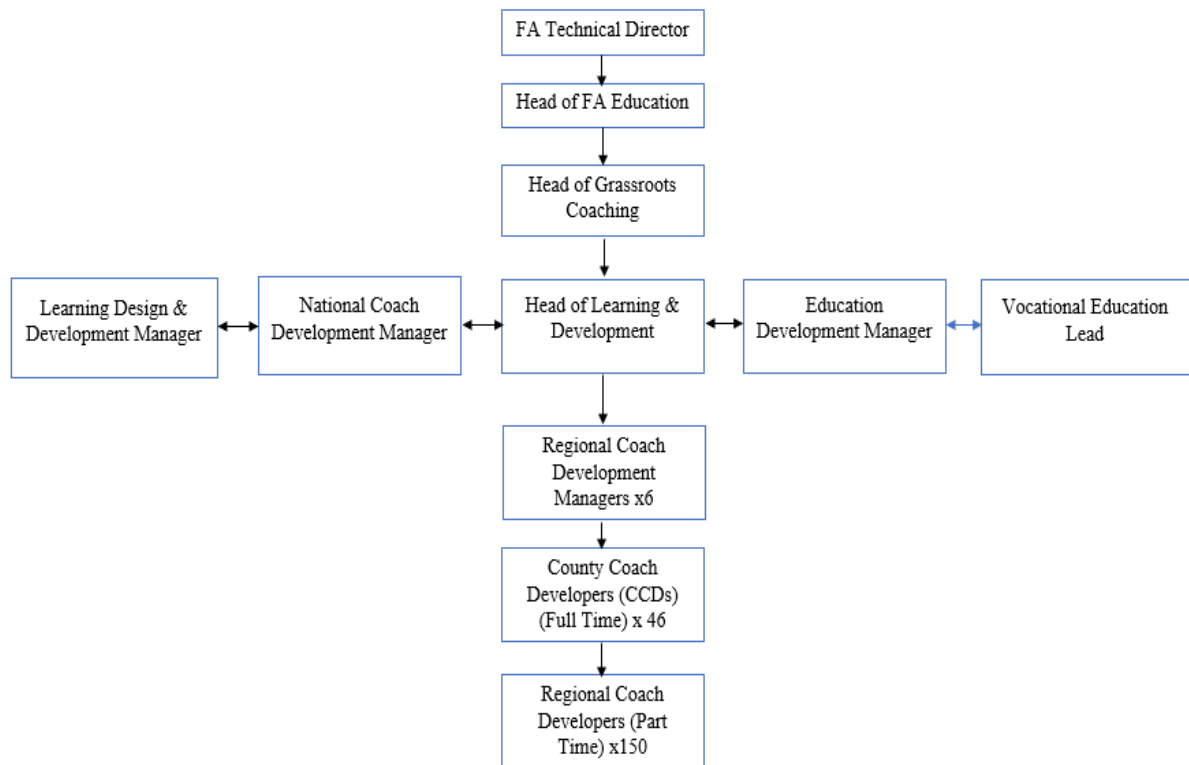


Figure 1. FA organisational chart - coach education section

Through the restructure The FA aimed to recruit a range of academic and educationally orientated personnel to help develop formal coach education courses, and to help recruit and educate the coach developer workforce. Through The FA application process, it became imperative that coach developers had a fundamental understanding of pedagogical (i.e., the methods and practices of teaching children) and andragogical (i.e., the methods and practices of teaching adults) approaches of teaching learners (namely post 16 and adult learners) (FA learning strategy, 2016). To achieve this, The FA embarked on a reaffiliation and employment drive of part-time coach developers in late 2015. I was part of this process as I became an FA coach developer and coach mentor for Manchester (discussed further in Chapter 4, section 4.4.).

The FA also continued to develop their full-time staff. For example, The FA, partnered with the University of Worcester (2018), to support the development of a number of full-time coach developers through a postgraduate-certificate programme. More recently, Redgate and colleagues (2022) also offered a realist evaluation of a postgraduate diploma in coach development between The FA and Leeds Beckett University. As with Worcester University, Leeds Beckett and The FA collaborated to help support full-time coach developers in the contexts in which they worked. In this study, these ranged from coach developers involved with youth development in professional clubs, coach development in national youth team coaches, and others from the professional footballer's association (PFA). Findings highlighted the need for the education of coach developers to be grounded in real-world practice, to value the interactional process of peers within the group, and offered coach developers a sense of credibility within their profession through these qualifications. This appears important, as Allanson, Potrac, and Nelson (2021) highlighted the challenges many coach developer's face. For example, coach developers feeling they need to critically reflect on themselves and plan how they aim to present themselves, their ideals, choices, actions, and emotions to others (p. 371). From these findings, consideration of where and how coach developers fits into the wider system of coach education, and within organisations such as The FA, need to be had.

The effort by The FA to develop staff supported the creation, dissemination, and reproduction of numerous policies, including the reformed level 1 and level 2 courses (2016-2020) and other initiatives (e.g., mentor programme). As part of this continued effort, The FA have also part-funded my PhD. From the outset, this PhD was envisaged as a collaboration between LJMU and The FA. More specifically, this research took on a co-production approach that Smith and colleagues (2022) termed 'integrated knowledge translation'. This is because my research was guided by both The FA and myself, as well as my supervisors at

LJMU. My research aimed to bridge the gap between research and practice to support and inform policy makers, courses designers and coach developers on their 2016-2020 coach education policy. A broader aim of this co-production was to guide and have some form of impact for the development of future formal coach education provisions within The FA, and beyond. Given this approach, collaboration between LJMU and The FA must be commended because The FA are one of the most widely scrutinised governing bodies within mainstream UK media. For example, they have been subject to critical reviews on wider issues concerning national stadium costs and sale of stadium (The Guardian, 2018), collaboration with other organisations (e.g., Premier League, English Football League), on disciplinary matters (The Independent, 2021), and national team failures at senior level (FourFourTwo, 2018). Given this scrutiny (warranted at times) it is understandable why The FA may, at times, seem like a closed off governing body. Nevertheless, from the beginning of the PhD, The FA committed financial resources to support an examination of their GR coach education provision, and should be commended for this.

1.5.1 FA qualifications: Level 1 and level 2

As part of my research, the courses examined were The FA level 1 and level 2 in coaching football (The FA, 2019a; The FA, 2019b). These courses were managed and delivered by local county (i.e., regional) FA's (n = 46, excluding additional FA's such as Army FA, English Schools FA, etc.) and awarded by the UK awarding body 1st4Sport (1st4Sport, 2017a; 1st4Sport, 2017b). Upon their release, The FA stated that:

The purpose of the new courses is to create a clear introduction to this [coaching] pathway that is aimed at people who want to coach as a volunteer at community club level or aspire to make football coaching a career. (The FA, 2016a)

Both courses sat within a wider FA coach education pathway (Figure 2.), which incorporated the five strands of the England DNA (The FA, 2020). The England DNA, initially released in late 2014, was created to support the development of players to help produce winning England international teams at senior level. It is a blueprint/framework for how The FA want the England teams to play across the different phases of the game (i.e., in possession, out of possession, transition) and stages (i.e., U15 through to full international first team) of development. The FA also created the DNA coaching fundamentals (Figure 3.) (The FA, 2021b). Here, twelve fundamentals were offered by The FA to coaches across the coaching pathway as somewhat of a ‘best practice’ approach to coaching.

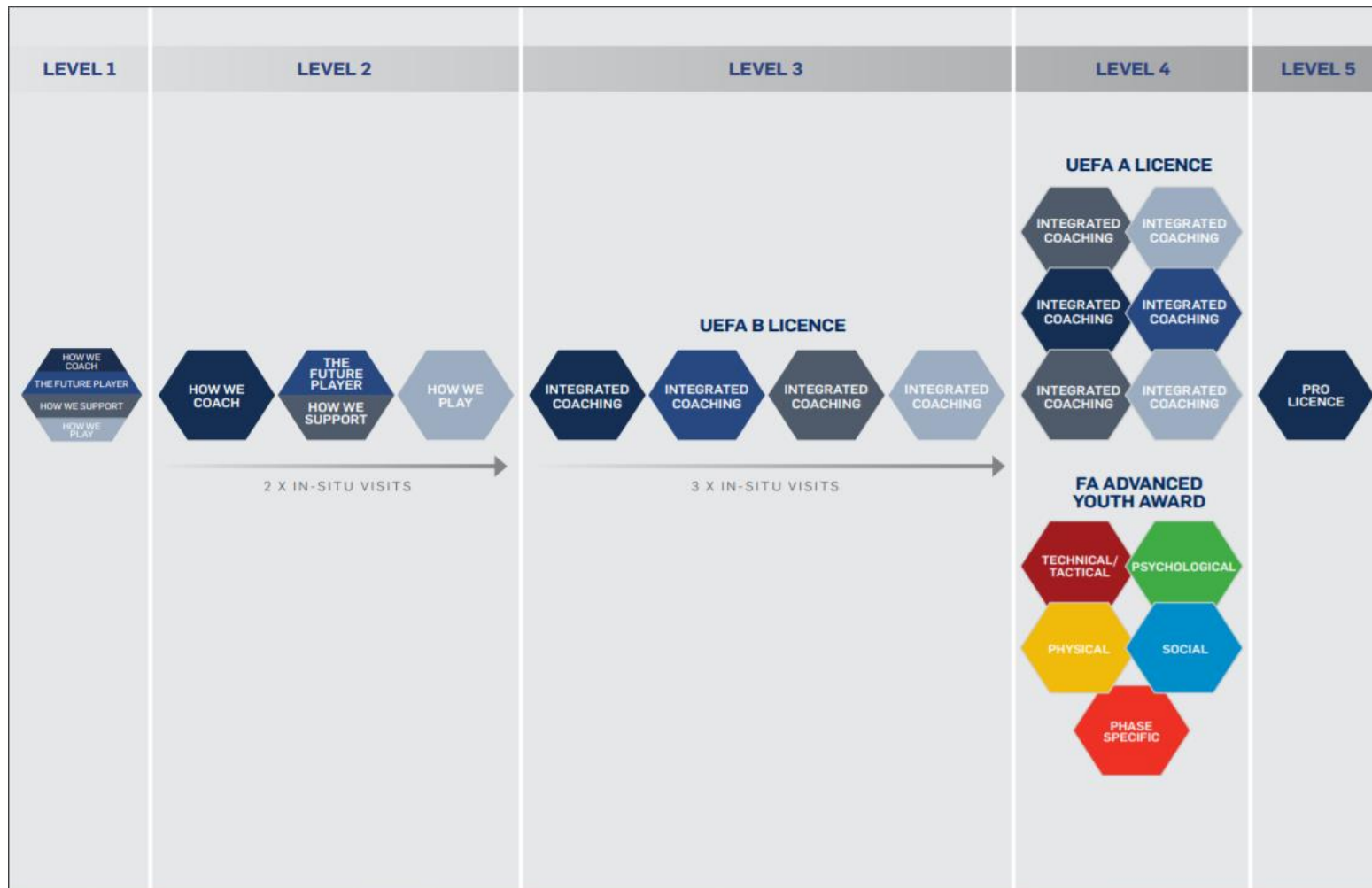


Figure 2. FA coach education pathway (2016-2020) (The FA, 2016b)

DNA COACHING FUNDAMENTALS

All England training sessions are built on the following core principles:



Figure 3. FA DNA coaching fundamentals (The FA, 2021).

The level 1 course included seven face-to-face workshops, each lasting three and a half hours (a breakdown of the course is offered in Chapter 5, section 5.3.2, and Chapter 7, section 7.7.3). The level 2 included twenty face-to-face workshops, each lasting three and a half hours each (a breakdown of the course is offered in Chapter 5, section 5.3.2, and Chapter 6, section 6.3.2). The broader purpose of the two courses aimed to support the development of a growing GR coaching workforce, which were made up of volunteers and young novice coaches in the main. Both courses inform the structure of my thesis and addresses the research questions (as identified above):

- 1) What was created by The FA as part of its 2016-2020 coach education policy?
(Study one)
- 2) How was the policy disseminated and perceived across the organisation (e.g., from strategic apex (policy maker) to delivery (coach developer))? (Study one)
- 3) What content knowledge was included in formal coach education courses, and how was this content structured? (Study two)
- 4) How did coach developers reproduce the 2016-2020 formal coach education policy in practice? (Study three)

1.6 Thesis Structure

To answer the four questions above, the following chapters critically explore the creation, dissemination and implementation of formal coach education policy. In order to do so, this first chapter (introduction) has presented a short overview of the topic area(s) and research questions posed. Chapter 2 will present a literature review, providing insight into some of the key considerations around the coaching process, coach learning, and formal

coach education policy at The FA. Chapter 3 provides information on the theoretical framework that supported the collection, analysis, and interpretations of the studies undertaken. Here I use the work of British sociologist Basil Bernstein. Chapter 4 presents the broader case study methodological approach that was adopted and which informed how my research was conducted. Individual methodology sections are also included in each of the three studies that follow. Chapter 5 presents study one, which examines the creation and dissemination of formal coach education provision within The FA 2016-2020 policy. Chapter 6 presents study two, which examines what content knowledge was used when creating a formal coach education course, and how this knowledge was structured within the curriculum on The FA level 2 in coaching football course. Chapter 7 presents study three which examines how coach developers reproduced The FA 2016-2020 policy in practice via The FA level 1 in coaching football course. Chapter 8 presents theoretical and practical considerations, as well as the implications built from the findings across the three studies. Finally, Chapter 9 provides a conclusion to my thesis, which summarises the original and significant knowledge contribution offered. It also provides future recommendations for both research and industry contexts alike.

Chapter II

Literature Review

2.1 The Coaching Process

Broadly, I believe that a coach's role is to try and develop 'better' people over time. However, what that broad scope may look like in practice is different depending on the context and purpose at a given point in time. For example, 'better' may include the refinement of technique or tactical awareness by a coach working with a professional footballer in an elite context to improve performance. 'Better' people could also mean developing a coach that effectively runs a community football session for underprivileged children to provide a sense of enjoyment and fulfilment. Thus, within each context, it is important to understand the purpose of what is being done, and more importantly, why. Taking the examples above, a coach may support a professional footballer to help them perform, which contributes to winning football matches. Additionally, a purpose of running a community session may be to keep those children 'off the street', to keep them safe, and instil a form of community cohesion amongst young people in that area. Based on these different purposes, shaping the individual coach's approach and subsequent behaviours is a discrete and nuanced endeavour. In each example, coaching requires skills, knowledge, and behaviours to offer a meaningful session for all involved. The nature of the coaching process therefore lies with valuing the specific coaching environment and context, the inherent aims set, and the people who inhabit such a space (Cushion, 2007; Lyle, 2018b; Kidman & Hanrahan, 2011). Developing an effective coaching process is therefore being able to interact with all three (context, purpose, person) simultaneously. Still, this does bring about a number

of challenges for coaches and is more complex than my initial broad statement above suggests.

The coaching process encapsulates the complex and multi-layered messiness of different coaching environments, contexts and subsequent practices. Specifically, Lyle (2002) and Lyle and Cushion (2017) highlighted the idea of ‘coaching domains’, commenting that, “...there are distinctive sporting milieux within which the participants’ needs, the organisational expectations and the prevalent practice of the sport result in quite discrete communities of coaching practice” (p. 71). Lyle (2002) proposed three domains of coaching, namely: participation, development, and performance coaching. Côté and Gilbert (2009) similarly proposed four domains of coaching, which are: 1) participation coach for children, 2) participation coach for adolescents and adults, 3) performance coach for young adolescents, and 4) performance coach for older adolescents and adults. Based on studies in Canadian sports (Erickson, Côté, & Fraser-Thomas, 2007; Falcão, Bloom, & Gilbert, 2012; Werthner & Trudel, 2009) it has been argued that within a specific domain a coach utilises key knowledge (e.g., interpersonal, intrapersonal, and professional knowledge) (Côté & Gilbert, 2009) to inform decisions as part of their evolving coaching process. In order to develop a contextually relevant coaching process, coaches require a nuanced understanding of their own domain and subsequent context because each will bring about their own needs, ambiguities, and challenges. To that end, it is important to clarify that my research focuses on the participation domain of coaching, and the context of ‘GR football’ in England (Consterdine & Taylor, 2022; Côté & Gilbert, 2009; Lyle, 2002; Lyle & Cushion, 2017).

GR football in England encapsulates the participation domain of coaching and playing football. GR football is associated with young children, through to older adults playing different formats of the game in a recreational manner (e.g., mini-soccer, 11v11, futsal, walking football, etc.). In England, GR football is steeped in the traditions of Saturday and

Sunday league games, populated by the players, parents (often coaching their own children) and officials (e.g., referees, welfare officers, chairman, etc.) (Webber, 2022). Generally, GR football aims to offer safe, fun, and engaging opportunities for all to play and learn the game (The FA, 2018b). As of March 2021, the GR workforce, comprising of both paid and volunteer coaches numbered close to 1.4 million people⁴, many who “volunteer their time, energy and expertise.” (The FA, 2021d, p.20). Upon the release of their new GR strategy, The FA commented “our commitment to GR football has remained...which will ultimately play a role in improving the health and wellbeing of millions of individuals across the nation” (p.20). These wider aims of improving health and wellbeing often align to government aspirations for the sport and recreational sector (Sport England, 2021). Critically however, sport policies (e.g., Sporting Future, DCMS, 2015; ‘Towards an Active Nation’, Sport England, 2016b) have often had limited impact on wider aspirations set (e.g., combat obesity, increase participation in sport and health related activities) (Weed et al., 2017). Given the limited impact of policies, there is a need to know more about the coaches, and their current process in order to support them. More specifically, O’Gorman (2016) highlighted the limited knowledge obtained around GR coaching, despite its wider influence on society. From experience within GR football, I would also highlight the lack of consistent support for coaches in order to build and maintain a safe, fun and engaging environment for all players. Potrac, Nelson, and O’Gorman (2016) also highlighted their surprise at such little research given the high number of volunteer coaches supporting the GR game, as well as the high demand placed upon this largely volunteer workforce. O’Gorman (2016) highlighted “the pre-occupation with elite youth level players and the governance of professional football has been accompanied by a relative academic neglect of football at youth and junior GR level”

⁴ These figures establish more recent 2021 updates of number of coaches. My thesis however does focus on the 2016-2020 policy where these figures would have varied slightly.

(p. 793-794). Therefore, there is a need to explore the different aim(s) and/or purpose(s) that influence the coaching process within the participation domain, and GR coaching.

Within the participation domain of coaching there are different contexts in which the game of football is played and used to support broader purposes. Here, there is a distinction between domains, which are largely static and broadly encompassing, compared with the notion of context, which can be seen as dynamic, temporal and continually reconstructed by actors. Many of these actors are influenced by wider social, economic and political agendas (e.g., increase participation in sport, help improve mental health, develop a robust safeguarding system) (Curran, Bingham, Richardson, & Parnell, 2014; DCMS, 2015). For example, Chapman and colleagues (2019a) identified initiatives such as ‘Man vs. Fat’ and ‘Walking Football’ that offer routes for people to enhance physical, social, and mental wellbeing. Both initiatives aim to support the fulfilment of wider political agendas linked to ‘Towards an Active Nation’ (Sport England, 2016b) and the more recent ‘Uniting the Movement’ (Sport England, 2021) for example. Both aim to get people active on a regular basis to increase physical activity, and support and maintain mental health (e.g., increase in confidence, motivated to get fit) to help reduce cases of illness and disease (e.g., obesity, diabetes, depression) on England’s National Health Service (NHS). Curran et al. (2014) also explored and highlighted the positive influence community programmes run by professional clubs could have on local communities (i.e., social support, developing community cohesion). Cautiously however, Curran and colleagues also highlighted the need for coaches to be trained beyond ‘the typical’ FA coach education provisions [in football] (p. 944) in order to deal with the increasing demands of addressing wider government agendas (e.g., increase participation). In doing so, this work illustrates that coaches may need support to meet the particular needs of those participants within nuanced contexts influenced by macro social, political, and economic cultures.

In addition to wider agendas identified above, the recent introductions of the female/girls 'Wildcats' initiative by The FA (The FA, 2018c) aimed to increase the number of young female players in England. Reflecting an ambition to thwart wider social inequality, its purpose has been to provide opportunities for girls and young women to learn and compete in football. Howie and Allison (2016) highlighted an FA review (2010, internal review) that explored the reasons why children play football more broadly (e.g., playing because it's fun, keeping fit and healthy, meeting new friends). To provide these positive experiences, the enhancement of a coach's skills and knowledge to be able to plan, deliver, and review their own practice and meet these particular aims becomes essential (Kidman and Hanrahan, 2011). This may include the development and refinement of coaching values, beliefs, and skills that directly relate to the broader purpose(s) of why a coach may be there in the first place (e.g., improve social cohesion, combat obesity, provide equal opportunity, etc.). I would argue that a huge challenge during any development of a coaching process however, is combating some of the traditions (e.g., aggressive behaviour, focus on winning) steeped in GR football. Thus, given the varied expectations placed upon volunteer coaches across the participation domain (Lusted & O'Gorman, 2010), there is a need to support the individual person/coach to develop their own bespoke coaching process within the specific domain and context they operate.

Given the range of contexts and multitude of purposes related to those taking part in sport, coaches should appreciate who stands in front of them. Harvey, Cope, and Jones (2020, p. 350) commented that "coach behaviours are of central importance to the coaching process as it affects, both directly and indirectly, athlete outcomes". In other words, the way(s) in which a coach behaves and interacts with other people can impact how a coach make others feel, think, and perform (Cushion, Ford, & Williams, 2012; Smith & Cushion, 2006). I would reiterate here though the influence of a wider influence of traditions within what could be

seen as a wider GR system of volunteerism and amateurism. An important part of this approach therefore is the relationship(s) a coach builds with their players'/athletes in the first instance, and others (e.g., parents, club official, league officials, NGB, etc.) (Jowett, 2009). For example, a coach would do well to connect and form positive relationships with their players in order to help build confidence, motivation and subsequent performance (Hampson & Jowett, 2014; Jowett et al., 2017a; Mageau & Vallerand, 2003). This can include valuing the athlete beyond their sport, getting to know them as people, and valuing their athletes/players own beliefs and processes. Given this stance, Jowett (2017b) commented that the coach-athlete relationship was therefore at the heart of coaching itself and that neither coach nor athlete could effectively 'do it alone'. This means a coach needs to continually develop their own skills and behaviours to meet the needs of their players (Kidman & Hanrahan, 2011). This becomes even more difficult given the need to understand and value the multiple disciplines (e.g., psychology, physiology, sociology, pedagogy, etc.) involved in supporting and enhancing athlete performance. Therefore, when aiming to develop an effective coaching process, valuing the people that a coach will engage with (e.g., players, parents, chairman, welfare officer, etc.) becomes an integral part of a coach's education, which is to meet individual needs on a consistent basis.

Given that an effective coaching process is shaped by valuing context, purpose, and people, research has suggested that coaching is a complex, socially constructed endeavour (Cushion, Armour, & Jones, 2006; Jones, Bailey, & Thompson, 2013). Considering each component (context, purpose, people) simultaneously is difficult and means the coaching process is no longer seen as a simple reductionist endeavour (Bowes & Jones, 2006; Cushion, Armour, & Jones, 2006; Jones, Bailey, & Thompson, 2013). By this I mean that the coaching process cannot be reduced or simplified to each of the components in isolation. Instead, we must value the interdisciplinary and interactive nature of all three simultaneously in order to

fulfil the required needs of others. Critically, coaching within any domain must also be seen as being part of a wider system that impacts how a domain, and context operates. For example, political agenda influence policy development, that subsequently influences what and how a coaching process may develop. The ambiguous nature of coaching means that coaching is heavily contested and negotiated between the individual coach and other key stakeholders involved at any one time. These could include other coaches (coaching with, or against) for example, ‘on the ground’, where a coach may be required to communicate, practice with, or compete against. This is because a coach will need to navigate their way through multiple interpretations of ‘best practice’, coaching ideals, motives and/or biographies of others to adequately inform what they do, how, and why. These interpretations could come from individual coaches, a collective set of people developing courses within a NGB (e.g., the FA level 1), or those within wider systems of influence (e.g., DCMS). Therefore, it could be contended that advocating a coaching process in an ideological fashion of ‘how it should be done’ does not meet the realities most coaches’ experience (Potrac, Nelson, O’Gorman, 2016). Rather, coaches are required to orchestrate their reality, often in a chaotic and nuanced environment (Bowes & Jones, 2006; Jones & Wallace, 2005; Jones & Wallace, 2006). This involves combating an array of ambiguities and dilemmas that coaches often face. For example, dealing with parents at different stages of the season when their child may not be playing, or, managing side line behaviour of those parents and substitutes during a tense cup game. Given these potential considerations, and the potential for ill-informed behaviours to be adopted by coaches, it is imperative that coaches are supported to develop an effective coaching process steeped in the intricacies and ambiguities of a coaches’ context, purpose, and the people they support. Given these difficult demands, coaches are required to try and learn new skills and knowledge to support those in their charge. How coaches go about learning however is also an area of deliberation and often negotiation.

2.2 Coach Learning

Many coaches have learnt, from a variety of ways, to construct knowledge, thoughts, and behaviours that are suitable for the context, purpose and individuals they work with. For example, Nelson and colleagues (2006) comment that learning could occur in formal, informal, and nonformal settings. Each setting exposes coaches to different types of environments and opportunities that may influence how and what coaches learn. For example, coaches could learn from attending a coach education course (formal) (Webb & Leeder, 2022), working with a mentor (informal/nonformal) (Leeder, Russell, & Beaumont, 2022), or participating in a positive community of practice (informal/nonformal) (Bowles & O'Dwyer, 2021; Culver, Duarte, & Vinson, 2021). These examples provide access to different types of knowledge (e.g., declarative or procedural, Abraham & Collins, 1998) that coaches could find useful to enhance their own process. In addition, coaches also learn a lot from 'doing'. The experiential nature of learning within a particular context means a coach could learn to plan, adapt and execute actions/behaviours based on the interpretation of the needs of those in front of them (Cronin & Lowes, 2016; Trudel, Milestetd, & Culver, 2020). For example, a GR football coach may plan to work on defensive 1v1s because she recognised her players were unable to prevent opposition players getting past them. This also brings about the importance of reflection as a tool for learning (Knowles et al., 2006; Stoszkowski & Collins, 2017). Providing space and time for coaches to practice, and reflect on their own practice, provides opportunity for further development (Gilbert & Trudel, 2005). Consequently, there have been a number of different approaches of how different coach learning opportunities have been designed.

Early coach learning in football often occurred in an authoritarian, or behaviourist manner (Chapman et al., 2019b). As pointed out by Roberts and Potrac (2014), the behaviourist stance could have been influenced by the positivistic influence of psychology as a dominating

discipline in higher education. Another factor could also include the long-established social hierarchy influencing wider society of being told what and how to do things (Bernstein, 1990). It somewhat viewed people (coaches in this instance) as docile bodies, that could be controlled by those in positions of perceived power. For example, Chapman et al. (2019b) highlighted early coach education at The FA as being somewhat controlled by the coach developers on course. Their study, highlighted that “coaches sought to conform to the educator’s [coach developer’s] preferred behaviours to pass the course” (p.687), and this depicted “tutors [coach developers] as powerful gatekeepers who controlled certification” (p.687). The early work of Skinner advocated this stimulus and response approach to learning (Cushion et al., 2010; Roberts & Potrac, 2014). This approach saw learning being valued as what could be seen (observed), for example, positive behavioural change within an individual. There was however more to this approach than the simplified stimulus-response mechanism that influenced how learners developed their own knowledge and navigated a perceived authoritarian learning space.

The influential work of Chesterfield, Potrac, and Jones (2010), who used the work of Goffman (a sociological thinker), explained that impression management, in the form of perceived changes in behaviour often occurred on episodes of formal coach education (discussed more in section 2.3 below). For example, participants within their study, stated “...the need to regularly intervene in practices during their [the coach] assessment was markedly different to what they [the coach] would do in their normal context.” (p. 308). Chapman and colleagues (2019) also commented that this approach was often taken by coaches’ on-course to appease those educators [coach developers] delivering the course. This in the most part was done to help them ‘pass’ a course. In addition, Denison and Scott-Thomas (2011), through Foucault’s writing, also illuminated the socially constructed nature of discourse related to the desired approach of coaching approaches, advocated by those in

positions of power (i.e., the coach developers). Discourse created, over time, by influential people and used continuously by those people in positions of (perceived) power (e.g., coach developers) can become the taken-for-granted norms of expected dialogue and subsequent practice/behaviour imposed in order to ‘pass’ a course. The specified discourse created and disseminated (e.g., pull your socks up, Chapman et al., 2019b) subsequently maintains the power of those offering a particular discourse and practice at a particular point in time. This stimulus (i.e., do as the coach developer says) and response (i.e., impression manage by coach) approach, and control, although not as simple as an action-reaction process, still required a greater appreciation of who (i.e., coaches on course) stood in front of the coach developers, and what they brought with them (e.g., experiences, skills, beliefs, etc.) onto a course. It also required an understanding that people were able to influence and affect the learning of others, which can be recognised as a contested space for favouring some content and processes over others.

As recognition grew that coaching was not an isolated endeavour, but instead a social activity (Jones et al., 2011), there was a need to appreciate the individual agency of those embarking on their coaching journey. This is because each individual will need some form of individualisation towards their learning across a range of [coach] education spaces (e.g., formal, informal, nonformal, Nelson et al., 2006). It also required academics to move beyond the historical behaviourist/authoritarian approach of stimulus and response proposed by more historical literature more broadly (e.g., Skinner, Pavlov), to a greater appreciation of the wider and more complex learning approaches. Each person who chooses to coach has numerous experiences, values, and beliefs which influences how they approach coaching (Cushion & Partington, 2016). This is also true for those constructing, disseminating, and delivering coach education courses (see next section, 2.3). Jones, Armour, and Potrac (2004) commented that in order to enhance a coach’s learning we must “embrace the personal

dimensions of coaching, and the ways that coaches' previous career and life experiences shape both their views on coaching and the manner in which they [coaches] set about it" (p.1-2). As part of this thesis, it is important to explore whether a formal coach education provision (as outlined above, section 1.4) embraces different learning approaches to allow people to engage, discuss and explore different ideas around coaching. Consequently, it becomes important to examine how people (e.g., policy makers, course designers) design courses to provide relevant time and space to help coaches learn.

When considering and valuing the needs of the individual and their learning, Stodter and Cushion's (2017) article identified, through semi-structured interviews and stimulated recall, the importance of a coach's 'biography' and subsequent individual and contextual 'filters'. These filters may (or may not) help coaches decide whether information gathered from different sources may be useful or not. Stodter and Cushion (2017) demonstrated that coaches were continuously constructing their own processes from lived experiences, experimentation, and reflective discussions in particular coaching contexts. This influential piece of research explicitly demonstrated the complexity of how learning takes place across a wider system of contexts. When complementing Stodter and Cushion's work with the works of Dewey and Schön for example, which were brought into the sport coaching field (see Nelson, Groom, & Potrac, 2016), help develop our understanding that the world is full of interactional and experiential opportunities. Critically however, and despite valuing people's individual agency, they are often part of a much wider system of influence. Numerous stakeholders, each of whom have their own perspectives and agendas ultimately influence what and how learning is carried out in particular contexts. To add to this complexity, problems within the context of coaching also come as a result of the often unpredictable nature of coaching (Jones & Wallace, 2006), and requires a constant reflective process to take place (Schön, 1983). This demonstrates the link and subsequent need and value for experiential learning from key

stakeholders (Cronin & Lowes, 2016), developing problem-based methods for teaching (Jones & Turner, 2006), and the need for reflection on the practices and experiences of coaches (Knowles et al., 2006). Therefore, returning to Stodter and Cushion's (2017) filter processes illuminates the individual, contextual, and reflective processes that offer a nuanced and complex explanation of how learning could be different for different people.

Given the appreciation of individual agency, alongside a mixture of learning opportunities across formal, informal and non-formal spaces (Cushion et al., 2010; Nelson et al., 2006), coach learning can be seen as a combined personal and socially constructed phenomenon (Stodter & Cushion, 2017). The experiential and social nature of learning led researchers to turn to constructivist perspectives (Hussain et al., 2014; Paquette & Turdel, 2018ab). Constructivism is seen as a broader umbrella term that often relates to different forms of constructivism (e.g., social, cognitive, radical, etc.) (a philosophical breakdown of constructivism has been included in chapter 4, section 4.4). Within the context of my thesis, social constructivism is used as a position where learning is constructed through the interaction of the individuals' mind and the environment (Schwandt, 1998). Schwandt (1998) alluded to the fact that people continuously construct their own knowledge about the world, based on the experiences they have within it. Vygotsky also advocated this point and considered learning a social process that had its roots within the social and cultural structures of a given environment (Potrac et al., 2016). This often meant that people (children in the case of Vygotsky) were required to engage and interact with others that inhabited their environment(s). These could include, parents, teachers, and coaches to help inform the processes of learning in different contexts, and in different ways. This appreciation of coach learning, within the context of this thesis, also illuminates the complexity of creating and disseminating learning opportunities within formal coach education. This is because people will hold different values and beliefs about how, what, and why certain aspects of learning

and content are important. In my view it also comes as a secondary process to what people in positions' of power are advocating as important within a broader policy. Therefore, this consideration of social learning for example (Potrac et al., 2016) brings about the recognition and importance of the need for collaboration and dialogue between people across a wide range of contexts and hierarchical levels. The need to engage, discuss, and debate offers those involved (e.g., coaches, coach developers, course designers, policy makers, etc.) the opportunity to build their own, and others knowledge, within a particular environment, and context.

In order to support coaches in what can be seen as social learning, authors have also advocated for the development of communities of practice (CoP) (Culver, Duarte, & Vinson, 2021; Stoszkowski & Collins, 2014; Wenger, 1998). Wenger (1998) highlighted that CoPs develop around things that matter to people (p.2). These CoPs invite and encourage: 1) joint venture, 2) mutual engagement, and 3) a shared repertoire that encourages dialogue and production of knowledge over time (Wenger, 1998). In coaching, this could include coach developers and coaches alike connecting in a GR context to discuss and debate coaching practice to increase fun and enjoyment using a range of practices and games. Critically however, it may struggle to align to wider influence from numerous stakeholders. To support the example above, Culver, Kraft, and Duarte (2020) alluded to the extension of three key characteristics of a CoP, namely the domain, the community, and the practice. Each requires the specific focus of an issue related to a practice within the given context. In sport however, and more specifically coach development, Stoszkowski and Collins (2014) contend “that there is a ‘clear and present’ danger that a CoP may similarly serve as a mechanism to regurgitate and reinforce the values of the social milieu” (p. 779). Critically, this could mean that policy makers, course designers, and/or coach developers in a coach education space

could reinforce discourse and practice already situated in the environment, instead of progressing and personalising it for the coaches in front of them.

To help combat this potential issue, Vinson, Huckle, and Cale (2021) advocated the crossing of sporting boundaries (i.e., moving across different sports/events) to support a coach's own development. Their study offered insight from coaches who recently completed a cross-sport development programme, and how it supported their future learning and development. Findings offered recognition towards a process of open and authentic social interactions that promoted honest and authentic appraisal of themselves in a non-judgmental space. Understanding others as well as themselves supported the sense making process and reflection of content delivered on the programme. The dialogical approach offered the chance to appreciate other people's environments (i.e., across other sports) and processes to support learner's own awareness. This would seem a worthwhile endeavour to pursue and encourage within wider coach development landscape when aiming to provide a supportive, and less judgemental approach across sporting contexts. When related to my thesis, the exploration of potential learning spaces and contexts designed by a NGB (i.e., The FA) on their formal coach education provisions would be a good place to begin.

Supporting a constructivist approach towards learning, my thesis acknowledges the influence of the environments that influence how and what coaches could learn, and from whom in a specific context. With this in mind, we cannot separate learning from a specific context and environment in which that learning occurs, and who may influence it (Daniels & Tse, 2021; Jones et al., 2018). For example, Williams and Bush (2019) demonstrated the positive influence learning could have in a community context when delivering a club-specific CPD programme within rugby. Williams and Bush (2019) commented on the need to merge "craft with science" (p. 386), alluding to the vertical discourse (discussed more in chapter 3, section 3.7) of knowledge and practice from HE and NGBs to support coaches

learning within their own context. This means that learning is susceptible to a myriad of influences and influencers that could impact learning via social, political, cultural, and economic means. Recent research into coach learning and coach education more broadly have used theorists such as Bourdieu (Townsend & Cushion, 2017; Webb & Leeder, 2021) to illustrate these range of influences. For example, Bourdieu extensively discussed the influence social systems have on a persons' ability to learn. His concepts of habitus, capital, and field have been transferred into more recent coaching literature (Leeder, Russell, & Beaumont, 2019; Leeder & Cushion, 2020; Webb & Leeder, 2021). For example, in football coaching for instance, a habitus in a particular field (i.e., football) may lend itself to 'traditional' behaviours by staff (i.e., coaches, managers, physios, parents, etc.) (Blackett, Evans, Piggott, 2017). This may be acquired by observing and modelling such behaviours in order to 'fit in'. In this way, coaches may informally learn and be socialised into potential ill-informed, or poor practices. Critically, during a coach's learning, these influences could also occur within a formal coach education space. These concepts support the analysis that societal influence(s) and power impact upon the thoughts, choices, and behaviours demonstrated by coaches. Learning therefore is influenced by, and as a consequence of, wider social systems. This implication and relevance to my thesis is that the learning journeys embarked by coaches through the creation and development of formal coach education provisions could follow similar influential stages.

Given the influential nature of wider systems (cultural, political, social, economic, historical) and the complex nature of coach learning, we must appreciate the enormity of the task at hand when aiming to develop coaches. Issues are likely to appear within a coach's learning process if, as many do (including myself), choose to adopt a number of fallacies and pseudoscientific ideals circulating within a coaching domain (Bailey et al., 2018; Stoszowski et al., 2020). This might occur because a coach may enter a new environment

(i.e., a new club) that has fixed traditions of practice (e.g., most of preseason is spent running and no footballs being used). Or a coach may be paired with a more apparent experienced coach, but who advocates for a lot of ‘stop stand still’ style instructive coaching only. Other influences can also come from a range of supposed opportunities within different contexts. For example, knowledge can be developed and contextualised into a formal course, continued professional development (CPD) session(s), or mentoring, as these are all sites of negotiated and compromised processes (Webb & Leeder, 2022). These processes are subject to influences from a range of stakeholders, organisations, and people, just like an individual’s learning process (Griffiths et al., 2018; Leeder & Cushion, 2020). Each of these people also carry with them their own experiences, biases, and intentions which could impact upon coach learning. Therefore, coaches may be subject to a myriad of ill-informed or contrasting views and practices from a range of people (e.g., other coaches, chairman, parents, coach developers, etc.) in their environment. NGBs and wider educational institutions must therefore develop coach education provisions that educate coaches across a range of different settings, with different personal and contextual factors. They must do this based on the best evidence available whilst also contending with, and try to (re)educate a large cohort of learners at times in contrast to widely held pseudoscientific beliefs (Bailey et al., 2018). This is not an easy task.

2.3 Coach Education

Given the appreciation of the complexity of coach learning, and the influence of a wider system at play (section 2.2 above), I enter this section with somewhat of an empathetic mindset. This is because creating and disseminating coach development pathways for so many is difficult. That said, formal coach education has the potential to play a crucial role in delivering the relevant skills, qualities, and knowledge required to enhance learning

opportunities. Much coach education within a NGB (the context of my thesis) typically falls into the ‘formal’ category of learning (Nelson et al., 2006). In the UK, formal coach education often takes place in an institutionalised, chronologically graded and hierarchically structured education system (Piggott, 2012). This policy space, as we know, is already heavily contested by multiple stakeholders (e.g., government departments, national sporting agencies, awarding bodies, etc.), each of whom want their say in what, how, and why a policy is created. In practice, formal coach education within a NGB setting can also be viewed as episodic, occurring in short bursts of interaction between coaches and coach developers. On these occasions, the combination of sport specific theoretical content and practical demonstration from coach developers are typically provided as learning opportunities on-course (Stodter & Cushion, 2014). However, any formal coach education provision is structured by policy makers, developed by course designers and is cascaded downwards to the coach developers. Each process of creation occurs in a different environment (i.e., university, NGB course) and is therefore open to contextual change. Such variation in environment and time (e.g., three-day course vs. three-year degree) makes it difficult to determine the impact formal coach education has more broadly, and instead requires a more specific exploration of: what course? (e.g., degree or NGB introductory course) What environment? (e.g., HE or NGB) And what learners? (e.g., full-time/part-time student, or volunteer).

Over the past two decades, formal coach education has come under considerable criticism. Much of the early criticism directed towards formal coach education focused on its lack of effectiveness (Nelson et al., 2013; Piggott, 2012; Piggott, 2015; Stodter & Cushion, 2014) compared to other forms of learning opportunity available to coaches. Formal coach education has previously been described as ‘isolated’ and ‘decontextualized’ (Piggott, 2015). This has led to the conclusion by many that formal coach education, such as structured NGB

courses are an inadequate means of enhancing coaches' learning (Nelson et al., 2013; Piggott, 2012; Mesquita et al., 2014). Furthermore, formal coach education courses have also been seen as bureaucratic and a curriculum-driven (i.e., content, discussed more in chapter 3, section 3.1) form of learning (Mallett et al., 2009; Piggott, 2015). Other terms used to previously describe formal coach education also include: prescriptive, rigid, and out-dated, and providing very little relevance to coaches and their development (Cassidy et al., 2006; Nelson & Cushion, 2006). Similarly, Cushion (2007) identified the importance of developing the coaching process within a more practical context; as it is the only context that really matters to coaches and to the development of their players. Arguably, learning within a very specific context driven domain, through experience and reflection offers coaches more relevant learning experiences than formalised coaching courses delivered in isolation (Cassidy & Rossi, 2006; Langan et al., 2013). Much of this earlier work however focused on what occurred on-course and through coaches' perceptions of their formal coach education journeys. Since then, many new iterations of courses have been developed.

Given the previous criticisms, more recent coach education research has advocated for coach education to offer a learner-centred approach. This has been informed by social-constructivist theory (Hussain et al., 2014; Paquette & Trudel, 2018ab). In response to this, NGBs such as The FA have utilised a broader range of apparent academic and educational evidence (see study two, chapter 6) in order to create a more efficient and professional coaching workforce and programme (Chapman et al., 2019b). Currently however, there is still no conclusive evidence of 'what works' within these revised coach education programmes⁵. Coach education still carries a level of ambiguity concerning what needs to be included to create sound coach education pathways for coaches (Cassidy et al., 2006; Stodter

⁵ I would stress here that I do not believe there is a single 'what works' given the complexity and difference each person brings with them on courses.

& Cushion, 2017). Coach education has therefore not yet demonstrated that it can help change coaching behaviours long term (Stodter & Cushion, 2019). Consequently, coach education has been seen to provide little in what Jones (2006) described as the intellectual, and practical competencies, including independent and creative thinking skills aligned to meaning making and problem solving. In other words, there is a need to improve how we (e.g., academics, policy makers, course designers, coach developers, etc.) support coaches to plan, deliver, and review relevant and engaging activities for their players on a consistent basis. To that end, wider coach education policy is an important area to explore.

Given the socially constructed nature of coach education policy (Chapman et al., 2019b), researchers have begun to recognise the negotiated endeavours required to construct such policies. For example, Culver and colleagues (2019) commented on the complex processes that required coach developers to navigate a much wider system of influence. This included fulfilling requirements of getting through content designed by coach development administrators (could also be known as course designers). This also extended in this study to meeting wider objectives set across a broad scope of different sport agencies (including 67 national sporting agencies) across Canada. Previous coach education literature attunes to the socio-cultural nature of policy construction also. Much of this research, using theorists explored in the section above (2.2), such as Bourdieu (Townsend & Cushion, 2017), and Foucault (Avner, Markula, & Denison, 2017) attest to the influence of multiple others on coaches' education and learning. Within these studies, influential individuals were able to determine elements of coach education provisions (e.g., content), which narrowed the possibilities for coach learning at times. This included prescribed topics and the degree of supporting literature and materials made available for learners. This impact demonstrated the influence certain people could have on a wider system of education. More recent research that provides a more positive outlook have used theorists such as Freire (Chapman et al.,

2019b; Cope et al., 2021) to look beyond the notion of coaching as a narrow and isolated endeavour, and to consider broader aspects of having choice and freedom of what is learned and feeling cared for by those supporting such learning. This research begins to unlock the requirement to view coach education provisions as a policy that serves wider stakeholders and broader outcomes within situated contexts. Given these parameters, the creation, design and implementation of coach education is compromised from the very beginning, but nonetheless may be a worthwhile endeavour as a means of supporting coaches. Indeed, the very acknowledgment that both internal and external stakeholders influence coach education means we need to extend future research to examine coach education policy from its inception through to its design and implementation. Doing so is necessary to envisage a coaching system that can provide education against a number of wider outcomes.

It would be remiss if I were to acknowledge the negotiated nature of policy development without having an understanding of the historical and cultural influences that guide coach education policy. Townsend and Cushion's (2017) article demonstrated the historical, socio-cultural tensions. Their findings "presented coach education in this case as far from being an unproblematic and straightforward endeavour but rather a socio-cultural, contested structure" (p.16). These included the programme director for example advocating 'taken for granted' assumptions (e.g., that ex-professional players make better coaches) shaping the suitability of coaches on advanced coach education courses. Also, there was resistance to some content if seen as incongruent with previous experiences of the elite coaches on-course. This maintained what the authors highlighted as Bourdieu's 'habitus', that is the internalised dispositions a coach relates to wider influences of a system they continue to be part of. Hussain and colleagues (2012) also found similar resistances throughout the process of delivering formal coach education. These included a change of approach to a more humanistic approach, inclusive of learning about coach and athlete needs, and creating coach

specific portfolios. This subsequent change in philosophy and approach to provisions required buy-in and the transition from ‘old to new’ manifested in some tension and resistance from those involved in the provision (e.g., coach developers). This came about given the hierarchical influence of numerous personnel involved within the construction of the provision examined.

Both of the examples offered above demonstrate the influence of power, whether they come from meso-level organisational influence, or from what Bourdieu would describe as social and cultural capital of the individual (Webb & Leeder, 2021). A recent paper presented by de Andrade Rodrigues and colleagues (2021) examined the constructed master’s programme delivered by Professor Pierre Trudel in a HE setting. Professor Trudel, an influential researcher, author, and practitioner within sport coaching and coach education literature conveyed how he constructed his programme over time. This programme provided choice, depth of required work to achieve certain grades, and a requirement of the learner to undertake different tasks. This is to be commended but also acknowledges the requirement of Bourdieu’s social and/or cultural capital in order to make such changes. Despite Professor Trudel’s positive influence, de Andrade Rodrigues and colleagues (2021) still caution HE institutions to do more to accommodate learner-centred approaches. This includes training and encouraging lecturers (could also be called: teachers, instructors, etc) to “teach in the shadows” (p. 13). de Andrade Rodrigues and colleagues also commented on avoiding quick drastic changes (i.e., all courses moving to learner-centred approaches), and instead value the cultural differences amongst HE institutions and courses. This was supported by Milistetd (2021), who stated that a lot of sporting structures are not yet ready to accommodate such an approach for the coach within their coach education provisions.

Given the issues highlighted above, and despite the best interests of learners trying to be met, utilising social constructivist theory to develop a learner-centred coach education

approach still appears problematic. For example, Paquette and Trudel (2018b) presented practical recommendations when designing learner-centred coach education. Although well intentioned, some still offer challenge. For example, their first recommendation “become a learner-centred leader”. In a previous article, Paquette and Trudel (2018a) highlighted programme evolution (i.e., development of coach education in golf in Canada) occurred due to: (a) program reviews and the dissatisfaction and resistance from the learners, (b) changes in governance, (c) trends in education, (d) systemic and governmental alignment requirements, and (e) continuity of key people involved (p.32). It means that Paquette and Trudel’s (2018b) first recommendation (e.g., become a learner-centred leader) offers little in the way of actualising this without the recognition of points B-E above. This is because any individual taking on a leadership role within coach education must contend with the cultural, political, and social evolution of society, education, and the sport. Additionally, the consideration of a complex and uncertain coaching landscape requires an examination of much wider aspects of coach education policy development. Ergo, one cannot simply ‘become’ a learner-centred leader.

Each construction of a coach education policy therefore requires insight into the culture of the organisation, wider society, and the changes that may have come before (Chapman et al., 2019b). This is because like in any organisation, people in positions of power will change/move on, as will the aims and objectives of the organisation and subsequent policies created. Related to this, Daniels and Tse (2021) combined the work of Vygotsky with the sociologist Basil Bernstein, who’s theoretical framework is used throughout my thesis (chapter 3 presents Bernsteinian theory in more detail). They alluded to the cultural influence on education as a cyclical process. They stated that the individual mind created society, and society subsequently continued the development of the mind. This means that the creation of language, context, and processes by those in positions of power, over

time, contribute to the complex field of sport coaching, and coach education lower down in societal channels. Therefore, a wider scope of meso and macro influences on coach education policy needs to be examined (Griffiths, Armour, & Cushion, 2018), if we are to understand and improve coach education practices.

Despite the positive and influential impact of coaching research over the last two decades, as identified above, coach education still requires further examination. In fact, a gap exists in our understanding of coach education as part of a wider system within society. An acknowledgement of this must go beyond accepting policy creation as a socially dynamic and contested process, and begin to examine *how* policies are created. It also needs to understand *why* processes have occurred and also *what* has been included as part of the policy itself. With this appreciation in mind, we can begin to examine the reproduction of policy on-course, having had a more complete (albeit not fully complete) picture of what has come before. Therefore, a deconstruction of formal coach education policy is required, before it can begin to be reconstructed with greater clarity and effectiveness. In order to achieve this, individuals, departments, and organisations need to make themselves open and therefore vulnerable to examination. The FA, through this project have been willing to take such a step. This is to be commended. However, greater exploration of wider influences on the policy processes is required to offer insight into what, how, and why these policies are created, disseminated, and reproduced.

2.4 Wider influences on a NGB coach education system

As stated in the introduction (section 1.2), a range of stakeholders (macro, meso, micro) often influence and impact upon where, why, and how coach education is created and disseminated. When considering policies related to the participation domain for example,

people may engage in this space of sport and physical activity to help combat issues such as obesity, mental health, and combating austerity (Mazzer & Rickwood, 2015; Widdop et al., 2018). To enable these outcomes, sport participation is somewhat supported and therefore financially influenced by macro (i.e., governmental departments) and meso (i.e., sporting agencies, NGBs) stakeholders (Widdop et al., 2018). The expected outcome for this support is often quantitative ‘achievement’ evidenced via increased rates of participation for social, political, and health related gain (Widdop et al., 2018). Despite this intention, funding has not always equated to gains in actual increases in participation rates. For example, Sport England’s (2016a) ‘active people survey’ reported that once a week football participation levels dropped by 2% nationwide between 2015-2016. Stakeholder influence is therefore an area that requires further exploration in order to support the wider objectives often set, and how NGBs for example aim to create their own policies around these objectives.

Historically, when considering macro and meso influences on sport policy processes, the UK government, via the DCMS, presented the DCMS (2002) ‘Game Plan’ report which sought to create an integrated and unified system for developing coaching within the UK (Padley & Vinson, 2013). One of the four key areas of ‘Game Plan’ (DCMS, 2002) was to increase participation in sport and physical activity in the participation domain (i.e., “GR” as detailed in the report). The aim of achieving greater participation was to try to remove barriers (e.g., reduce costs, increase information, increase opportunity, offer additional support through local and regional initiatives) to help create a culture of active participation in England. From this contribution was the creation of the UK Coaching Framework. The UK Coaching Framework 3-7-11 action plan (Sport Coach UK, 2008) referenced twelve other interconnected policies (e.g., UK Vision for Coaching; The Coaching Task Force Report, etc.), identified numerous collaborative partners (e.g., Government departments, SkillsActive, NGBs, HE institutions, etc.) and offered a range of guiding principles (e.g., great sport needs

great coaches; parents play a key role in children's involvement in sport, coaching must be equitable, inclusive and guided by professional and ethical values, etc.) (Sport Coach UK, 2008, p.11-12) to help shape the framework that other coaching organisations needed to align towards.

For all home nations in the UK the need to align, adopt, and adapt their systems offered an approach that would see both macro and meso level stakeholders interact to meet wider policy drivers (e.g., increase participation). For example, Sport Coach UK (2008, p.1) argued sport coaching “drives better performances and increased success as well as supporting key social and economic objectives throughout the UK”. However, Houlihan and Green (2009) identified that part of the struggle of continued collaboration amongst so many stakeholders is often a lack of clarity around stakeholder roles. For example, Houlihan and Green (2009) alluded to the different objectives of UK Sport (i.e., performance orientated), Sport England (i.e., participation focused), and the UK Coaching Framework. Policy development involving multiple stakeholders is therefore a contested and negotiated space. In terms of the UK Coaching Framework, this often resulted in other, and often micro stakeholders (i.e., personnel such as coach developers and coaches), being left out of coaching policy development (Lusted & O’Gorman, 2010). Wider system influence, including the employment of individuals for specific course design roles (i.e., as The FA did, above, section 1.5) meant coach developers were often left as the recipients of a policy created to deliver, rather than having a co-constructing role within it. Therefore, there is a need to explore how policy is cascaded from macro and meso stakeholders and how it impacts those on the ground (i.e., coach developers and coaches).

More recent policies like the UK Governments’ ‘Sporting Future’ (DCMS, 2015), Sport England (2016b) ‘towards an active nation’, and the more recent ‘Uniting the Movement’ (Sport England, 2021) have continued to set out key performance indicators and

subsequent funding. For example, Sporting Future (DCMS, 2015, p.10) targeted five fundamental pillars towards achieving an ‘active nation’ (Sport England, 2016b): physical wellbeing, mental wellbeing, individual development, social and community development, and economic development. Uniting the Movement (Sport England, 2021, p.11) somewhat followed this by aiming to “connect communities, and live happily and more fulfilled lives”. Sport England also aimed to tackle the recent impact of COVID-19 on people’s health and well-being, that as of October 2021 had seen 1.6 million people become less active (BBC Sport, 2021). Amongst the plethora of paperwork, funding expectations, and objectives, coaches at the micro level are expected to contribute to all of these. Yet, it has been sometime since Kay et al. (2008) commented that continued funding deficiencies and the subsequent reliance of volunteerism in the UK coaching system impacts on the level of coaching felt by athletes/participants. The constant need to achieve objective and quantifiable targets make any long-term creation of a system liable to quantity over quality. These influences impact upon the types of policies that are created within organisations such as The FA.

The FA interact with multiple stakeholders such as the DCMS, Sport England, and others agencies (i.e., awarding bodies such as 1st4sport) in a stakeholder chain that influences policy over time. For example, Sport England’s (2018) ‘the coaching plan for England – two years on’ demonstrated Sport England’s financial investment to support FA coach development by providing £2million per annum. This funding aimed to support NGBs like The FA and other stakeholders (e.g., UK Coaching, County Sport Partnerships, CIMSPA, etc.) to develop and maintain standards of coaching and coach development across England. This funding is to be welcomed given the complex and multifaceted nature of coaching, and recognition that coaches require support through effective coach education (Cushion, Armour, & Jones, 2003). To that end, The FA redeveloped their coach education pathway to support the development of local grassroots football coaches. Much of the recent change

leading up to the 2016-2020 coach education policy (i.e., the focus of my thesis) came as a result of The FA chairman's commission reports (May and October, 2014). With reference to coaching and coach education, the chairman's commission reported that the lack of quality coaching at GR level contributed to the lack of professional players in the top league in England (i.e., the Premier League) and the struggle of the national teams to win major tournaments (i.e., the World Cup). Both reports (May and October, 2014) encouraged the development of more coaches beyond the introductory level 1 courses (to more UEFA B/level three standard) to compare to rival European countries (e.g., Germany, Spain, France, Italy, etc.). The challenge however is how sport stakeholders balance the competitively based policy making system (i.e., governed by funding and objectives to be met), with relevant holistically focused approaches to coach learning and development (Padley & Vinson, 2013). This challenge illuminates the difficulties of creating a provision that is coherent and progressive. One that meets the needs of multiple stakeholders and their objectives, as well as developing those people on such provisions to offer more engaging coaching sessions for their players. This again, is not an easy task.

Given the challenges set above, coach education providers must engage within a negotiated space to support coaches with an evidence-based approach. This approach must offer relevant knowledge related to a coach's own environment(s), and the people within them. NGBs for example are therefore tasked with the training, development, and support of GR coaches in their respected domains (Lyle & Cushion, 2017) to meet individual and societal objectives simultaneously. Relevant to this, my thesis will focus on one particular NGB, The FA, and more specifically, their formal coach education provision at level 1 and level 2. The thesis will explore the 2016-2020 coach education policy, which builds on the past reports such as the chairman's commission report's (2014) that emphasised the need for more coaches and improved formal coach education that was at a time criticised in the media.

The 2016-2020 policy also builds from and responds more recent policies, such as to Sport England's (2018) continued funding, while also acknowledging a move influenced by social constructivist perspectives of coach learning (Paquette & Trudel, 2018a), and a flagging influence of the UK Coaching framework (Sports Coach UK, 2008). The following chapter therefore presents a further breakdown of policy considerations and also introduces the work of Basil Bernstein. Bernsteinian theory has been used throughout the rest of my thesis to offer a theoretical framework to guide and support the design and interpretations made from data collected across three studies.

Chapter III

Theoretical Frameworks to Address the Research Questions

In order to critically explore the creation, dissemination and implementation of formal coach education policy, I turned to the wider educational literature (e.g., Ball, 2015; Bernstein, 1990, 2000; Bowe, Ball, & Gold, 1992; Prestley & Humes, 2010), which offered a social perspective to complement the recent influx of sport coaching and coach education literature. This is not to say that such research (e.g., Ciampolini et al., 2019; Maclean & Lorimer, 2016; Paquette & Trudel, 2018ab) has not been instrumental in informing understanding of coach education to this point. Rather there is a need to understand the social construction of courses over time. This is because the construction of any coach education policy/provision is a socially co-constructed endeavour, influenced by numerous people across different departments and organisations. The space for negotiation and compromise therefore warrants an examination of such influences and negotiations to be able to offer and support development beyond the present case. This chapter therefore utilises the work of Basil Bernstein, who offers a sociological perspective of education and education policy. Thus, this chapter continues on from the literature review (Chapter 2) and the wider influences (e.g., wider political agendas, specific organisational aims, such as The FA Chairman's Commission Reports) impacting on coach education. This chapter begins with an initial appreciation of the complex nature of policy development and its dissemination, before offering a focus on a number of Bernsteinian concepts used as part of my thesis.

3.1 Policy creation: process and trajectory

Policies are not simply object ‘things’ (Ball, 1993). Policies involve complex socially constructed processes where outcomes have been formed by authorities, through expertise, multiple channels of communication, and negotiation. This allows for ‘something’ (e.g., a coach education course), to be created that aims to implement what a policy originally set out to do. I have found the process of policy creation fascinating throughout my research. This is because policy creation encapsulates a myriad of processes involving people within different hierarchical positions, perspectives and priorities. Houlihan (1997, p.49) stated that “any description of domestic policy making is an exercise in capturing the essential features of a dynamic process”, and this is what fascinates me. The policy process brings about the complexities from within and outside a particular sector or organisation. These include, but are not limited to, the influence of government departments, hierarchy of the organisation, individual roles and responsibilities, priorities, and explicit aims/outcomes set out by an organisation. Policy development can therefore reflect the cultural, economic, and social underpinnings of society.

When discussing the initial stages of policy creation, policy makers are primarily concerned with the development of a socially constructed document outlining the aims and objectives to be achieved, policy as text. Typically, a policy is perceived to require a clear aim for its creation, and an objective(s) of how it will look to achieve this aim. For example, within education, a policy may inform how a curriculum will best serve physical literacy within secondary physical education. Related to this thesis, The FA are responsible for the creation, development, and dissemination of coach education policy and numerous other policies (e.g., respect campaign, inclusion and diversity, etc.). Given the context of The FA and its requirement to maintain multiple policies at any one time, coach education policy must be acknowledged as an incredibly difficult task. This is because policy development is

not simply a linear process. Instead, policy is often mistaken for the simple creation of a document (policy as ‘text’) that outlines the direction of an organisation (Nudzor, 2009). Such a linear approach to policy creation and its analysis does not account for the level of interpretation, debate, compromise, and rejection that is involved in the construction and dissemination of policy (Ball, 2015). In other words, a ‘policy as text’ offers only a partial story.

As well as the consideration of policies as text, policy makers must also effectively manage policy as discourse. Here, ‘discourse’ can be understood as the verbal (as well as textual) communicative channels of information between individuals, departments, and organisations. The importance of communicating policies is as fundamental as the creation of the initial message (i.e., in-text), and should also be analysed to determine the projection, interpretation and understanding of such policies (Ball, 2015). Historically for example, within the education sector, Brown (1992, cited in Ball 1993) found that 7% of its teacher sample had never read any National Curriculum documents. More recently, Lambert and Penney’s (2020) and Lambert and colleagues (2021) work aimed to offer a more transparent approach to physical education policy, and the importance of engaging teachers in disseminating and interpreting policy. From an education standpoint, policy trajectory can prove difficult, and at times, policies are perceived as irrelevant. Education systems are often complex, and comprise of national government, local education authorities, to singular schools or institutions, and educators. This means that much of a policy can be seen as divorced from the lives of policy actors (e.g., teachers, coaches, coach developers). For those that do engage with policy, much meaning can be lost through a number of (re)interpretations and conceptualisations. Differing parties and individuals for different reasons will (re)interpret policy, where their own subjectivities/biases will ultimately impact how that policy is used (or not) in practice. Once a policy has been visited by so many influences(ers)

it could be argued that clear discourse for ‘what’ the policy is and ‘how’ it should be used can become lost. Liasidou’s (2009) work involving special education policymaking in Cyprus, noted that there were ‘contradictory values and beliefs vying for ascendancy’ (p. 107) and aiming to influence policy. These contradictory aspects included the influential discourse represented by political power of government when aiming to empower ‘disabled children’. This was expressed by policy trajectory offering ‘professionalised’ advice for the catering of children with a disability, as opposed to the nurturing and nuanced value of the children as ‘children’. The policy therefore offered an ‘official’ line of policy discourse, ‘normalising’ the children, rather than valuing them. This research demonstrates the importance of language/terminology chosen to be articulated during a dissemination process. This is because ‘what’ language is chosen ultimately impacts the thought process and practice approach of others more broadly. Therefore, the difficulty of managing discourse of policy, certainly within education, should not be considered lightly. There are many major barriers and potential stumbling blocks that often prevent policy makers from effectively, and at times, correctly, communicating socially constructed text of a policy. Thus, within this part of my thesis on coach education, there is a need to look at policy creation, policy dissemination, policy as text, and policy as discourse.

Bowe, Ball and Gold (1992) supported my early understanding of what was supposedly required when creating policy. Their ‘policy cycle’ provided some initial explanation as to the involvement of numerous individuals in the policymaking process. The policy cycle includes three contexts that they believed influence the policy making process: 1) the context of influence, which relates to *who* is involved and influencing the initial construction of the policy; 2) the context of text production, which informs *how* the policy is written, verbalised and disseminated; and finally, 3) the context of practice, which looks at how policy is reproduced in practice. The proposed policy cycle presented some excellent

initial insight for me. These contexts are apparent in each of the three studies (chapter's 5-7) included within my thesis, as they each offer a critical exploration of the creation, dissemination and implementation of The FA formal coach education policy. It prompted me to observe and explore curriculum development within education in more depth.

The work of Priestley and Humes (2010) offered further in-depth consideration of policy making. Priestley and Humes' (2010) article, which sits firmly within the field of education and curriculum development, presented further insights into what I wanted to try and explore within formal coach education within The FA. Priestley and Humes (2010) explored a new curriculum for excellence within Scotland and explained the types of curricula available. Building on the work of Kelly (2009) and Stenhouse (1975), Priestley and Humes explained three models of curriculum development. Firstly, Priestly and Humes described a *process model*, as a shared and co-constructed learning 'process' between educators and learners. This approach prioritised the development of learners as individuals in their own right, with a focus on understanding their individual needs, rather than a focus on predetermined content or roles. The process model has much in common with learning relationships that aim to promote the emancipation and empowerment of such learners (Kelly, 2009). In contrast to the process model, Priestley and Humes also discussed a *content model* that prioritised the learning of predetermined content, rather than the co-construction of curricula between educators and learners. Kelly (2009) contends that unlike the process model, a content model drives a particular culture directed by those in power. Content is likely to be based on what those in higher hierarchical positions desire, rather than being shaped on what learners need or desire for themselves. Therefore, shaping 'what' is transmitted could pose a culture linked to a more oppressive focus on what people in power want (Stenhouse, 1975). It must be highlighted however, that it could also be viewed by some

as liberating, with people offering what they consider to be the best version of a knowledge base that is currently known (Young, 2020).

Finally, a *product model* (i.e., objectives to be achieved) approach to curriculum development prioritises what a ‘competent’ learner “should” be doing. Like the content model, objectives created are often associated with those in power. Objectives also relate to the demonstration of behaviours, and as such, those in power can direct specific forms of behavioural change/development they desire, over the desires of the learner(s) themselves. However, the objectives model can be seen as overly simplistic, in that it regards learning as a linear process (Kelly, 2009). The wider English national curriculum has in recent times taken a hybrid approach of both content and objective models. Aims and objectives that have been set and are supported by predetermined content/topics to be taught as a way of assessing and standardising desired behaviours (Roberts, 2021). This then has informed success rates in terms of quantifiable data (such as pass rates), represented via league tables. For some people, this represents an attempt of social control by the government rather than an authentic attempt at developing a critical education (Preistley et al., 2021; Priestley & Philippou, 2018). Others however see this as a liberating approach of providing the ‘best’ knowledge (Young, 2020). It must also be acknowledged that a hybrid approach is not rare. In fact, a mixture of all three outputs is commonplace within any curriculum. However, Priestley & Humes (2010) advocate that one model should be used as an explicit starting point to guide curriculum making. This is because a clear starting point can support the coherency and consistency of a policy (Sullanmaa, Pyhältö, Pietarinen, and Soini, 2019). By this I mean, whichever approach (process, content, outcome) spearheads the policy influences how the other elements are created, disseminated, and reproduced in practice.

The extensive work of Priestley and colleagues (Priestley, Edwards, Priestley, & Miller, 2012; Biesta, Priestley, & Robinson, 2015; Priestley, Biesta, Philippou, & Robinson,

2015; Hizli Alkan & Priestley, 2019; Sinnema, Nieveen, & Priestley, 2020; Priestley et al., 2021) became more of a prominent focus throughout the PhD because it provided a way of analysing the social construction of curricula whilst also considering the practical implications (i.e., policy to practice). Study one (Chapter 5) echoes Priestley and Humes' (2010) consideration of different curriculum models. While Priestley, Biesta, and Robinson's (2015) work offered questions on the agency of educators. I used these concepts to consider how coach developers implement policy during Studies two and three (Chapter 6 and 7). Priestley and colleagues' work therefore provided an excellent insight into curriculum making.

With the above in mind, there was a need to not only focus on *what* coach education policy was being created in The FA, but *how* (i.e., the processes of creation, dissemination, and reproduction of policy). To address this, I decided to use concepts developed by Basil Bernstein to inform the work that has been undertaken. Bernstein's work has allowed me to explore the overall aim of the thesis (i.e., to critically explore the creation, dissemination and implementation of formal coach education policy). It must be acknowledged that other theoretical frameworks were available. For example, more recent coach education work involving the concepts of Bourdieu (Cushion, Armour, & Jones, 2003; Townsend & Cushion, 2017; Webb & Leeder, 2021) and Foucault (Cushion, Stodter, & Clarke, 2021; Downham & Cushion, 2020) were considered. However, I chose to utilise Bernsteinian concepts because: 1) they offered an opportunity for a multi-levelled (i.e., across multiple levels with an organisations hierarchy for example) analysis of policy creation and dissemination processes, via Bernstein's pedagogic device (Bernstein, 1990, 2000), 2) Bernstein offers a connected set of concepts over time that are able to be moved from the macro (e.g., distributive rules with his pedagogic device, explained below in section 3.3) to micro (e.g., framing, explained below in section 3.6) factors influencing policy, and 3) that Bernstein was able to offer these

factors in an iterative ‘back and forth’ manner to be able to zoom in and out of specific elements of policy. Therefore, Bernsteinian concepts offered a robust sociological and structural symbolic framework that enabled an examination of the processes involved in formal coach education policy development. This framework allowed me to address the overall aim of the thesis, which was to critically explore the creation, dissemination and implementation of formal coach education policy. Thus, it provided a greater evaluation of formal coach education provision within The FA.

3.2 Introduction and Biography of Basil Bernstein

Basil Bernstein (1st November 1924 – 24th September 2000) was a British sociologist who spent the majority of his academic career being associated with the sociology of education. Bernstein, who grew up in east London, was initially concerned with linguistics. This evolved, with Bernstein exploring the divisions of the class system (primarily between middle and working class) and its effect on children’s education and attainment (Bernstein, 1971, 1973). He used education as a field to explore how, through the structuring of language and its dissemination, middle class children were more likely to have a higher attainment of knowledge than their working-class compatriots. Throughout Bernstein’s long tenure of academic work, he was often referred to as several different things; 1) sociologist of education (I myself up until further reading thought this); 2) a structuralist; 3) a sociolinguist. However, in an article completed shortly before his passing, Bernstein reiterated that he was more concerned with a problem, rather than an approach; “what is required is less allegiance to an approach but more dedication to a problem” (Bernstein, 2001, p. 364). Fundamentally, he is most identifiable by the education ‘field’ he chose to be involved and the problems he analysed including how processes maintain cultural reproduction.

Bernstein went on to publish four volumes of *Class, Codes and Control*. In 1971, his *Theoretical Studies, 'Towards a Sociology of Language'*, was published. This was followed by *Applied Studies Towards a Sociology of Language* (1973), *Towards a Theory of Educational Transmissions* (1975) and *The Structuring of Pedagogic Discourse* (1990). All of the above demonstrated his ever-evolving tools and concepts to help explain, from a linguistic, and later, structural perspective, how class division was maintained between the working and middle class in education. In 1996, he published *Pedagogy, Symbolic Control and Identity* (1996[2000]). This book accumulated the previous fifty years of articles and book volumes written by Bernstein, along with his colleagues, and offered a fundamental text for those concerned with the field of sociology within education. This introduction, albeit brief, is important to understand the context of Bernstein's work within this chapter, and throughout the thesis. I must be honest and admit that I have struggled with some of his concepts. Bernstein's work, like many, had limitations (discussed in section 3.8). However, listening back to a talk he gave via video link from his home during the 'Towards a Sociology of Pedagogy' conference held in Lisbon in 2000, I was invigorated (Bernstein, 2000b). Like so many authors within any field, he spoke with passion, belief in his words, while acknowledging his views without wanting others to simply agree.

Bernstein, as I now begin to understand him, was not simply an author of sociology within education literature. He seemed more than that. He is, to me anyway, an author of society and culture. He saw education as a social construction and was keen to understand powerful wider social and political influences that lead to the construction of education provision and knowledge. As Bernstein (2000) indicated, pedagogy is a moralising ruler influenced by wider discourses. He considered pedagogy as the combining of relevance and meaningfulness to those involved in it, and across the plethora of his work on culture and symbolic control (Bernstein, 2001b) that mechanical pedagogies caused oppression, primarily

within the working class. For example, Bernstein illustrates the use of different language codes (below in section 3.4) and how they either elaborate or restrict different forms of knowledge. He wanted liberation for those receiving education. He was astute and clear in some of his final words, that, wherever there is pedagogy, there is hierarchy (in the sense of society and culture) (2001[2010]) and thus liberating education would help break down such hierarchical influence on educational discourse (i.e., by government and middle-class populations).

Within formal coach education research, Bernstein has been introduced more recently. For example, Griffiths et al. (2018, p.285-286) commented that Bernstein ‘offers a language to engage in a multi-level understanding of the impact of organisational culture on pedagogical practice’. This statement highlights the relevance of Bernstein’s focus on hierarchy, culture, and control to coach education. Through his concepts, Bernstein helps researchers to explicitly describe the complexity of education policy making and the development of a curriculum. In other words, Bernstein’s concepts help researchers examine *who* has the power to shape *what* education policy looks like, and *how* that is received by others. In the remainder of this chapter, I will present five fundamental concepts developed by Bernstein that help explore my own work in coach education. First, an explanation of Bernstein’s pedagogic device is provided (3.3). This is followed by language codes (3.4), classification (3.5), framing (3.6), and vertical and horizontal discourse (3.7). This chapter also acknowledges some of the perceived limitations of Bernstein’s concepts (3.8). Finally, a summary justification of why Bernstein suitably supports my research, and addresses the thesis aim is provided (3.9).

3.3 Bernstein's Pedagogic Device

Bernstein's pedagogic device provides a sociological lens for the production, recontextualisation, and reproduction of policy (Bernstein, 2000), that I have used to understand coach education. Within the pedagogic device, Bernstein (2000) described a set of internal structures, or principles. These principles operate within a social space, defined by the relationships between government, the education system, the economy and society, and the power which operates between them all (Moore, 2013). The pedagogic device therefore is not a material thing. Instead, it is a theoretical device that intrinsically examines the macro-political relations of a range of agents and institutions/departments. To do this, the pedagogic device enables researchers to identify the symbolic structures that distribute, regulate, and constitute what is to be known, by whom and how it is to be known (Bernstein, 2000; Moore, 2013). Bernstein continued by commenting that pedagogic discourse makes possible the *meaning potential* (i.e., knowledge) that is to be received by those looking to acquire it. The pedagogic device makes possible a particular form of discourse. What must be considered and appreciated is that any form of discourse will never be ideologically free, and instead will carry multiple influences from those involved within the device (i.e., government, the education system, the economy and wider society). Thus, the pedagogic device helps explore how particular discourse(s) are developed. For example, the national curriculum in England typically offers a tight prescription of aims, content and at times, method (Priestley, Biesta, & Robinson, 2015; Kelly, 2009). This pedagogic structure is deemed important by those who create the national curriculum and thus the pedagogic device prompts us to examine who has the power to produce a particular curriculum. What must be made clear, as it carries deep consideration throughout my thesis, is that policy and curricula are heavily contested, debated and often compromised processes (Bernstein, 2000). This is due to the level of acceptance and/or rejection of the policy that each individual chooses. The pedagogic device therefore

also prompts us to consider who influences policy as policies are dynamically interpreted and reconstructed. Thus, the pedagogic device is Bernstein's set of principles to investigate how and why education policy and processes occurred. Within my thesis, these processes will be explored in relation to The FA coach education provisions.

The pedagogic device is made up of three interrelated and hierarchically structured rules. Here, each rule proceeds after the other and each carries different forms of power relations within and between them (Bernstein, 2000). The first rule, the 'Distributive rule' (DR) involves identifying a body of knowledge to be learned by those receiving such information (i.e., the learners, coaches on a course). For Bernstein, the creation of knowledge often takes place in an esoteric fashion, whereby select individuals (e.g., governments and/or higher education institutions) distinguish the 'relevant' knowledge to distribute to learners (Bernstein, 2000). Bernstein termed such a distinction as 'thinkable' and 'unthinkable' knowledge depending on the particular form of discourse generated. This is where the first form of symbolic power comes into play by those selecting knowledge. For example, within education, the government in England would decide what knowledge was to be acquired and thus to become included as part of the key stages of learning in schools. Therefore, while there is thinkable knowledge that will be disseminated and presented to the learners, there is also unthinkable knowledge that, within those phases of education, it is determined cannot be known within that system. For example, in HE sports coaching degrees, thinkable knowledge may come in the form of HE staff including sociologists such as Goffman, Foucault, or Bourdieu as part of their studies. Introducing these to first years as an initial guide to help 'think' about the world and coaching. However, an author such as Bernstein may be excluded in these phases, and his knowledge may therefore be 'unthinkable' in this system, at this time. This power is often confined to the upper reaches of the educational system (Bernstein, 2000). These individuals and institutions control and manage the unthinkable, while the

thinkable knowledge is cascaded and managed by the schooling system of what has been decided as the ‘what’, ‘who’ and ‘how’ of knowledge acquisition. This process serves true to the processes that also takes place within sport, and more specifically within the case of The FA and its formal coach education system. NGBs are responsible for *what* knowledge they offer learners while on-course. This again demonstrates power within the phase of policy creation and development, given that those multiple actors involved in policy development will present arguments for and against knowledge they feel is required for the learners to obtain. This is because selecting and disseminating knowledge is a negotiated act, reflecting wider social, economic and political influences and priorities. The distributive rule, therefore, is a good analytical aid to use in order to examine research question 1; *what* was created by the FA as part of its current coach education policy? (Study one, chapter 5).

Bernstein’s second rule, the rule of ‘recontextualisation’(RR), is primarily concerned with the decoding and recoding of policy, from the site of initial production (DR) into a form of meaningful and contextualised practice. Bernstein describes the recontextualisation rule as that which regulates a specific form of pedagogic discourse (Bernstein, 2000). According to Singh, Thomas and Harris (2013, p. 469) the recontextualising rule involves “translation work that occurs when policy text moves from the site of policy-making to local sites in which policy is enacted”. Like the distributive rule, the recontextualisation rule is influenced by those involved in a policy’s dissemination, to make a legitimate form of pedagogic discourse. As such, the discourse of a policy offered by The FA, stems from not simply what The FA deem appropriate, but from what has been appropriated from the wider education system, society, and the individuals within the device in that moment. Accordingly, the recontextualisation rule offers a useful aid to explore how policy is disseminated and appropriated across an organisation such as The FA, and the narrow and wider power relations at play during this phase of policy dissemination. This brings a further consideration

of power and control during the phase of policy recontextualisation and the outcome desired by those at the top of a hierarchy. There has also been a concern within the context of coach education research that the knowledge, which has been identified for distribution and recontextualised rarely meets the needs of learners⁶ (Nelson & Cushion, 2006; Stodter & Cushion, 2014). Within the recontextualising rule, those in power “selectively appropriates, relocates, refocuses and relates discourses to constitute its own order” (Bernstein, 1990. p.33). Any recontextualisation, therefore, is interrelated to the distributive rule and is once again not ideologically free from influence.

Finally, the last of Bernstein’s three interrelated rules is that of the ‘Evaluative rule’ (ER). Bernstein explained that the reproduction of policy from a specified form of discourse into pedagogic practice involved specialising three elements, *time*, *text*, and *space* (Bernstein, 2000). *Time*, as discussed by Bernstein referred to the age and therefore acquisition of knowledge at a particular time. Within mainstream education, this is visible through the division of age year groups (i.e., year 1, 2, 3, etc.). Within an FA context, time has an introductory application of 16 years old in order to access an FA level 1 course in coaching football. Beyond such requirements, time (age) is less prescribed. There are however levels 1-5, and the seasonality of coaching to consider also. Next, *text* is concerned with the transformation into specific content and the evaluation of such content. Working in conjunction with time, text is provided to learners based on year group within mainstream education. Within The FA context, text has been more regulated to the level of the course (i.e., level 1 or level 2) and the content presented via PowerPoint presentations within each level. Finally, *space* is transformed into the context in which knowledge is appropriated and therefore the transmission of a particular discourse and subsequent pedagogic practice. The evaluative rule therefore is the actualisation of the meaning potential originally created by the

⁶ As discussed in Chapter 1.

device. By this, I mean that a learner's acquisition of knowledge, can be influenced by the prior rules providing and recontextualising thinkable knowledge. Within the context of The FA and my research, the evaluative rule sits as a secondary focus to the first two rules of the pedagogic device. This is due to a focus on what has been created and how it has been disseminated to coach developers for reproduction on-course, rather than focus on the learners (i.e., the coaches on course) themselves.

In sum, Bernstein (2000, p.37) concluded that the pedagogic device “acts as a symbolic regulator of consciousness”, which means Bernstein offers a framework to examine what and how people come to think and know what they do at a particular point in time (e.g., from a coach education course). It allows for the structural examination of each stage of the policy making process. The pedagogic device is used throughout my thesis, because it provides me with a conceptual tool to analyse the formal coach education policy within The FA. More specifically, in order to answer the following research questions, the distributive rule and recontextualisation rule allow me to examine: 1) *What* was created by The FA as part of its most current (2016) formal coach education policy? and 2) *how* current policy is disseminated across the organisation e.g., from strategic apex to delivery? (Study one, chapter 5). 3) How content knowledge was selected and recontextualised to form content for courses (Study two, chapter 6), and 4) looking at the reproduction of policy in practice by coach developers (Study three, chapter 7). The following sections will therefore look at other concepts within the pedagogic device that relate to these studies including: language codes, classification, framing, and horizontal and vertical discourse.

3.4 Language Codes

One of Bernstein's early contributions to socio-linguistic research within education, was his focus on language codes. As outlined by Moore (2013), Bernstein offered two interrelated concepts of classification (section 3.5) and framing (3.6), with elaborating and restricted language codes (this section, 3.4). All of these concepts explore power and control in pedagogic discourse and practice. With regards to language codes, Bernstein was concerned with how particular systems of speech and language influenced the acquisition of knowledge. Bernstein (1971, p.123) commented that "speech is a message, language is a code", which means the choice of language (e.g., terminology, concepts, ideas) shape what could become "thinkable" knowledge in a particular environment and context. How that is portrayed in speech offers a particular system to obtain that knowledge. Within the context of The FA, power and control of deciding *what* is to be known, and to decide *how* it is to be disseminated lay with policy makers and course designers deciding what type of language code to use (i.e., restricted or elaborating). I will therefore explain how both elaborating and restricted codes are prevalent within the processes of pedagogic discourse and therefore support the exploration of research questions 1 (what was created by The FA as part of its 2016-2020 coach education policy?) and 2 (how was the policy disseminated and perceived across the organisation (e.g., from strategic apex (policy maker) to delivery (coach developer)?) in Study one (chapter 5).

Firstly, elaborating codes describe a language that is presented as explicit to an audience. Bernstein used 'elaborating', as a verb in the sense of an actionable 'process' (Moore, 2013). The aim of an elaborating code is to simplify the complex, through explaining, unpacking, or clarifying it (Moore, 2013). The explicitness of a code presents itself so that people's access to meaning is not taken for granted or that any understanding is assumed (Bernstein, 1964; Moore, 2013). In an elaborating code, knowledge is explained and

demonstrated to form meaning on a wider scale (Bernstein, 1971). For example, elaborating on key strategies of implementing the formal coach education policy to coach developers would require an explicit explanation of rationale, aims and outcomes, alongside the methods to achieve them. In this example, elaboration is both a *relationship*, in that it presents something for someone, and a *process*, in that it needs unpacking to become meaningful. Ideally, this process should be prevalent throughout an institutions hierarchy in order to ensure policy is cascaded (clearly and coherently) from policy makers and course designers, through to coach developers and learners. In education, practitioners tend to identify elaborating codes in practice, where the relationship between transmitter (teacher or coach developer) to the acquirer (learner or coach) makes shared meaning of potential knowledge (Bernstein, 1990, 2000). By this, we may see an elaborating code as one that transports learners from the place of present (knowing/not knowing something) to another place, where access to knowledge provides expansion of a previously unfamiliar topic. Coach education is similar in that access to an elaborating code may provide access to concepts either not previously known, thought of, or applied in a given context, to one where a concept is at the forefront of a learner's consciousness. With respect to the pedagogic device, elaboration during the distributive phase of knowledge production, and the recontextualisation phase where policy is disseminated, could allow policy, curricula and knowledge to be understood more easily. Here then lies a potential barrier or struggle for power. The elaborating code being transmitted first comes from those operating at the level of policy making and design (distributive rule). Elaborating codes are therefore influenced from the very beginning by the political and cultural values and interpretations within the higher reaches of the policy making process. Subsequently, as policies, curricula and knowledge are elaborated during the recontextualisation phase, they will also be influenced by numerous people (see Study one, chapter 5). For example, in cascading policy, the process may be to cascade from policy

makers, to course designers, to full time coach developers, to part time coach developers, to coaches/learners, etc.

As opposed to an elaborating code, a restricted code suggests that a more localised and internal language structure is in operation. ‘Restricted’ refers to a shared level of understanding amongst actors (Moore, 2013). Language spoken here is predictable to the presenters and listeners and can therefore be condensed. For example, nuanced concepts and terminology are assumed to be understood by all individuals. In this case, knowledge may be ‘taken for granted’ and without elaboration, access to meaning is ultimately restricted to those people ‘in the know’ (Bernstein, 1971). Like an elaborating code, there appears to be both a *relationship* and *process* taking place that informs a restricted code. Here, the *relationship* would appear to be already cemented in shared and assumed understanding. In turn, this relationship affects a *process* dominated by acceptance of what is being portrayed or discussed. Bernstein offered a number of initial examples in his earlier work (i.e., Bernstein, 1964; 1971). One example includes the relationship of best friends. Within this, it is not the language used that distinguishes it as restricted. In fact, it is the lack of language, the lack of elaboration of dialogue between best friends that makes this such a good example. Non-verbal cues, looks, body language, eye contact all allow for the removal of language while meaning is still understood. Here, we may understand restricted codes in formal coach education where the assumption is made that policy makers, course designers and transmitters (i.e., coach developers) all understand the nuances of *what* is created. This removes the apparent need to elaborate during the recontextualisation phase. However, this assumption may be wrong. In other words, some coach developers ‘in the know’ may understand one message, while other coach developers have a restricted understanding. Like an elaborating code, a restricted code is not ideologically free. Interpretations of a restricted code may be established early on within the policy making process and maintained to ensure

a particular process of knowledge production, recontextualisation and reproduction. Here we must remember that both restricted and elaborating codes provide access to potential knowledge and further understanding (or lack of).

Language codes are prevalent throughout this thesis, as they offer a lens to explore in Study one (chapter 5) *how* policy is disseminated across the FA. Language codes are also useful in Studies two (chapter 6) and three (chapter 7) by understanding the reproduction of policy in practice.

3.5 Classification

As mentioned above, languages codes, classification and framing concepts were built as Bernstein continued to develop what would eventually culminate in his pedagogic device. Here, classification will now be discussed and related to language codes above (3.4) and entwined with the pedagogic device (3.3). While language codes explain that there is the potential for different types of communication (e.g., elaborating or restricted), there is also a need to understand what specific content knowledge is applicable within a particular code. To do this, Bernstein introduced classification, which is relevant to coach education because coaching is a multidisciplinary endeavour, and therefore involves developing a range of content across a number of different disciplines to support coach learning. Classification is concerned with the structuring and organisation of knowledge (Penney, 2013). Classification is concerned with the boundary insulation between subjects (or content) of knowledge that has been determined to be known. Classification occurs during the distributive and recontextualisation rules of Bernstein's pedagogic device in that knowledge, which has been established, as key for the eventual dissemination of education policy in a given context (i.e., classroom, football pitch). The development of knowledge again involves power at the macro

level of policy making and during recontextualisation to inform what is seen as a particular curriculum. Here, classification is concerned *not* only with *what* content knowledge is included, but the relationships *between* content to be transmitted as part of a curriculum (Bernstein, 1975). Bernstein (1975) identified his somewhat confusing use of the term, in that usually it informs us about categories of knowledge that could be taught (e.g., psychology, biology, maths, etc.). However, Bernstein was more concerned with the *space between* each category (i.e., an example here would be that physiology and psychology are often taught separately from each other with little integration). The space between categories could potentially determine a different form of discourse in the reproduction of policy in the classroom. Penney (2013) commented that the structures of any curricula carry symbolic and social meaning, as a form of control. This control is likely to reflect influences across wider society and as the discourse within the recontextualisation of policy in a given context. Those individuals privileged to be powerful will look to insulate categories of their preferred knowledge to maintain their social order (e.g., prioritising and protecting what they deem valuable). Classification, is therefore concerned with the organisation of knowledge to form a specified curriculum. Through classification, a curriculum structure reflects a power relation of knowledge that has been selected (distributive rule) and structured to form what can be known (thinkable) (Study two, chapter 6).

To further explore how curricula can be classified, Bernstein split curricula into two forms, *collection* and *integrated* (Bernstein, 1975). When discussing the space between categories, Bernstein referred to this as the *insulation* of categories. Bernstein discussed a strong insulation that pointed towards a *collection* form of curriculum. To help further understand the forms of insulation, Bernstein (1975) explained that classification can be described as being either strong or weak. Such terminology must not be interpreted at the level of positive or negative, so strong in relation to better and weak to be poor. Instead,

strong classification refers to the level of insulation between categories, being such that each category has its own unique identity and that a category's strength lies within the space it has from another. An example of a strong classification would be the distinction between traditional educational subjects, such as English and Maths. Each holds its own unique identity and therefore the *space between* each category is well insulated and typically impermeable (Bernstein, 2000). Here, a strong classification of categories can offer a *collection* form of curriculum. Weak classification on the other hand offers a far more permeable insulation, where categories are more likely to be blurred and cross one another as part of a more *integrated* curriculum. Weak classification will still reflect power relations between stakeholders. The difference is that discourse is less specialised, with less specialised identities between boundaries (Bernstein, 2000). An example of weak classification can be seen within more contemporary educational subjects, such as Sociology and Psychology, where categories can be blurred and integrated into aspects of one another. This can also be seen within this thesis, where the merging of educational concepts are embedded within sport coaching, and more specifically, a formal coach education context. Classification is therefore an awareness of boundedness between categories and contexts (Moore, 2013). It is the relationships, both internal (in relation to people, tasks, and the subject) and external (between school, work, and/or home) that form different boundaries of classification of knowledge. These relationships, like the previous concepts discussed can be controlled by those initiating policy making processes to support a desired outcome of a given curricula (Bernstein, 1990).

Within my thesis, classification is explored within Study two (chapter 6) and primarily addresses how formal coach education policy is structured and reproduced as curriculum in practice. However, given the nature of classification, with its concern around what knowledge is insulated or not, classification also provides scope to explore what content

knowledge was used (and what was not), and how such knowledge was structured to create a specific form of curricula. This is because whatever knowledge has been constructed to be known during the distributive phase of policy creation, ultimately impacts on the recontextualisation of such policy. Here, during this phase, there is the potential for multiple (and inevitable) discourse channels to be opened by those developing policy. As policy is cascaded down a hierarchical chain, it presents opportunity for new power relations that influence the classification of knowledge by individuals adding to or removing aspects of the policy through to the reproduction phase of either an elaborating or restricted language code (above, section 3.4). Within the context of The FA, and in relation to my thesis, classification presents an excellent analytical tool for exploring the categories of content knowledge deemed useful (and therefore ‘thinkable’) by stakeholders, and the space that is left (whether strongly or weakly insulated) between these categories while on-course.

3.6 Framing

Like classification, the concept of ‘framing’ was developed by Bernstein relatively early in his work (Bernstein, 1975). It was not until later, during his 2000 book edition, that Bernstein demonstrated its entwining with the pedagogic device with more clarity. Essentially, framing is concerned with *who* controls *what* at the micro level of pedagogic practice. It is part of the evaluative rule within his pedagogic device (Bernstein, 2000). From a Bernsteinian perspective, framing occurs once satisfactory principles have been established as to *what* knowledge will be used (and how) (classification) (Bernstein, 1975). Bernstein (2000) developed and explained framing as being the control of the four core features at the micro-level of the classroom, which are as follows and includes reference within the context of The FA:

- 1) Selection – this is the choice of *what* is to be taught and conversely, not being taught. Which content is most appropriate for a given group on a formal coach education course. Although this is already heavily influenced by policy makers and course designers.
- 2) Sequencing – what is taught first, second, etc. that would be most relevant for the learners in the room or on the pitch at that time.
- 3) Pacing – the rate at which something is taught. For example, how long to allow for activities, discussions, debates, practical demonstrations, so learners can acquire the selected knowledge.
- 4) Criteria/Evaluation – what is used to determine success (i.e., what makes a ‘competent’ coach in the eyes of the coach developer, on behalf of The FA).

Like classification, framing can be classified as being either strong or weak. Again, such terminology should not be interpreted at the level of positive or negative, such as strong in relation to better and weak to be poor. Rather, strong framing represents a level of control over the selection, sequencing, pacing and evaluation criteria that lies with the educator (i.e., coach developer) and therefore less control and subsequent power with the learner. Through controlling these features, coach developers can make explicit the requirements to be deemed competent (Aldous & Brown, 2010; Aldous & Freeman, 2017). Historically, formal coach education within The FA has taken on a more authoritarian role while on-course (Chapman et al., 2019b). This could be conceived as strongly framed, but not necessarily correct. In contrast, weak framing would see the learner have more apparent control over the features (Bernstein, 2000; Aldous & Freeman, 2017). ‘Apparent’ control refers to the fact that Bernstein, through his research, identified that from the very start, policy is influenced and

therefore created to maintain, or change, a particular social order. Therefore, despite ‘apparent’ control being given to the learner, it may still direct a particular transmission of knowledge directed by an educator. Bernstein (2000) also identified that each of the control features, selection, sequencing, pacing, and evaluation of framing can be framed independently of one another. For example, a lesson could be strongly framed in terms of sequencing but have a weak frame when it came to pacing. This is important in formal coach education because the choice of deciding what features are strongly or weakly framed can aid the development of how courses are practiced in order to meet the needs of individuals.

In relation to Study three (chapter 7), framing provides an excellent analytical tool for exploring how coach developers reproduce policy in practice. Secondary to this, research questions regarding The FA (2016-2020) policy also utilise the concept of framing. Here, the dialogue between myself and the coach developers during Studies two and three (chapters 6 and 7) enabled understanding of their perceptions on what content knowledge had been created as part of the 2016-2020 policy, as well as perceptions of how it had been disseminated to the wider part-time coach developer workforce.

3.7 Vertical and Horizontal Discourse

A final concept used within this thesis came very much towards the end of Bernstein’s life, with what he called ‘vertical and horizontal discourse’ (Bernstein, 1995, 1999, 2000). The concept came as a result of the previous conceptual developments and adaptations discussed previously in this chapter. Bernstein (1990) acknowledged, during his own criticisms of elaborating and restricted language codes, that “between language and speech, there is social structure” (p.95). Bernstein (1990) identified a need to analyse the transmission of discourses within his pedagogic device, and he felt that was not yet achieved using what he had already

created. He was conscious of not wanting to delve into the linguistics of ‘speech’ and ‘language’, while offering a perspective on discourse. Bernstein (2000) distinguished between the two by outlining that “sometimes one form is seen as essentially a written form (language) and the other essentially an oral form (speech)” (p.155). Bernstein extended this by elucidating that one form can be seen as ‘school knowledge’ or ‘official’, while the other ‘common sense knowledge’ or ‘local’. Such a distinction is not made at the level of intellectual ability of an individual or a collective. Instead, it is a distinction in the location of their creation, which in turn, provides different criteria for different forms of knowledge to be acquired. In the context of coach education and my thesis, social structures exist within The FA, in clubs and teams that will create a mix of discourse (written and spoken) to be disseminated. Each will occur at different levels of an organisation and include different forms of knowledge to be known. Coach education within an NGB such as The FA here is no different. To further explore these locations, Bernstein introduced the horizontal and vertical discourse concepts.

To begin, horizontal discourse offers the following features that make it distinguishable from vertical discourse. These are, as stated by Bernstein, “likely to be oral, local, context dependent and specific, tacit, multi-layered and contradictory across but not within contexts” (Bernstein, 2000, p.157). Here, Bernstein highlighted this common-sense knowledge through the more informal pedagogic acts within a community. For example, developing an understanding of crossing the road, which could involve initial experience crossing with a parent/guardian, to then growing up with friends who develop a way of crossing the road (i.e., at traffic lights, looking both ways, etc.). In coaching, it may be observing another coach when they are warming up their team before a game. Another, and more crucial feature is that horizontal discourse is explained as segmentally organised. By this, Bernstein meant that horizontal discourse across collective groups is likely to be

separate, with each having their own nuanced forms of distinguishable discourses and subsequent knowledge. Within the context of this thesis, and in coaching as a broad umbrella term within The FA, groups adopting horizontal discourses may involve coaches, coach developers, mentors, mentees, medical staff, psychologists, parents, etc. Within these localised forms of communication, horizontal discourse can be seen to offer an influential form of knowledge. Moore (2013) commented however that horizontal discourse may only last the length of the segment it is part of. This can include the length of a formal coach education course, or the length of a relationship/interaction between a coach(es) and coach developer(s) for example. Despite the segmented nature of such discourses, horizontal discourse draws on localised features (e.g., environment that is being coached in), that aim to serve the collective, rather than the individual only (e.g., support of all players in a team, and all teams within a local GR club), and is therefore aimed to be understood by the wider community.

In contrast, vertical discourse can be identified through features that “takes the form of a coherent, explicit, and systematically principled structure [which is] hierarchically organised” (Bernstein, 1990, p.157). For example, this can be seen in relationships between doctor and patient, or lawyer and client. Within the context of The FA, a vertical discourse can be seen at the micro level between coach developer and coach. What is distinctive about vertical discourse is that it has strong distributive rules (section above, 3.3) that ultimately regulates access to specific meaning, and therefore regulating both transmission and evaluation of that specified meaning. Within this thesis, vertical discourse can be identified within the current systematic and hierarchically structured approach within most education institutions, as well as NGBs (study one, chapter 5). This often occurs in a top-down approach to discourse being sent down, explicitly recontextualised by those in power and fed through an organisation. These power relations are dominated by those hierarchical positions.

There is, however, still compromise of vertical discourse given the power amongst those in similar positions within a given organisation. However, vertical discourse can still be seen to be created and distributed in an esoteric fashion because it supports the maintenance of power relations of a select number of people (i.e., policy makers).

Bernstein (2000) stated that both horizontal and vertical forms of discourse were often seen as oppositional rather than complementary. Both sets of discourses, have the potential to develop hierarchical knowledge structures (vertical) or horizontal knowledge structures. In practice, this can be differentiated in pedagogical practice, whereby horizontal discourse is able to generate potential meaning through contextually relevant, informal modelling or showing. In contrast, vertical discourse offers access through more institutional, formal forms of delivery such as formal coach education provisions. Within the context of the FA, and coaching as a wider discipline, both forms of discourse are present at any one time. What must be considered however, is, for the purpose of coach development, where may the best form of discourse lie at a particular time? Is it vertical discourse, top down from an organisation, or horizontal discourse across a segment that coach developers and coaches need? Or, can both forms of discourse be negotiated to provide coaches with the best form of education in a given time and space. This is considered in and study two (chapter 6) and study three (chapter 7) when aiming to consider how policy has been reproduced in practice.

3.8 Criticisms/Limitations of Bernstein's work

Bernstein's extensive work has offered the area of education and more broadly sociology a great deal. His work, like anyone's, was not without limitations. The continuation and evolution of his work testified to such a fact as he acknowledged pitfalls by providing extensions or new concepts built on what had come before. I will however focus on three

core limitations expressed by others around his work. Firstly, many saw Bernstein's early work around 'codes' as a deficit theory. Secondly, Bernstein's language and writing style makes it difficult to sometimes understand and interpret. Finally, Bernstein's work lacked empirical testing and support. Within the three of these, I will comment on how I aimed to overcome them within my own research.

With regards to the first potential limitation of Bernstein's work, and maybe the most crucial, was that many academics felt that Bernstein's early work around 'codes' and 'code theory' was a deficit theory. Bernstein's early work within this centred around the class system and how children from a working-class background would perform more poorly against their middle-class compatriots. This was taken by many to acknowledge a structural evaluation that those from a working-class background were in some way intellectually deficient (Bernstein, 1973). This was a claim refuted by Bernstein, and acknowledged by Frandji and Vitale (2011, p.105) who stated that "children limited to a restricted code are inherently neither less gifted nor less clever than children who have access to elaborating codes". He saw a sociological explanation of the difference in the division of labour, rather than a linguistic claim of deficit (Sadovnik, 2001). Bolander and Watts (2009) made an important point of contextualising Bernstein's work, which occurred in a time (post World War Two), and in an area of apparent deprivation (east end of London), coupled with the experiences Bernstein held as a teacher, either prior to or during his research being conducted. These are important points to consider as a division between the classes in wider society would have been more prevalent and felt amongst children in education settings. In this context, Bernstein must be acknowledged as a sociologist first and foremost, with a background in linguistics, rather than a linguist working within a sociological paradigm. In contrast to Jones' (2013) criticism, which stemmed from a linguistic stance of Bernstein's work, I have interpreted codes at the level of 'difference' and not 'deficit'. This means I view

elaborating and restricted code as offering a difference between what is thinkable (or not), not as class of people being inherently deficit of knowledge compared to another. I have read and interpreted Bernstein's work on language codes as a term reflective of presenting access to meaning. This therefore operates at the level of 'difference', that depending on the language codes used, presents different opportunities for access to meaning.

A potential contributing factor of the first criticism may have come from a second criticism of Bernstein's work. Bernstein's use of terminology and his style of writing often made it difficult to read and interpret many of his ideas. Bernstein effectively created his own language structure as he developed and evolved his concepts. He introduced terms such as *codes*, presenting a rationale for its use that enabled him to portray what he wanted. He continually redirected meaning to codes, which included terms such as elaborating and restricted and their meanings within his context of language and educational access. He continued to build and develop terminology, for example, from codes, to classification, framing, recontextualisation, all entwined and affecting one another. This meant that researchers had to, whenever possible, simplify his terms to form coherent meaning in their own context. Something I have struggled to do in this chapter at times also. The difficulty many seemed to find was that unless you had sufficient time and scope to delve into Bernstein's early work to familiarise yourself and actively decipher these terms, you could be forgiven for getting lost in translation when picking up one of his later papers or books. In his earlier volume (volume 1, Bernstein, 1971) he openly acknowledges his need to form a language to aid his explanations of what he wanted to say. He also acknowledged his short comings when moving on to new concepts, and his failure to sufficiently define, describe or explain a previous term. Such writings, and the subsequent criticisms that followed a lot of Bernstein's earlier work could be conceived as actually stemming from a misinterpretation of his work (Sadovnik, 2001; Bolander & Watts, 2009; Moore, 2013). This certainly was the

case linked to the first criticism on deficit theory explained above. This was something that Bernstein accepted. Within my own research and having the support of working with my supervisory team, I have gone through, and continue to go through, phases of needing to understand and simplify what I interpreted Bernstein was discussing, without losing each concept's fundamental principles. So, throughout my thesis and by revisiting concepts in each of my three studies, it can go some way to providing the contextual and theoretical explanations required to provide an interpretative stance of my findings.

Finally, many criticised that Bernstein's early work lacked the empirical rigour and testing to be able to adequately support what Bernstein was proposing. Bernstein's first volume of class, codes, and control (1971) was however a collection of papers examining his early ideas across a period from 1958-1971. Despite this apparent early limitation of empirical study and support, later research using Bernstein's concepts provided support and/or evolution of his work on specific elements first introduced (Sadovnik, 2001; Morais, 2002; Aldous, 2010; Aldous & Freeman, 2017). Barrett (2012), when reviewing Frandji and Vitale's book on Bernstein's sociology of education (2011) highlighted:

Bernstein's sociology of education...is ultimately more capable than others of theorising possibilities for educational change...while also pointing the way for continued development of Bernstein's work. (p.80)

With this in mind, the evolution of his work by others helps to solve the original empirical limitations of his work. That said, in this thesis, Bernstein's work has been used as a framework to help collect, analysis and provide a form of explanation for my own findings within the context of formal coach education. As such, my own interpretivist and relativist stance of the research informs this thesis (discussed in chapter 4), through an exploration of formal coach education within The FA. This reiteration does not come from a need of justification, but instead an appreciation for what Bernstein believed philosophically, while

rationalising my own stance of the world that ultimately informs, what and how I have written my work.

3.9 Why Bernstein is so valuable in this thesis?

Despite some of the limitations of his work, Bernstein offers a nuanced and incredibly useful theoretical framework to help support the work undertaken across my thesis. Namely, the pedagogic device provides a symbolic structure for exploring the fundamental processes of the creation and dissemination of policy (research questions 1 and 2) and how it can be evaluated in practice (research question 4). Bernstein's work also allows for the journey of going back and forth, from the macro structures impacting the policy process, through to the micro level of the classroom, and back again. Such an ability allows for greater insight and exploration of his key concepts outlined above in this chapter. For example, despite the pedagogic device being the final core concept of his work, previous adaptations and creations of concepts such as framing have allowed me to delve into the specific areas concerned with policy in the classroom (study three, chapter 7). While, at the same time, having a macro-framework to be able to offer a rationale and explanation as to how such a policy was able to get to that micro level in the first place. Examples of Bernstein's work can also be seen within sport coaching (i.e., Williams & Bush, 2019) and coach education more specifically (Griffiths et al., 2018). I believe that within the scope of my thesis concerning formal coach education, Bernstein, along with the work of Ball and colleagues (1992), and Preistley and others (Preistley & Humes, 2010; Preistley et al., 2021, etc.) are able to offer a sociological lens to a discipline still young enough to be able to form significant and original contributions for future development. This is because all three acknowledge the complex, heavily contested and negotiated social process of policy development.

Chapter IV

Methodology

4.1 Introduction

Following on from offering Bernstein as a core theoretical framework underpinning my work, the purpose of this chapter is to explain my own philosophical underpinnings of the methodological choices adopted throughout this thesis. It must be made explicit that no research concerning the construction of meaning about a particular phenomenon is researcher neutral or theory-free (Sparkes & Smith, 2014). Accordingly, I offer here my own account of what has been a messy research project. Indeed, its methodological rationale is a temporal account by me of the decisions taken during the research process. Individuals including myself, my supervisors, the participants, and other stakeholders (including supportive liaisons at The FA, and academic reviewers) influenced these decisions. Therefore, this chapter offers a first-person account that acknowledges some of my struggles during the methodological process, and also details the social construction of the studies that follow. It is by no means a definitive account of how research *should* ideally be constructed (Crotty, 1998). Instead, this chapter offers a rationale for the choices I made, and how they have led to the production of three studies that achieve the aim of critically exploring the creation, dissemination and implementation of formal coach education policy within The FA. Providing a transparent rationale is therefore important for the credibility of this thesis. Tracy (2010) commented that credibility should aim to offer a rich, thick description of interpretations in a social and cultural space that expresses some kind of truth towards the phenomena being explored.

To understand the methodological decisions within this thesis, we must first be reminded of the project at hand. The FA, which drove the initial considerations of the research, wanted, more broadly, to examine the effectiveness of their formal coach education courses. This research was situated within the domain of GR football (i.e., a participation domain) (Lyle & Cushion, 2017). This domain works with large cohorts of coaches, most of whom are volunteers, who support players in local communities to engage in safe and fun football activities. Given the size and scope of this project, it was split between myself and Mr Reece Chapman. We took on a parallel approach, utilising our respective previous experiences with The FA (see section 4.2 below). My particular focus was to explore how the level 1 and level 2 courses were constructed and disseminated within the 2016–2020 policy (current policy at the time of investigation), before exploring what content knowledge was being included (and excluded), and finally exploring how this policy was being reproduced in practice. This decision reflected the notion that the coach education system included multiple stakeholders, and therefore many influences(ers) acting upon it. It also built upon my own personal/professional experiences as a coach developer and coach mentor for The FA, and my interest in understanding how best we can support GR coaches within a formal coach education provision. Given the personal nature of the project, the next section (4.2) provides a reflexive story of my own personal and professional background (4.3), which influenced the research process. This is followed by the paradigmatic positioning of the thesis (4.4); the qualitative approach used in the studies (4.5); the collective case study approach (4.6); ethical considerations relevant to the thesis (4.7); my analytical journey through the data (4.8); and finally, my conceptions of rigour and judging quality (4.9). In doing so, the chapter offers a personal and transparent account of the research process which underpins the studies that follow.

4.2 A reflexive approach (to this chapter, and research thereafter)

Douglas and Careless (2008) outlined how storied approaches can support coaches in coach education by opening up a view of experiences into what has been seen, heard, and felt by those involved. A similar approach has been taken here to offer the reader a nuanced and contextualised insight into how my own subjectivity and experiences shaped and influenced the research process. Further, Berger (2015) commented on the importance reflexivity plays in research that actively involves the researcher. Berger defined reflexivity as:

the process of a continual internal dialogue and critical self-evaluation of researcher's positionality as well as active acknowledgement and explicit recognition that this position may affect the research process and outcome. (p.220)

This level of criticality is necessary because I am a part of the research, rather than simply on the outside of it (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Indeed, reflexive contemplation is a crucial strategy in the generation of knowledge in qualitative research. It does, however, require a mindfulness of where I was, who I was (i.e., the multiple roles I played throughout this process), and with whom I was interacting. As Berger (2015) went on to comment:

researchers need to increasingly focus on self-knowledge and sensitivity; better understand the role of the self in the creation of knowledge; carefully self-monitor the impact of their biases, beliefs, and personal experiences on their research; and maintain the balance between the personal and the universal. (p.220)

To illustrate the reflexive analysis that was undertaken within the PhD process, the sections that follow offer the reader a personable account of my personal and professional background. This aims to provide an honest, authentic, transparent, and at times vulnerable account of the biographical and social influences upon my research within the thesis. In doing so, it provides readers with an opportunity to judge the quality of the research process (Sparkes & Smith, 2009; Smith & Sparkes, 2016).

4.3 Personal and professional background

Following on from the section above, and continuing to reflect, there has been an inescapable link between who and what I am, in this research. My roles as a father, partner, researcher, coach, coach developer, and coach mentor have impacted upon how this research has been investigated, analysed, interpreted, and finally, written. This section is somewhat inspired by the work of Cushion (2001), who offered similar personal accounts. Douglas and Careless (2015) also commented that “we have a responsibility, as best we are able, to present ourselves alongside our participants because this is the reality of how social research unfolds: we do research *with* participants, not *on* them” (p.50). Therefore, the text below offers an insight into who I am, and what led to me being so incredibly fortunate as to undertake this research project. Such an account is not provided to occupy the central space of this research – it is not about me. However, it did involve me, my thoughts, choices, and actions (Douglas & Careless, 2015). Therefore, it is necessary to explicate the biographical influences on this research.

I remember, distinctly, the first football match I ever attended: Chelsea vs. Wimbledon, at Stamford Bridge. I may have been five years old, at most. My father took me on the London Underground from Walthamstow Central to Fulham Broadway station. That was my beginning, my introduction to football, and I loved it. My passion for the game has never waned. I played throughout my childhood, with my friends, in the GR game, at university and beyond. I was never the best, I knew that, but I was determined and stubborn. That determination took me through school, college and to university, completing a degree in Sport Science (BSc) and a Master’s degree in Sport and Exercise Psychology (MSc) at the University of Central Lancashire (UCLan). I enjoyed them both, but I was not sure what I wanted from them. These beginnings provided me with the motivation to find a way to stay

within academia and explore a sport I am extremely passionate about. However, this opportunity did not occur for a number of years.

Returning to London, I became a teacher, completing a PGCE at the Institute of Education, University College London (a place where, prior to undertaking my PhD, Basil Bernstein resided) while simultaneously teaching inner-London students within the further education (FE) sector. It was here that I chose to get involved with coaching. Not far from my house was a club, run by three brothers, all well respected in the game in London. It was here I chose to go and ask if I could help do some coaching. They embraced me with warmth and a desire to help me. I learned quickly: the detail, the intensity, the expectation of making young boys and girls into players worthy of the academy system and professional contracts in London and further afield. There, I completed my FA level 2 and UEFA B licences in quick succession. It was a learning experience I have never forgotten; know the ‘detail’, *on the ball, around the ball, away from the ball*. This initial journey of coach development heavily influenced my decision to take up this wonderful PhD opportunity. It also influenced how, in the initial phases of this research, I still thought coach education could/should be; that is, loads of technical and tactical detail. This often led to many debates and discussions with Dr Colum Cronin (lead supervisor), certainly during the first half of my studies. I thought I was ‘right’; I struggled with the fact Colum would not agree that ‘technical and tactical’ detail was essential in GR. I fumed – I will not lie. Now, it feels like a lifetime ago that those were my thoughts, and that was my approach.

After I had completed my PGCE, I ended up living in Sydney, where I remained for over a year, coaching every day. I had my own team – a female reserve team at a university in the city – as well as being assistant head coach for the first team. It had youth internationals playing in the side. I was struck by how good they were. I realised quickly I couldn’t simply turn up and put on a practice – I had to plan. This was where my love for

planning sessions really started. Being far from home, my coaching process and development was down to me; I was in charge of the girls' development, and I loved it. Returning to the UK, I was back in London only a few weeks before deciding to move to Manchester, where I now reside with my partner Naomi and our children, Theo (7) and Sienna (4) (and our dog Reggie).

The move 'up north' was spurred by a desire to be involved in the professional game. I have been very fortunate to work both full-time and part-time in professional football clubs, both as a coach and as a head of academy education. Entwined with roles within football, I still also taught in mainstream education settings. I have a passion for developing people; I want to help them. I felt such a passion that during my time at one club I ended up writing a book that was published on my interpretation of developing better people to develop better players. It is not academic; far from it. It is one of those books' academics would never hear of. Reading it back now, there are things I would certainly change in there; but it was mine, and I believe in its core message, which was that by developing better and more well-rounded human beings, you could produce better football players. The book reflects, on the whole, my outlook on the game, and more broadly, society, which is to simply want people to be better than me and be happy doing what they enjoy. However, I was certainly caught in two minds prior to beginning my PhD. On the one hand, I valued the technical and tactical elements (as mentioned above) of football and feel they are important to include in formal coach education. On the other, I have always aimed to use football as a vehicle to help support the development of better people. That is ultimately what I care about, but it was certainly lost in the initial phases of the PhD.

As it now stands, I am a UEFA A licence (UKCC Level 4) football coach. I worked for The English FA, both as an FA coach developer (across levels 1–3) and an FA coach mentor, for just under five years (leaving officially in February 2021). I was all of these

things prior to the beginning of this wonderful journey of a PhD. Some 12 years after starting my first degree, I was back in the academic allure of university, petrified; a new discipline, a new expectation, a completely different level of work. How could I ever separate myself from this research? This research, which aimed to explore how formal coach education policy is created, disseminated, and reproduced in practice, offered what I as a learner, coach developer, and mentor, had been part of for over 15 years. These courses, on a number of levels, are my past, present, and my potential future life.

I have been ingrained in the conflicting cultures of education and practice within football for a number of years. Such cultures have, at times, offered a lack of synergy between what is taught and what is experienced in my own practice (Stodter & Cushion, 2014). That is what has spurred me on throughout this PhD journey: how can I support The FA in evaluating courses to help coaches learn what they need for the realities of GR football? Also, the industry itself has offered little justification for particular practices across NGBs and clubs, where coaching philosophies have been shaped and moulded (Cushion & Partington, 2016). At other times, I have followed ill-informed and somewhat pseudoscientific principles or ‘traditions’ around coaching practice and behaviours because I did not have the skills to question them (Bailey et al., 2018). For example, getting younger players (5–8 years old) to do isolated technical work, or that 10–12-year-old players needed to be physically fit, and therefore needed to run! Such experiences, however, have also offered me some form of familiarity within the current field of study. For example, experiencing GR football has provided me with a good level of understanding of the realities coaches face on a weekly basis (e.g., parents, poor pitches, aggressive opposition, etc.). Also, my experiences as a coach developer and mentor have enabled me to learn and develop my ability to teach, guide, and facilitate the learning of others in those same spaces. Charmaz (2004) alluded to the fact that intimate familiarity forms the foundation of qualitative inquiry.

My experiences above have therefore informed my initial thoughts, and caused debate and discussion throughout this project. As such, my positionality within this research allowed for such familiarity, given my journey with The FA, both as a learner and as an employee.

4.3.1 Initial Reflections – where I was during phases of my research

As an initial reflection of ‘where I was’ during my research, I will admit that I probably did not get to grips with the role of ‘researcher’ in a space I was familiar with (i.e., coaching and coach education) in the early parts of my research. I did not yet value the combination of the ‘academic’ and ‘practitioner’ roles that I needed to adopt. They were separate (as was to be expected in the beginning). It took time, and during that time I was making errors. This was partly down to my biography and experiences going into the research process (section 4.3 above), as well as my initial approaches/processes undertaken during the research. Two initial reflections are offered here, aligning to: 1) who I was interacting with and collecting data on (i.e., policy makers, course designers, coach developers, etc.) (this is also considered in section 4.7 (ethical considerations)) and 2) the analysis process undertaken during the three studies (see 4.8 below; chapter 5, section 5.4; chapter 6, section 6.5; and chapter 7, section 7.4). These reflections help support the journey through not just this chapter (e.g., 4.3, my biography, 4.8, the analytical journey, 4.9 rigour and judging quality), but also across the three studies (chapter’s 5-7). These reflections also helped inform future practical applications offered (see chapter 8, sections 8.3 and 8.4), and concluding thoughts of where I came to be as a person, researcher, and practitioner now (chapter 9, section 9.5).

My initial phases of becoming a ‘researcher’ were difficult, and I struggled. For example, I struggled to manage my practitioner background and perspectives (i.e., technical and tactical detail really important in coaching). This impacted on my ability to shift my

thinking to wider, more conceptual considerations (e.g., Bernsteinian theory). However, through support and training, I learned to attune myself, and have a deeper appreciation for the people I was speaking with. This was most apparent as I learned from the participants in the early studies (i.e., study one, chapter 5), and the culture they operated in (i.e., FA coach education). For example, discussions during my transfer from MPhil to PhD (after the first 12-18 months of undertaking this project) led to the decision to go back and interview the participants again. This decision made for a richer data set and impacted on the knowledge obtained during data collection and for analysis. It meant returning to the same people (e.g., policy makers) and asking for 'more'. These were busy people, but during phase one interviews (section 5.4.1) I was not really concerned with that. I lacked full appreciation and empathy. However, during phase two, through dialogue and discussions with my supervisors, I began to somewhat appreciate the enormity of 'the coach education system'. Subsequently, I was becoming more comfortable with the nature of my research, I was appreciating those who were giving up their time to speak with me, which in turn impacted positively on the methodological processes to collect data (e.g., being more empathetic in interviews, see 4.7 below around ethical considerations also). The next challenge I found myself facing however was my approach to analysing the data.

Initial data analysis in study one (chapter 5) was a huge learning experience for me. The *journeying* (Braun & Clarke, 2019, discussed in 4.8 below briefly) from my initial study one process, which was rigid to say the least, allowed for more comfort (if not totally comfortable) in the constant thinking, reflecting, interpreting, and questioning of data. After reading more recent papers around thematic analysis (TA), my own journey was beginning to feel a bit more of a liberation: I had experienced a plethora of emotions while carrying out TA across the three studies, and began to appreciate its flexibility as a method of analysis. It also supported the complex and nuanced nature of the data itself. For example, study one

(chapter 5) required a “bending back on oneself” (Braun & Clarke, 2019, p.594), this took time, support, and allowed me to move from where I was in my research process at the time, which was very rigid and linear in my approach (e.g., familiarisation, to coding, to clustering, etc.). This led to deciding to conduct second interviews with FA staff (from MPhil to PhD transfer meeting). The revisiting of initial codes, clusters of codes, and themes helped me develop questions and considerations during the second interview process (section 5.4.3). It also helped me to coherently tell the story of policy creation and dissemination, utilising the theoretical concepts of Bernstein (chapter 5, section 5.4). And so, my journey with my analysis process developed into one of flexibility, while maintaining the provided framework of TA.

Within study two (chapter 6), the analysis process had both my supervisory team and myself discussing and tweaking themes all the way up to proofreading the whole study. The constant revisiting of initial themes often generated further discussion and requirements to dive back into the data. This was a far cry from the initial linear step-by-step approach to TA as originally conceived. Finally, study three (chapter 7) required a very long iterative TA process. The constant travelling across the country to courses (see, chapter 7 and chapter 6) meant that reflections were constant. Notes were made, fieldnotes were examined and coded, before having to wait for the next block of a course, or a new course entirely. Therefore, theme generation went through a comprehensive, messy process of refinement, amendments, and challenges. My notes were not always useful, they were muddled at first, vague, generic. Over time, they got better, they linked practice and theory. My emotions became less prevalent, while theory became more frequent. Across the three studies (chapter’s 5, 6, and 7), TA was never utilised in the exact same way, nor via the exact same process of data analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2020). The TA approach instead offered a nuanced flexibility,

while maintaining a rigorous and theoretically informed (i.e., via Bernsteinian) method (these can be seen in chapter 5, section 5.4; chapter 6, section 6.5; chapter 7, section 7.4).

The examples offered above are part of my initial reflections of my methodological journey. Throughout the rest of this chapter, I identify how this process evolved, as well as how it influenced the three studies (chapter's 5-7). Finally, this section is revisited in section 9.5 in the conclusion chapter (chapter 9) to offer a more current reflection of 'where I am now'.

4.4 Paradigmatic positioning – ontological and epistemological stance

Given the above considerations, and the area of study, it appeared reasonable to embrace an interpretivist stance for this research. As detailed by Schwandt (1998), the goal of interpretivism is “understanding the complex world of lived experience from the point of view of those who live it” (p.221). That was my first position, and one I will return to at the end of this section. However, in between came the struggle and messiness of positioning my own philosophical underpinnings throughout the research. This included my understanding to date of ontology and epistemology to a level that makes me feel confident in where I am/may be. Monforte and Smith (2020) commented that a researcher may be in something of an ‘identity dilemma’, as is (or was) the case for Monforte. Given that I too am an early-career researcher, I have found myself struggling to find my place in the academic world given my ingrained background in industry. Therefore, in this section I describe my own paradigmatic, ontological, and epistemological considerations. Within this, I will articulate my positioning, and the apparent stances of others within an organisation such as The FA. This section offers not so much a regurgitation of traditional philosophy, but an authentic account of the philosophical concepts that are relevant to the studies that follow.

A paradigm, as defined by Guba and Lincoln (1994, p.105), is “the basic belief system or worldview that guides the investigator, not only in the choice of method but in ontologically and epistemologically fundamental ways”. This offered a starting point to think about how I viewed the world. A paradigm also presented the relevant boundaries of inquiry for the research, aligning with the nature of the research at the beginning (Crotty, 1998). The decision to select a paradigm (positivism, post-positivism, interpretivism, etc.) is something of a philosophical conundrum, centred around three fundamental questions: 1) What is the nature of reality? (Ontology); 2) What constitutes legitimate knowledge? (Epistemology); and 3) What is the process of research followed? (Methodology) (Creswell, 2013). Despite each of these concepts having extensive and complex histories, and value, one cannot see them as separate. Ontology, epistemology, and methodology entwine to encourage a platform of coherent research practice (Braun & Clarke, 2013). The concepts typically offer a kind of guide that informs a researcher’s start position, journey, and return point throughout a research project.

This research was underpinned by an *interpretivist paradigmatic stance*. This view values the emic point of view of social inquiry, which aims to understand meaning within a particular context, and among those who occupy such spaces (Crotty, 1998; Schwandt, 1998). The interpretivist stance therefore was rationalised in the context of developing an understanding of the ‘meaning’ that others assigned to formal coach education policy development (Crotty, 1998; Potrac et al., 2014).

As will become apparent in later chapters, within The FA, many individuals create and disseminate numerous policies across any one season. People attach many interpretations to these as part of a meaning-making process. As Crotty (1998, p.93) commented:

...reading a text is very much like listening to someone speak. Speakers use words to express their thoughts and listeners are able to understand because they share the

language that a speaker employs. They know the words, phrases and sentences that they are hearing and they understand the grammatical rules. On this basis, they are able to put themselves in the place of the speaker and recognise what the speaker is intending to convey.

Understanding coach education policy, therefore, does not simply involve realist evaluation of policy documents. Rather, there is a need to interpret the meanings of individuals located *within* a specific cultural space (The FA) attached to policy. Interpretivism also extends to this thesis's use of Bernsteinian theory, inasmuch as Crotty's stance relates quite elegantly to Bernstein's 'language codes' (see chapter 2, section 2.5). Both Crotty and Bernstein demonstrate an appreciation for language, whether text or speech, and both recognise the interpretive nature that human beings assign to particular language. Schwandt (1998) also alluded to how meaning construction is embodied in the language and action of social actors. Therefore, this project focused on a cultural space (The FA and English football) and how actors within that space (policymakers, course designers, coach developers, and to a lesser extent coaches) interpreted the 2016–2020 formal coach education policy.

As part of the interpretivist stance, this research was underpinned by a *relativist* ontology. In this context, multiple and subjective realities exist, which over time are constructed by the individual (Sparkes & Smith, 2014). This position is embraced across this thesis. For example, given the multiple departments and individuals connected to policy making and dissemination within The FA, a wide variety of subjective interpretations of policy will exist. This extends to my own constructions over time around the field of coaching, coach education, and research. Therefore, as a researcher, my own subjective interpretations are inherent in this thesis. This position does not come without its critics however. Ronkainen and Wiltshire (2021) provided a detailed account of realism and the potential issues of a relativist ontology in qualitative research. For example, they built upon previous qualitative work (Sparkes, 1998; Sparkes & Smith, 2009; Smith & McGannon,

2018) to problematise the perceived ‘superiority’ of relativism. They also alluded to the ‘anything goes’ principle given to ontological relativism, where no one person’s view should be valued above another. These critiques are acknowledged and valued here. In response, within this thesis, I do not claim to value one person’s view over another. Instead, the findings have been offered as an alignment of the research aims, the methods I chose to collect and analyse data, and the theoretical framework used. This stance values the interpretations of all involved while also acknowledging the purpose of this research within a temporal and cultural space, and my own ontological stance as a researcher. I therefore also acknowledge Ronkainen and Wiltshire’s (2021) critique of the decision to portray ‘a truth’ across the accepted ‘multiple truths’ perspective of relativism. However, as a qualitative researcher, I accept that the findings within this thesis are/could be one of potentially many ‘truths’, dependent on the reader’s own stance. Given my positionality of relativism, I openly accept the studies included here can and will be interpreted differently. The goal of my methodological approach was not one of superiority above others, but to offer transparency of approach from the perspective of my worldview. My relativist view is also driven in part by the desire to maintain a constructive alignment of what I value as epistemological and ontological coherency (Crotty, 1998). It also steers away from what Schwandt (1998) described as ‘ontological idealism’. For example, I do not claim that a ‘real’ world exists independent of ourselves, if the very language we use to try and find ‘being’ outside of ourselves, is already a social construct of reality (i.e., we create language to develop our own reality).

Given the relativist nature of the research, and the consideration of interpretivism above, this thesis also took on the epistemological stance of *subjectivism*. It must be acknowledged that terms such as *interpretivism*, (social) *constructivism*, and (social) *constructionism*, have often been used interchangeably with subjectivism, causing something

of an epistemological minefield. The aim here is not to solve such problems in this section. Instead, I offer as much clarity on my own epistemological stance as possible, while acknowledging that authors have often used different terminology to refer to the same epistemological considerations. It is generally accepted that a subjectivist epistemology supports the co-construction of knowledge (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Philips (1995, p.5) provided a clear summary: “human knowledge – whether it be bodies of public knowledge known as various disciplines, or the cognitive structures of individual knowers or learners – is constructed”. In this text, however, Philips referred to the term ‘constructivism’ and expounded the many variants of it in detailing how we come to know, including radical, social, and cognitive constructivism. Schwandt (1998) also detailed constructivism when commenting that “knowledge and truth are created, not discovered by mind” (p.236). Schwandt extended this to highlight that “we invent concepts, models, and schemas to make sense of experience and, further, we continually test and modify these constructions in the light of new experience” (p.237). This is the case for myself in that my understanding and knowledge of educational and policy-orientated literature has developed based on my engagement with it. This engagement extends beyond academic articles, however, and includes social interactions to help form and advance my own thoughts and knowledge on the subject area (e.g., Bernsteinian theory to use in the context of formal coach education). This apperception can therefore be extended to this current project, as policy making in The FA is a demonstration of the co-creation of knowledge in a social space. Cushion (2013) also offered an informative comparison between *constructivist* and *constructionist* language. Constructivism, as stated, is concerned with the cognitive processes that support individual knowledge development, while paying little attention to the social world. Constructionism, however, details how knowledge has both individual and social components of what and how we come to know (Cushion, 2013). Forgetting for a moment the different terminology and

focusing on the consistent components of a subjectivist stance, this thesis acknowledges the social and interactive construction of knowledge, as being made and not discovered. This thesis also appreciates that individuals will construct knowledge relevant to their own world, while also being influenced by the different cultures they inhabit. This somewhat illuminates my struggles between navigating the knowledge acquired and used within my own coaching practice, and between the previously mentioned ‘traditions’ of practice and what literature may advocate. It also extends to whom I choose to connect and communicate with: I know and acknowledge that those I call friends and role models influence my thoughts and approaches to coaching, teaching, and life. These individuals may also hold (knowingly or unknowingly) different epistemological perspectives of knowledge. Therefore, my construction of knowledge is influenced by others while building my own cognitive structures. Within the context of The FA, both social and political cultures carry capital in shaping what is created. For example, in policy making spheres, one could perceive a representation of epistemological objectivism. That is, someone (or a community of people) decides which knowledge is ‘best’ represented in a policy to disseminate above other potential knowledge. That stance is not taken here, however. Rather, my constructivist epistemology recognises that individuals have the capacity to construct knowledge based on their prior experiences and in relation to their own worlds.

My own position as the researcher meant I was often faced with individuals who seemingly held different ontological and epistemological beliefs (whether or not they were explicitly aware of them). Therefore, it was not my position in this research to find ‘best practice’ or ‘best policy’. Instead, my role was to discuss, observe, and critique against theory, and construct my own interpretations of coach education. This also extended to the methodological considerations (see section 4.5 below) and methods used to offer a subjectivist and relativist account of the research findings. For example, semi-structured

interviews in study one allowed for an ‘understanding’ of what policies had been created, and the rationale behind them from the perspectives of those involved. The qualitative approach allowed for elaboration and justification via the participants’ perceptions of policy creation. I therefore rejected the notion of ‘objective knowledge’ in this instance, as it is believed that the construction of our social reality depends on the meanings we attach to the objects in the world (Sparkes & Smith, 2014). It must also be appreciated that the interpretations within this thesis are temporal accounts from those individuals involved across a large and dynamic NGB. Consideration therefore is needed on the interpretation of information created by others, and the subsequent influences (and influencers) that impact upon such a hermeneutic approach. Therefore, my own interpretations of others’ interpretations of The FA require a double hermeneutic approach. Given this task, I adopted a qualitative methodology.

4.5 A qualitative approach

Given the complex and dynamic nature of this project, a qualitative methodology offered a valuable approach. Qualitative research has typically been an umbrella term used to support the exploration of social and cultural phenomena (Potrac et al., 2014). Schmid (1981) described qualitative research as the study of the empirical world from the viewpoint of the person under study. Denzin and Lincoln (2018) also explained that qualitative research is “a situated activity that locates the observer in the world” (p.10). Such a position aligns coherently with the interactive nature of developing formal coach education policy within The FA. It also accounted for my own position within the research at that time. This allowed for the gathering of data, by which I could gain in-depth individual perspectives, including my own, on the phenomena (Jones et al., 2011). To do so, Saldaña (2011) focuses on undertaking:

...a wide variety of approaches to and methods for the study of social life. The information or data collected and analysed is primarily (but not exclusively) nonquantitative in character, consisting of textual materials such as interview transcripts, fieldnotes, and documents, and/or visual materials such as artifices, photographs, video recordings, and internet sites, that document human experiences about others and/or one's self in social action and reflexive states (p.3–4).

Such an approach aligns to the *process* conducted throughout this research project. For example, Chapter 5 (Study one) employed semi-structured interviews across two data points in time (12 months apart). This allowed for the collection of data from a range of individuals while policy was being practised, amended, and debated out in the field. Chapters 6 and 7 (Studies 2 and 3) used a multiple-methods approach of course observations, document analysis, interviews, and photography to help provide a contextualised picture related to the aims of each study.

Denzin and Lincoln (2018) offered a view of such a process in qualitative research. They provided five fundamental phases that constituted the value of a qualitative research process: 1) the researcher, 2) the paradigm, 3) strategies of inquiry, 4) methods and analysis, and 5) the interpretation and presentation of findings. These phases can be seen as a relationship that binds together the researcher and the project. They are embedded throughout my thesis and are explained in their own right. For example, phase 1 (*the researcher*) is dominant within this current chapter (section 4.3), along with phase 2 (*interpretive paradigms*) (section 4.4). Phase 3 (*strategies of inquiry*) also occurs in this section (4.5), through the recognition of the alignment between the interpretivist paradigm and the qualitative methodological approach taken. Phases 4 (*methods and analysis*) and 5 (*interpretations and presentations*) are offered across the three studies (Chapters 5-7) and the implications of the current research (Chapter 8). Despite the seemingly logical and chronological phases, this project is better represented as a continuous, iterative process.

This project comes at a time when qualitative research continues to thrive within wider sport-orientated research. Recent review articles have recognised qualitative research across the disciplines of sport coaching and sport psychology (Griffo et al., 2019; McGannon et al., 2021). These reviews built upon more historical accounts (Culver et al., 2003; Gilbert & Trudel, 2004) that pointed to the need, at that time, for qualitative research to find its own place within scientific research. This was stressed at a time when quantitative research (methods, analysis, and rigour) was seen by academics as the preferred methodology (e.g., in the sport sciences). Such a position, as outlined by Culver and colleagues (2003) identified qualitative research that was still aiming to meet the rigorous elements aligned to quantitative research (validity, reliability, etc.). Since that time, the growth of qualitative research has seen insightful, and rigorous accounts across a spectrum have been offered in areas of sport coaching, including coach behaviours (e.g., Stonebridge & Cushion, 2018), learning in sports coaching (e.g., Walker et al., 2018), and coach education (e.g., Stodter & Cushion 2014; Paquette & Trudel, 2018a).

Given the continued progression of qualitative orientated research, it must be acknowledged that researchers have continued to question and critique its value and process in areas such as paradigms concerning underlying philosophical positions. Denzin and Lincoln's (2018) seminal textbook, and their offering of fundamental elements, particularly paradigms, has more recently been challenged in terms of coherency in qualitative research (see 4.4 above, including Ronkainen & Wiltshire, 2021). For example, Smith and McGannon (2018) discussed the need for coherency stretching across ethical considerations, methods, analysis, rigour and the need for movement away from the more positivist routes of early sport science qualitative judgements of quality. However, (and as discussed in 4.4 above) Ronkainen and Wiltshire (2021) and more recently, Ryba and colleagues (2022) suggest mixed methods research is able to branch across both qualitative and quantitative methods

that can help advance our understandings of different phenomena. This contemporary debate brings another much desirable avenue for future research that deserves our time as researchers. For example, debating whether research could/should (or is possible) be philosophically coherent with a particular methodology when collaborating with multiple ‘others’ in industry (e.g., funding stakeholders, policy makers, course designers, coach developers, etc.). This comes as an acknowledgement of what could be different epistemological and ontological beliefs that exist in ‘others’ within a piece of research. This is acknowledged here within my thesis, while also being clear that I value the stance detailed in section 4.4 above.

To conclude this section, and despite some of the more recent contentions offered for consideration, it is felt that qualitative research, as a broad scope for exploring a phenomenon, has cemented its place within the academic community, and therefore no longer requires a longwinded and systematic regurgitation of acceptance.⁷

4.6 A collective case study approach

Given the collaborative nature of the project (i.e., part-funded by The FA to explore formal coach education in GR football), this research used a collective case study approach (Simon, 2009; Stake, 1995). A collective case study approach is where “several cases are studied to form a collective understanding of the issue or question” (Stake, 1995, p. 3-4). This approach also aligned with the philosophical and methodological approach of interpretivism, to explore a complex and temporal account of formal coach education at The FA. The FA therefore presented an opportunity to conduct a collective case study approach (Simons,

⁷ The value of qualitative methodological research for this thesis does not, however, discredit or devalue the quantitative approach taken in this or similar fields of research.

2009). Such an approach allowed for three smaller cases (i.e., my three studies across chapters 5-7) to form a collective understanding of a particular issue or research question (Stake, 1995). Within a large-scale organisation like The FA, this allows for the breakdown and exploration of their formal coach education provision. This approach also offers those reading the studies (i.e., chapters 5-7) within this thesis the opportunity to attach meaning to each case separately, as well as collectively across the thesis that aligns to the overall aim to critically explore the creation, dissemination and implementation of formal coach education policy. However, the collective case study approach within my thesis does not act as a ‘representative’ of all formal coach education course development. Instead, The FA offers a unique and temporal account of GR coach education policy in England. The uniqueness of any case study should therefore be appreciated, as Thomas (2011) commented: a case cannot be ‘typical’ as each one offers a unique set of variables from the outset. In order to achieve this, I offer three studies (chapter 5-7) that each offer three different cases centred around the overall case built upon across my thesis (e.g., chapter 8 and 9) of critically exploring the creation, dissemination and implementation of formal coach education policy.

Creswell and Poth (2018) offered a definition of a case study, which I felt to be best suited to how this research took on a nuanced and effective process with The FA:

a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a real-life, contemporary bounded system...over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information. (p.96)

This definition suggests that case studies have the capacity to develop an in-depth, holistic understanding of a particular issue/event/person (Hodge & Sharp, 2017). It also offers what Merriam (1988, 1998) explained as providing three distinctive attributes that advocate case studies as a legitimate research strategy: *particularistic* (offering a specific focus); *descriptive* (providing in-depth, thick depictions of contextual reality); and *heuristic* (allows readers’

understanding to be developed). As The FA were kind enough to provide access to both an ‘event’ (their 2016-2020 policy), and persons (FA employees) throughout this research, it could also be seen as a collaboration. Such a position needs to be acknowledged and appreciated as part of this wider case study approach. It must be remembered that this project delved into the work of people, who ultimately had the best intentions to create and disseminate effective formal coach education.

In chapters 5-7 (i.e., Studies one, two, and three) that follow, three cases are provided that contribute to the collective case study approach, which is presented across chapter 8 (i.e., wider discussions and implications) and concludes in chapter 9 (i.e., conclusion of key elements found across my thesis). For example, Chapter 5 explores the creation and dissemination of policy. Chapter 6 explores the content knowledge that forms a coach education curriculum on The FA level 2 course. Finally, chapter 7 considers the reproduction of policy in practice on The FA level 1 course. Each of these studies act as smaller cases in their own right, while also contributing to the wider collective case of critically exploring the creation, dissemination and implementation of a formal coach education policy within my thesis (chapter’s 8 and 9).

4.7 Ethical considerations

Given my positionality, the context, and the focus of this project, there were numerous ethical issues to consider. There were the statutory ‘procedural’ requirements of completing university ethics applications and gaining approval (ethics reference numbers: 17/SPS/057 and 18/SPS/064 respectively) across the three studies. This took considerable time given the dynamic and iterative nature of the research from a qualitative perspective with a NGB (Palmer, 2016). Gatekeeper approval was also required from The FA regarding the three

studies: initially in November 2017 for study one, and then in October 2018 for studies two and three. Throughout, an open and interactive relationship was maintained with the gatekeepers from The FA (Dr Ed Cope primarily, and Ms Caley Parnell also). From a statutory perspective, the *procedural ethics* ran smoothly through the lead-up to data collection (Lahman et al., 2011). This also included gaining required informed consent from all participants (i.e., policymakers, course designers, regional managers, full-time and part-time coach developers, and learners-on-course). Ethical considerations were, however, far more complex when entering the field. Here, there were numerous spaces to navigate, and experiences to reflect upon from a perspective that extended the ‘in-practice’ ethical considerations (Sparkes & Smith, 2014). To guide my way through this I turned to Lahman and colleagues’ (2011) discussion of what they termed *culturally responsive relational reflexive ethics* (CRRRE). The three Rs offered in their article (responsive, relational, and reflexive) build from the statutory position outlined in the paragraph above, to a more aspirational view of ethics:

we are suggesting a stance that acknowledges as researchers we will not be able to fully understand the perspective of the varied cultures with whom we interact, as well as the need to be flexible and open to examining ethical issues from the perspective of the participants to the extent possible. (Lahman et al. p.1400–1401)

Considering *cultural responsive ethics*, The FA presented a large NGB, comprising a dynamic and often ‘closed’ culture across directorates and departments. Within these departments, power and influence were commonplace when making decisions on coach education and wider coach development. Being employed by The FA (as a coach developer and mentor) on a part-time basis presented me with some insight into this working culture, albeit from a distance. However, navigating my roles was made complex by my new position of ‘researcher’. The requirements in some instances to delve into understandings of policy creation with individuals I either worked with – or in most cases, for – was a difficult space

for me personally and professionally. At times it led to being party to information that my own line managers were not aware of or did not acknowledge and/or practice. This required an appreciation and understanding of this information, and to move to consider the relational ethics during the research process.

Relational ethics, as defined by Ellis (2007, p.4), values the “mutual respect, dignity, and connectedness between the researcher and researched, and between researchers and the communities they live and work in”. This came far more naturally given my positionality as a coach, coach developer, and mentor. I had/have a genuine care for the area I was researching, and the people involved. I was heavily attached to the project itself: I wanted to support the development of coach education, and to help The FA (i.e., my line managers, fellow coach developers, and coaches attending the courses). This meant I took a relational stance on ethics, and tried to involve the participants in the research. In study one, for example, member reflections (as discussed in section 4.9) allowed for the reading and continued contribution of their thoughts and experiences, to provide as credible of an interpretation as possible. Studies two and three, where I was immersed in the courses with fellow coach developers, required constant reflection on my own position and the spaces I was occupying (e.g., where to sit in the classroom, removing myself as required during private coach-to-coach developer conversations, etc.). I also maintained a continuous appreciation of my role of ‘researcher’ and explicitly checked with coach developers on whether it was suitable for me to come back into an area, on to the next block of a course, or have discussions during breaks/lunch. I did this in order to maintain respectful and trustworthy relationships with those I was collaborating with (Lahman et al., 2011).

Finally, there were constant *reflexive* episodes throughout this project. Etherington (2007) highlighted the sensitivities and reflections on self, others, and the situation; these presented continuous opportunities to discuss episodes of data collection, although I did not

know this in such explicit terms while it was happening. Reflections and discussions occurred in the first instance, for example, with my supervisor (Dr Colum Cronin), and also with a critical friend (Mr Reece Chapman), on car journeys home from courses and/or interviews. These discussions would generate reflections to build upon and discuss in further meetings. For example, the need to adapt questions across phases one and two in study one (chapter 5, section 5.4), or considerations of what had been observed on courses in studies two and three (chapter's 6 and 7). This impacted future practice and approaches to data collection in an ethical manner, all the way down to where I chose to sit on courses during observations. I also used my reflective journal (see section 4.9 below) to offer my own personal interpretations.

The cost of maintaining respectful anonymity and confidentiality took its toll on me in certain areas and moments of the research. I was being exposed to a lot of sensitive (albeit policy-orientated) information that required thought and care for how it was going to be presented (Lahman et al., 2011). I was getting insider knowledge from The FA (and the policy) whilst operating in the field, while at the same time gaining valuable contextualised interpretations out in the field regarding the knowledge produced internally. My struggle came when trying to navigate this space as a researcher and practising coach developer. Do I go against elements of policy (i.e., workshop order and slides) or not? Do I use the competency framework 'on' or 'with' learners on-course? I could not provide anonymity to the organisation itself, given that they had part-funded the project. The aim for myself (and the wider team) therefore was to offer a critical but fair perspective on the research undertaken.

4.8 An analytical journey

Each study within this thesis was analysed using a continued evolvement of what more recently has been identified as ‘Reflexive Thematic Analysis’ (TA) (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Braun, Clarke & Weate, 2016; Braun & Clarke, 2019). Within each study, I present the process of *how* TA was used (study one, chapter 5, section 5.4; study two, chapter 6, section 6.5; study three, chapter 7, section 7.4); therefore, this section does not cover that issue. Instead, it offers another layer of the journey through this research, and a rationale and justification of *why* TA was used. Braun and Clarke (2006) provided a detailed account of how TA could be used within qualitative research. Reading through this article gave me an initial confidence about using this method. Braun, Clarke and Weate (2016) also offered an insightful and informative six-stage approach to conducting TA, which provided the structure I craved at the beginning of the first study’s analysis process. However, as the analysis phase approached, and with continuous discussions about managing my own positionality (section 4.2 above) a recurring theme (no pun intended), it felt as if I needed to remove myself as much as possible from the process. I learned however, over time, that I could not do this (reflected upon in section 4.2.1 above, and section 9.5 in the conclusion).

Braun and Clarke (2013) explained that developing themes from coded data with TA is an *active* process: themes are created, not discovered by an author. In the initial stages, the mantra ‘themes do not emerge, they are created!’ rang around my head each time I looked at my coding, my clusters of codes, and themes. This was something that I did not fully grasp in terms of its underlying meaning until much later in my studies. In the studies that follow I have articulated the development of these themes; of the process of TA. Study one (Chapter 5) in particular demonstrates the advancement of the themes across the two data collection and analysis points. The process was also aided by Dr Colum Cronin’s persistence and patience in getting me to view my positionality as useful, as long as it was managed

effectively. Combining an understanding of what underpinned reflexive TA, alongside the continuous support and guidance of my supervisor, was therefore essential. Braun, Clarke, and Hayfield (2019) alluded to how TA presents a ‘starting point’ and not a map to utilising what it has to offer. They acknowledged that, like my own journey, errors were made when first developing this analytical process (see sections 4.2.1 above, and section 9.5 in the conclusion). Braun and Clarke (2019) acknowledged that errors, misjudgements, and assumptions had been made when writing their initial (2006) paper on TA (also see Clarke & Braun, 2018). They acknowledged that part of the journey was a refinement and elaboration. Some parts of their writing could be seen as aligned to the Bernsteinian concept of a restricted code! This is not intended as a criticism; instead, as Braun and Clarke (2019) proclaimed, it offered an adventure.

4.9 Rigour and judging quality

This section further describes the rigour of my thesis. Through the appreciation of the messy and iterative process of the data collection and analysis, this thesis took on a relativist approach to maintaining the quality of the processes undertaken (Burke, 2016; Sparkes & Smith, 2009). There have been considerable advancements in recent times regarding how to judge quality within qualitative research (Sparkes & Smith, 2009; Burke, 2016; Smith & McGannon, 2018). These have often been built on a shift of paradigmatic thought to rigour in such spaces, moving away from a more positivistic philosophical stance (Burke, 2016). This section, however, will not aim to regurgitate this work, but to use it to rationalise my own decisions in trying to achieve rigour throughout the research process. By offering an explanation and identifying the potential areas of contestation, this section will provide a relativistic appreciation and nuance to rigour. This section therefore offers a kind of reflexive

account of the main characteristics that drove rigour and quality across this project more broadly.

Within each of the three studies in my thesis (i.e., chapters 5-7), I have included separate and specific rigour and quality sections related to their respective aims. This was done because each study required its own stance on what made it original, and potentially impactful, at the time of writing. The concepts utilised to enhance the rigour of the three studies are presented as *characterising traits* associated with the nuanced nature of this project (Burke, 2016; McGannon et al., 2021). This contrasts with the labelling of set *criteria* (Tracy, 2010; Tracy & Hinrichs, 2017) which can be seen as universal. Such universal ‘lists’ of criteria provide little appreciation for the interpretivist and relativist nature of the research undertaken. In contrast, this research offers a unique set of aims, in a distinctive setting (i.e., an NGB), with numerous departments and individuals offering their own perspectives and insights. Given my own philosophical underpinnings, I cannot (and will not try to) take on a universal or ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach to developing quality studies. Rather, the criteria stated below offer quality characteristics that are specific to this thesis. To try and provide as rigorous a process as possible, specific methods (tools) were also put in place to support the researcher and supervisory team. Of course, readers can use their own interpretation and connoisseurship to judge the success of these characteristics (Sparkes & Smith, 2009).

Two methods that were consistent throughout this research project were the use of a *reflective journal/diary*, and making use of *critical friends* (both inside and outside of the supervisory team). I kept the *reflective journal/diary* throughout the data collection processes of this research. It consisted of entries related to the research project (practical and theoretical considerations), my work (coaching, mentoring, delivering formal coach education for The FA), and general thoughts and feelings around the project itself. Sparkes and Smith (2014) commented that a reflective journal supports the reflexive process as data are collected across

multiple sites (e.g., during observations of level 1 and level 2 courses across England). This also afforded reflections on more theoretical concepts under consideration during write-up phases (i.e., Bernstein's framing and classification concepts). For example, returning from a course observation, I could note down and reflect on coach developer practice in relation to the four elements of 'framing' (e.g., selection, sequencing, pacing, and evaluation). These reflections allowed me to combine the Bernsteinian literature with my reflections and what I had observed.

To complement the reflective journal, I utilised *critical friends* throughout this research project to further support and enhance the reflections often included within the reflective journal. Where the journal often offered a personal and initial phase of reflection, critical friends offered a sounding board to either build discussions, critique initial analysis, or offer alternative theoretical considerations (Sparkes & Smith, 2014; Smith & McGannon, 2018; McGannon et al., 2021). I also had critical discussions with people outside of the immediate supervisory team, including Dr Ed Cope who had been an outstanding liaison to this research during his time with The FA, and beyond. Others included Mr Reece Chapman, who was part of the project, and another PhD student from Liverpool John Moores University, who offered critical discussion points on study one in particular.

Finally, *member reflections* were also utilised in Study one (Tracy, 2010; Braun & Clarke, 2013; Smith & McGannon, 2018), as an advancement on member checking, which has been seen as problematic (Smith & McGannon, 2018). These incorporated reflections on interview transcripts by the participants. The purpose was to allow participants the space to read and discuss their transcripts, to either clarify, confirm, or add to the discussions around policy creation and dissemination in the first phase of interviews. Braun and Clarke (2013) commented that this process is important to understand participants' meanings and understanding of the topic under study. For example, participants play a more active role

within the sense-making elements of the analysis. The three tools above promoted a rigorous process that spanned the project all the way through to the writing and editing of this thesis.

Having utilised some supportive analytical tools to enhance the rigour of this research project, I will now present the selected criteria for the purpose of the thesis. Aligning with the relativist stance adopted in this research, the criteria offered below represent the contextual and study-specific set of what was deemed important at the time. These criteria align with the philosophical paradigm and complement the research process undertaken as part of the thesis. Quality therefore comes as part of the process and experiences that helped shape this research, rather than merely as a concept to ‘test’ at the end of the research (Burke, 2016).

When first considering judgement of quality across this thesis, I refer throughout to the levels of *transparency*, *sincerity*, and *credibility* (Smith, Sparkes, & Caddick, 2014). *Transparency* is offered through the methodological openness of the research process across the three studies, incorporating methodological choices and analytical processes. Although a positivist concept of reliability is not the aim of this research, the reader will be able to understand *how* the research was undertaken across these phases (Burke, 2016). To enable this, I used critical friends during the analysis process, and show the initial codes and themes in the studies that follow (e.g., chapter 5, section 5.4; chapter 6, section 6.5, and chapter 7, section 7.4). Building from this, the reader is offered a sense of *sincerity* within this chapter in particular, and thereafter. I offer my honest views, stance, and vulnerabilities across this research project (e.g., section 4.3.1 above, related to 9.5 in the conclusion). I have relied on my reflective journal, as well as utilising my critical friends to be reflexive in my accounts, both methodically and theoretically (Tracy & Hinrichs, 2017). From here, researcher *credibility* is portrayed within this process, given my own positioning within the research, the experience I have to date (coach, coach developer, coach mentor, etc.), and the

methodological credibility of utilising member reflections to provide a voice to/for the participants within the research.

From a theoretical and paradigmatic perspective, this research offers a level of *coherence*. In this instance, coherence applies to the internal paradigmatic process, and the epistemological and ontological stances, through to the methodological and analytical processes undertaken (Burke, 2016). Earlier sections within this chapter rationalise and justify such coherence (e.g., section 4.4 above). Within the context of where and how this research took place, *naturalistic generalisations* can be made (Smith, 2018). By achieving the above, the reader is able to resonate with the research undertaken across the three studies and considering them in relation to their own context. Finally, the use of theoretical concepts, such as the work of Bernstein, offers a transferable explanation of the phenomena under study. For example, given its structuralist nature, Bernstein's work may not be seen as wholly compatible with a relativist stance (Sadovnik, 2001). However, Bernstein has already been used in other sporting and physical education contexts (see Evans & Penney, 1995; Griffiths et al., 2018; Williams & Bush, 2019). Therefore, readers are encouraged to critically consider the *theoretical transferability* of findings to their own context (Smith, 2018). For example, in study three (chapter 7), an evocative and impactful process of a creative non-fiction approach was undertaken to enhance the readability and transferability of the findings to policymakers, course designers, and coach developers alike.

Finally, when considering the broader applications of quality criteria to this thesis, this research offers a *worthy topic*. Within this, key areas of *originality* and *substantive contribution* to academic research to date is offered. I believe that this research has come at a significant point in time and has therefore been worthy of exploration. For example, Chapman and colleagues' (2019) article provided a significant insight into the ever-changing nature of formal coach education in football over time, which influenced the direction of this

research. This project has also built on previous work within academia, highlighting the complex dynamics presented within policy creation in coach development frameworks (Griffiths et al., 2018). The work of Bernstein also provided a sense of originality, as only a limited number of articles had utilised his concepts (in less explicit and more varied ways) in sport coaching (Griffiths et al., 2018; Williams & Bush, 2019). Finally, I have been incredibly fortunate to offer some form of contribution to the academic field at this stage, as all three studies have been published in peer-reviewed journals. It must be acknowledged that my supervisory team (along with Dr Ed Cope) have contributed to this publication process, along with the reviewers of the journals. However, moving beyond the current published papers, my thesis offers an original and substantive contribution on its own to the research field of policy creation and development. For example, I hope to continue utilising, as well as building upon this work to support and inform impact across a range of sporting and educational bodies/institutions, at the macro (policy making), meso (course design), and micro (coach developer) levels (see, chapter 8 for ideas of application in 8.3 and 8.4, and chapter 9 for future avenues of research in 9.4).

In summary, by reading this chapter, readers can identify: 1) where the research comes from, 2) the author's positioning within the research, and 3) how the research has subsequently been examined, interpreted, and communicated in the chapters that follow.

Chapter V

Study one - Creating and disseminating coach education policy: a case of formal coach education in grassroots football

Chapters 5-7 offer their own introduction's, literature reviews, and methodologies to complement what has been explored in the above chapters. The reasoning for this was twofold: 1) each study undertook a different level of policy analysis, from policy maker, course designers, through to content and coach developer reproduction of policy, and 2) because each study was written with the intention to submit to peer-reviewed journals. This chapter (5) presents study one, and explored the following research questions aligned to the thesis:

- 1) What was created by The FA as part of its 2016-2020 coach education policy?
- 2) How was the policy disseminated and perceived across the organisation e.g., from strategic apex (policy maker) to delivery (coach developer)?

5.1 Introduction

Sport coaching is a complex social endeavour. To prepare for this activity, coaches engage in a range of formal, informal, and non-formal learning opportunities (Nelson et al., 2006). Formal coach education within the United Kingdom (UK), the focus of this study 1, has been the subject of much critical research. National Governing Body (NGBs) courses have been depicted as a flawed means of enhancing coaches' learning (Nelson et al., 2013). Specifically, courses have been deemed ineffective, because content is 'isolated' from

coaches' contexts and therefore 'decontextualized' (Piggott, 2015). In response, some research, including international studies, have encouraged constructivist informed approaches to formal coach education courses (e.g., Paquette et al., 2014; Paquette & Trudel, 2018a, 2018b). In coaching literature, constructivism has been referred to as a broad epistemology that suggests learning takes place through shared knowledge, meanings, and understanding (Ciampolini et al., 2019). This epistemological position has developed from philosophers such as Kant, Dewey, and Popper (Philips, 1995). Educationalists such as Piaget (cognitive) and Vygotsky (social) have also advanced different forms of constructivist learning theory (Jones et al., 2018). Today, a gamut of 'constructivist' perspectives exists including cognitive, social, radical, and feminist (See Fosnot, 2013 for further details). To greater and lesser extents, these variants proceed from the epistemological tenets that (a) learning involves the active contribution of humans; (b) new knowledge is developed in relation to prior understanding; and (c) knowledge and learning is not independent of social context.

Paquette and Trudel (2018a) described coach education approaches informed by constructivist epistemology as those that involve facilitation, group work, localised problem solving and the sharing of ideas. Critically, in coaching, rather than coach education research, it has been argued that practitioners are focused on methods rather than the underlying philosophical positions of constructivism (Cushion, 2013; Nelson et al., 2014). To be clear, "constructivist approaches are not prescriptions for teaching. Instead, they operate as a general orientating framework for *thinking* about teaching and learning" (Culpan & McBain, 2012, p. 99). Failure to understand this position may result in a naive form of constructivism (Cushion, 2013), where dialogue takes place but ultimately, knowledge and power remain the preserve of the educator. Thus, at a micro-level, coach education may involve social interactions that support or thwart the construction of knowledge by learners. Beyond courses, coach education is a wide system involving multiple stakeholders such as knowledge

producers, policy makers, course designers, and coach developers (Culver et al., 2019; Williams & Bush, 2017). These key personnel have significant power and control over course design, including the theoretical perspectives informing formal educational provision (Chapman et al., 2019b). Interestingly, in mainstream education systems, Evans and Penney (1995) demonstrated how policy is an inevitable compromise between inputs from different stakeholders involved in the creation and dissemination of policy and materials. Related to this, Priestley and Humes (2010) demonstrated how stakeholder interests may result in educational curriculums with different foci (e.g., learner focused, content focused, or assessment focused). Further, it has been suggested that stakeholders can add or corrode coherency between objectives, content, and assessment (Sullanmaa et al., 2019). Indeed, many NGBs now position their coach education and preferred methods as ‘constructivist’. Such claims need to be sceptically considered because similar to the wider education field, policy making in coach education is a dynamic and negotiated process. Accordingly, Culver and colleagues (2019) and Williams and Bush (2017) encourage coaching researchers to consider how the dominant foci of stakeholders within coach education systems influence formal coaching courses. Similarly, Griffiths et al. (2018) called for researchers to use Bernsteinian (2000) theory to explore how ‘upstream’ influences on policy affect learners ‘downstream’ (i.e., on courses). Thus, this study aims to consider what one NGB created as part of their policies and how it was disseminated. The significance of the study lies in drawing attention to the social construction of courses, opening up a discussion on the key influences on formal coach education policy, and moving beyond on-course evaluation to provide a more complete, if always partial, analysis of an existing coach education system.

5.1.1 The FA context

The FA is an appropriate area of focus because their courses are experienced by a large number of coaches (i.e., circa 30,000 per annum), within the participation domain of coaching (i.e., GR) (Lyle & Cushion, 2017). These coaches typically work with a team once a week for training, plus a single game over a weekend in a range of communal environments (i.e., local club, parks, youth centres). This often-voluntary coaching role facilitates opportunities for young people and adults to play football. To support coaches in these contexts, The FA mandate coaches attain a FA level 1 (introductory) qualification. They also recommend carrying out a level 2 (intermediate) qualification within this domain.

Recently, Chapman and colleagues (2019b) described gradual changes in FA qualifications over a fifty-year period, from a perceived authoritarian approach, where learners would replicate coach developers' behaviours in order to pass the qualifications, to an approach, more, if not wholly, focused on learners' needs. In keeping with this, in 2016, The FA relaunched their formal coach education provision at level 1 and level 2. This change was prompted by critical examination from the UK Government's Department for Culture, Media, and Sport (DCMS) who highlighted issues with wider FA governance and a historic weakness in coaching (DCMS, 2011). The Commission Report 2 (The FA, 2015) also identified that:

the overall numbers of coaches holding B Licence level (level 3) and above need to be increased substantially ... in particular the Commission would argue that The FA needs to provide the right encouragement to coaches below the top levels so that they are motivated to pursue higher level qualifications (The FA, 2015, p. 38).

This informed The FA's focus on learning at that time and was a response to much criticism of formal coach education (Chapman et al., 2019b). Therefore, multiple stakeholders including The FA, UK Government (via DCMS), and other funding agencies committed to improving formal coach education (The FA, 2015; DCMS, 2014). Since then, The FA have

made significant changes to their coach education courses, including providing in-situ support for learners at level 2, where coach developers support coaches in their own contexts (Chapman et al., 2019b). Beyond this observation however, little academic research has examined what exactly has been created, and how. Such consideration has the potential to open up discussions and future research on how policy may best influence coach education provision.

5.2 Theoretical frameworks

In order to address the research objective of understanding what policy was created, this study turns to Priestley and Humes' (2010) three models of curriculum development. Subsequent to this, Bernstein's framework is also introduced to elucidate how education policy is both constructed and disseminated.

5.2.1 What policy is created?

For Priestley and Humes (2010) (discussed in chapter 3, section 3.1), curriculum development is an amalgamation of multiple and sometimes disparate interests from within a wider system. In order to develop coherent education provision, they advocate for curriculum development to be shaped by one of three clear 'start points' or models. Firstly, Priestly and Humes describe a process model, as a shared and co-constructed learning 'process' between educators and learners. This approach prioritises the development of learners as individuals in their own right, with a focus on understanding their individual needs, rather than a focus on predetermined content or roles. The process model has much in common with learning relationships where teachers guide learners through topics that learners deem meaningful within their own context. In contrast to the process model, a content model prioritises the

learning of predetermined content. Finally, a product model (i.e., objectives to be achieved) prioritises what a ‘competent’ learner “should” be doing. While a mixture of all three outputs is commonplace within any curriculum, Priestley and Humes (2010) advise that for coherency, one model should be used as a starting point to guide curriculum making by stakeholders, including educators. Accordingly, Priestly and Humes’ work is used to examine and explain what policy was created by The FA. However, while Priestley and Humes provide a description of what is produced, it does not explain how policy is constructed by stakeholders. Here we turned to the work of Basil Bernstein.

5.2.2 How policy is created

In order to address how policy is constructed and disseminated, Bernstein “offers a language to engage in a multi-level understanding of the impact of stakeholders on pedagogical practices” (Griffiths et al., 2018, p. 286). Specifically, Bernstein’s (1990, 2000) ‘Pedagogic Device’ (distributive and recontextualisation rules, discussed in chapter 3, section 3.3) and his early development of language codes (1964, 1971) (chapter 3, section 3.4) are relevant to this study and are therefore included below.

As alluded to in chapter 3 (section 3.3), part of the ‘distributive rule’ of Bernstein’s pedagogic device involves identifying a body of knowledge to be learned. For Bernstein, this often takes place in an esoteric fashion, whereby select individuals (e.g., NGB staff) distinguish ‘relevant’ knowledge to distribute to learners (Bernstein, 2000). Bernstein primarily recognises the role of higher education in producing knowledge, but professions may also contribute to this. Selecting and disseminating knowledge is a negotiated act between stakeholders and reflects wider social, economic, and political influences, status, and

priorities. The distributive rule, therefore, is a useful analytical aid that prompts researchers to consider who is involved in selecting ‘what’ (e.g., knowledge for example) to develop policy.

Bernstein’s (2000) second rule, the rule of ‘recontextualisation’ (also discussed in section 3.3), is concerned with the decoding and recoding of policy. Policy is taken from those creating it during initial production (through the distributive rule), and then recontextualised into a form of meaningful and contextualised practice. Singh et al. (2013, p. 469) commented that the recontextualising rule involves “translation work that occurs when policy text moves from the site of policy-making to local sites in which policy is enacted”. In coach education, this may involve the production of materials (e.g., PowerPoint presentations/handouts, course handbooks, and verbal discussions that clarify syllabi, schemes of work, and qualification specifications). In other words, within a NGB such as The FA, numerous personnel will influence how policy is constructed and disseminated through text and discourse.

To explain how relevant knowledge may be recontextualised, Bernstein introduced the concept of elaborating and restricted language codes (Bernstein, 1964) (chapter 3, section 3.4). An elaborating code describes a language that is explicitly presented to the audience. Access to meaning is high because understanding is not taken for granted and meaning is elaborated (Bernstein, 1964; Moore, 2013). Bernstein (1971) explained that in an elaborating code, knowledge and policy is explained and demonstrated in order to form meaning on a wider scale.

A restricted code suggests that a more localised and internal language structure is already in operation. ‘Restricted’ refers to a shared understanding amongst actors (Moore, 2013). Language spoken here is predictable to the presenters and listeners alike. Nuanced concepts and terminology are assumed to be understood by all individuals. In this case,

knowledge may be ‘taken for granted’. Without elaboration however, access to meaning is restricted to those people ‘in the know’, who may understand one message, while others have a restricted understanding (Bernstein, 1971). A restricted code may mean that individuals are not exposed to confusing information, but they may also have an oversimplified understanding of policy. Thus, language codes are important concepts that enable us to examine how knowledge is disseminated and understood by policy actors.

Bernstein, like Priestley and Humes, assumes that policy is a dynamic constructed process. Both frameworks detail the influence of individuals, and organisations/institutions to shape policy and in turn curriculum making. Indeed, both theoretical frameworks offer an insight into examining policy, looking at what can be created (Priestly and Humes), and how it is created (Bernstein). Used together, these theories are useful for examining The FA’s 2016-2020 policy at level 1 and level 2. More broadly, the models and concepts within these frameworks provide important analytical contributions that shed light on the dynamics of creating, interpreting, and disseminating policy.

5.3 Methodology

5.3.1 Paradigmatic positioning

The research, as detailed in chapter 4 (section 4.4) was underpinned by ontological relativism (i.e., reality is multiple) and epistemological constructivism (i.e., knowledge is constructed) (Philips, 1995). These philosophical positions recognise that prior knowledge (e.g., theoretical frameworks) inform our sense making. As such, the findings of this study represent and value the temporal interpretations of the individuals (participants, me as the researcher, my supervisory team, and the reviewers when this study was submitted for potential publication) involved in this study.

5.3.2. Sampling, participants, and the courses

Following university ethical approval, a purposeful criterion-based sample were recruited from within the organisation (Sparkes & Smith, 2014). Bowe and colleagues (1992) ‘policy cycle’ (originally discussed in chapter 3, section 3.1) identified those who are influential, and those who produce/disseminate text as key participants in policy analysis research.

Accordingly, the following criteria were used to select these participants: (1) active involvement in the creation of The FA level 1 and level 2 courses (context of influence); and (2) active involvement in disseminating The FA level 1 and level 2 courses (context of text production).

A gatekeeper from The FA facilitated access to the sample. An introductory email was sent to the gatekeeper who provided contact details for the sample. Following this, individuals who fulfilled the criteria above, were sent an introductory email with an information sheet and consent form. These emails ensured the gatekeeper provided permission and facilitated a purposeful sample and participant confidentiality. Fourteen participants (twelve males and two females), aged 28–66 ($M = 45.21$) responded and were involved in this study. For the purpose of maintaining anonymity, participants were placed into three classifications based on roles within The FA: Senior Staff (SS; $N = 4$), Departmental Leads (DL; $N = 3$), and Coach Developers (CD). Coach developers have also been split within this research as there are full time members of FA staff known as county coach developers (CCD’s; $N = 4$), as well as part-time coach developers (CD part-time; $N = 3$). With reference to the courses, Table 1 provides details on the structure of the GR coach education courses under study. Further information, including learning outcomes, content, and prerequisites are also available for level 1 (The FA, 2019a) and level 2 (The FA, 2019b).

Course	Level 1	Level 2
Number of Days/Workshops	4 and a half days (9 workshops) e.g., Workshop 2: How we coach – the coach; Workshop 5: The future player	10 days (20 workshops) Split over 3 blocks: Block 1 – 4 days (8 Workshops e.g., Workshop 3: Social Corner) Block 2 – 3 days (6 Workshops e.g., Workshop 13: Managing Mistakes) Block 3 – 3 days (6 Workshops e.g., Workshop 16: Planning)
Maximum Tutors/Candidates ratio	1:18	2:24
Contact Space	Classroom; Football Pitch	Classroom; Football Pitch; In-situ visit at coach's own football club facility.
Typical Activities carried out on-course	PowerPoint Presentations; Group Discussions; Planning; Delivery of short session; Individual or paired reflection; debates; matching tasks; scenario activities.	PowerPoint Presentations; Group Discussions; Group, paired, or individual planning; Delivery of short session; Individual or paired reflection; debates; group presentations of work/sessions; scenario-based tasks.
Assessment	Completion of Tasks inside FA Learner Journal (11 tasks) e.g., how can you, as a coach, link practice to competition? (Half a page (A5 size)).	Part 1 Completion of FA project i.e., a substantial portfolio that explores topics such as the coaches' own philosophy, preferred styles of play, and match day planning Part 2 demonstration of practical competency (against CCF)
Cost (range – dependent on area of country)	£155 - £185	£295 - £430

Table 1. FA course information for level 1 and level 2.

5.4 Data collection and analysis

This study utilised semi-structured interviews with individuals responsible for the courses outlined in Table 1. I conducted all interviews and was a 'partial insider' because of additional roles within The FA (i.e., as a part-time coach developer and coach mentor, discussed in chapter 4, section 4.3). These roles brought some valuable insight but also subjective perspectives to the study. Accordingly, my positionality is discussed briefly in the rigour section below (having been discussed more extensively in chapter 4). Twenty-eight semi-structured interviews were conducted with fourteen participants from within The FA. It was decided to conduct two interviews with each participant across two data points in time, separated by a twelve-month gap between phase 1 and phase 2 interviews. A twelve-month

gap enabled policy to be further disseminated and experienced. All interviews took place at either The FA's National Performance Centre (St Georges' Park), or within local FA facilities. This was to ensure that participants felt as comfortable as possible within a familiar setting (Kvale, 2007). Interviews lasted between 40–115 min in length (mean: 54 minutes) .

5.4.1 Phase 1 interviews

Initial interview questions reflected (1) the context of influence – who influenced what, and (2) the context of text production – who disseminated what and how (cf. Bowe et al., 1992). Questions also reflected participants' roles. For example, schedule 1 for Senior Staff (SS) – In your view/opinion, who have been the key people that have influenced this change?; Schedule 2 for Department Leads (DL) – What control or influence did you have during these changes?; Schedule 3 for Coach Developers (CD) – Can you tell me about the new direction The FA has taken within coach education?

5.4.2 Phase 1 analysis

After Phase 1 interviews, Thematic Analysis (TA)(see appendix 1) was used to identify, analyse, and report initial themes. Braun, Clarke and Weate's (2016) six-step protocol was used as part of a deductive form of analysis. Data were analysed to identify who created what, and how. To do this I began with a period of data familiarisation (step 1), being immersed in the data through listening to the interviews, transcribing the interviews, and reading back through each transcript multiple times. This presented opportunities for coding data (step 2) (see appendix 1.1 and 1.2) that were relevant to the policy cycle (i.e., who created what and how). As codes were developed, initial themes were identified (step 3) (see appendix 1.3 and 1.3.1) by mapping codes together to form meaningful insights (e.g., key

influencers generating change; good intentions; assessment approach). Refinement and revision (step 4) (see appendix 1.4) of the codes and initial themes were then carried out through further reading of transcripts, coding maps, as well as discussions with the wider research team. The research team (me in the first instance, followed by my supervisory team, and then an external liaison in Dr. Ed Cope) named the themes (step 5) in order to represent the data. In the last part of phase 1 (step 6), these themes were organised and were relabelled.

5.4.3 Phase 2 interviews

After a twelve-month period, phase 2 interviews were conducted. Questions were developed from both the themes identified in phase 1 interviews (i.e., Theme 1 – Influencers generating FA coach education development; Theme 2 – A pedagogic shift in FA coach education) and Bernsteinian concepts (distributive rule, recontextualisation, and language codes). Bernstein's pedagogic device was used in order to understand the social relationships that influenced policy and curricula. For example, because assessment was perceived as a potential issue in phase 1, questions explored how and why assessment may have been recontextualised. Again, questions were amended to reflect the differing professional roles of the participants. For example, Schedule 1 for SS – Why do you think people experience ambiguity around assessment? Schedule 2 for DL – In your opinion, does the current course content, delivery approach, and assessment process lend itself to the overall purpose of the level 1 and level 2 courses? Schedule 3 for CD – What guidance/support/training has developed your understanding of these courses? These questions aimed to gain further insight into what had been created and how these changes were being disseminated across the organisation.

5.4.3 Phase 2 analysis

Braun, Clarke and Weate's (2016) six-step protocol was then repeated. Deductively, I used Bernstein's 'distributive rule' (i.e., who decides what is to be known), and 'recontextualisation rule' (i.e., how is policy interpreted and cascaded to practice). Phase 2 analysis was either added to existing codes from phase 1 or new codes were generated (e.g., new code: A 'learning model'). Development and refinement of themes continued through the mapping of codes and discussing these with the research team (e.g., subtheme – confusion around assessment) (see appendix 1.5). During these discussions, Priestley and Humes' (2010) curriculum models were used to refine and support the final themes that felt best represented the data. This refinement process occurred all the way through and into the writing phase of this present study one, where the themes presented offer a final product of a messy iterative analysis phase (see appendix 1.6). Table 2 provides an illustration of the development of themes across the two phases of analysis.

Phase 1 Analysis			Phase 2 Analysis	
Influencers generating change (physical, personnel)	FA coach education has been positively influenced by physical and cultural developments	Key Influences Impacting Change	A Learning Model Developed	Three Elements of Curriculum/ Course Design
Good intentions	FA coach education has a clear social constructivist pedagogy, but assessment is more ambiguous	Social Architects Impacting Change	Ambiguity Around Assessment	Recontextualisation and Confusion of Policy
Assessment Approach		Assessment is ambiguous		A Restriction in Disseminating Policy

Table 2. Development of codes and themes over two phases of analysis.

5.5 Rigour

Member reflections were used post phase 1 interviews to enable participants to consider interview transcripts and the initial insights identified by the research team (Smith & McGannon, 2018). This provided additional data. Ten participants engaged in the member reflections, and these provided support and clarification (e.g., SS “the themes felt really good. I just want to make sure that we ...”). A reflective journal was also used to manage my own positionality and note down thoughts and feelings that may influence further processes (e.g., data collection and analysis). This reflection led to discussions within my supervisory team primarily (as well as discussed some elements with Dr. Ed Cope) that managed my subjectivity, without losing the enriched perspective that a partial insider brings. To further manage subjectivity and provide a form of credibility, data analysis were also read by ‘critical friends’ (supervisory team, Dr. Ed Cope, and Mr. Reece Chapman) (Smith & McGannon, 2018). These processes were put in place to enhance the rigour of this study. Nonetheless, being mindful of the epistemological stance of the study, readers should themselves consider to what extent the findings are relevant to their own context.

5.6 Findings and discussion

This section demonstrates three themes from the data. Theme 1 provides an insight into what was created as part of the 2016-2020 FA policy for level 1 and level 2. Theme 2 focuses on the recontextualisation of the policy and confusion. Finally, Theme 3 describes a restricted code when disseminating policy.

5.6.1 Theme 1: three elements of curriculum/course design

The first theme identified three elements produced as part of the 2016-2020 policy: (1) A 'learning strategy' that was informed by individuals' understanding of social constructivism; (2) a body of content for courses (e.g., PowerPoint slideshows, unit specification); and (3) a coaching competency framework (CCF) and qualification specification. These changes came from a number of key stakeholder inputs.

5.6.2 The first 'element' – a move towards a 'socially constructivist' informed pedagogy

The first element produced was an explicit written learning strategy (internal document) used to inform the development of the level 1 and level 2 courses. This strategy was reportedly designed by a small group of staff at senior levels, who consulted with individuals in different roles across FA education.

We set up a coaching learning group and we began to develop a learning strategy. In that learning strategy that I eventually wrote was in two parts really. The first part was the how and why. Basically, the philosophy behind why we do what we do, so [social] constructivism. That was what we have nailed our hat on in terms of basis for our learning philosophy. (SS)

If you look at the official line from The FA education strategy, it is a [social] constructivist approach to learning. (CCD)

Consistent with the participants above, the learning strategy, which is detailed through an internal only document, explicitly refers to social constructivist principles. The strategy recognises 'learning as an active constructive process', where coaches build upon their prior knowledge, and make sense in relation to their own social context. Such principles are broadly consistent with the tenets of constructivist epistemology (Fosnot, 2013). Further, the internal FA document encourages coach developers to embrace problem-based learning and

‘other active methods as they challenge learners’, which again has been associated with constructivism (Paquette & Trudel, 2018a). The approach also echoes Priestley’s and Humes’ (2010) process model that advocates for a collaborative process, involving both learners and educators (i.e., coach developers) to inform future knowledge.

The creation of the learning strategy reflects Bernstein’s (2000) distributive rule as those in powerful positions were able to provide direction from knowledge producers. Without detailing specific sources, in interviews, participants acknowledged that Higher Education (HE) research had some influence in the group’s decision to take a social constructivist approach.

What do we feel is the latest research in terms of how you could and should design and deliver learning? Constructivism came as a result of that. (SS)

While not explicitly identifying coach education research, the learning strategy document does make one explicit reference regarding Malcom Knowles’ (1973) work on andragogy, which characterises adult learners as self-directed and focused on learning from personal, situated experiences. This view of learners is consistent with the social constructivist epistemology espoused in the strategy, but the inclusion of this solitary reference does raise a future research question of why certain research might explicitly influence policy (Lyle, 2018). Nonetheless, the strategy provides a clear starting point for the construction and dissemination of curriculum, and materials (Priestley & Humes, 2010), but is just one part of a larger coach education system (Culver et al., 2019).

5.6.3 The second ‘element’ – a body of content for courses

Illustrating how different stakeholders can influence policy production as part of Bernstein’s (2000) distributive rule, another group at The FA developed a second element within the

policy; The content that made up the level 1 and level 2 courses. This second element emphasised subject matter knowledge considered useful to learners. This included the England DNA, which is The FA's position on how they view the game, and how they prefer the game to be played (e.g., intelligently dominate possession), and coached (e.g., use games whenever possible) (The FA, 2020). This content was deemed important to inform coaching practice and is an integral part of the seven workshops on the level 1 course (The FA, 2019a), and twenty workshops on the level 2 course (The FA, 2019b) (see Table 1). Within these workshops, predetermined topics, learning outcomes, and resources/materials were created (e.g., schemes of work, PowerPoint presentations, videos, posters, session plan ideas). Those participants who deliver the courses met this revised content with some positive perceptions:

Session plans, the PDF's, the videos, I think the candidates are now getting much more value for money and they're getting better resources (CD part-time).

I feel I've got much more information to give to them, so I feel more knowledgeable personally so I can talk to them about what St George's Park [National Performance Centre] is, what the England DNA [Organisational football philosophy] is, and what the coaching fundamentals are, but I feel like I've got more stuff to back it up (CD part-time).

The data does, however, reflect a tradition of coach developers 'giving' content to learners, as opposed to learners constructing knowledge meaningful to them and their context. The data also continues a trend where knowledge lies with coach developers.

[We are] trying to make sure that you're [the coach developer] on message with the workshops and delivering the outcomes and not deviating too far from the truth ... (DL)

The quotation above, for example, encourages coach developers to stick to the 'truth'. This somewhat contradicts the constructivist learning strategy designed by the first group, which

advocates for a more personalised ‘process model’ (Priestley & Humes, 2010) to meet the relevant needs and context of the learners. In doing so, the content demonstrates how different stakeholders may shape the development and dissemination of coach education policy (Bernstein, 2000).

5.6.4 The third ‘element’ – the coaching competency framework (CCF) and qualification specification

The third element produced during the development of policy was the CCF. The CCF is a list of 16 competencies for coaches from level 1 (introductory) to 5 (elite). This was created to provide constructive alignment where coach developers build on the prior experiences of learners. It was reported that the CCF was developed by senior members of FA staff. One declared:

We developed a cross football group of people to help design that and, eventually, developed a set of coach competencies (SS).

Throughout the interviews, participants associated these competencies with the assessment process at level 2:

At level 2, there are no tasks; it is the project. So, the project has to wrap around something that aligns with the standard and the standard is the competency framework. (DL)

The competency framework is a reference point for assessment (DL)

The CCF appeared to be treated somewhat akin to Priestley and Hume’s (2010) outcome driven approach where learners achieve a predetermined set of competencies. That said, The

FA and an awarding body (an external stakeholder in 1st4Sport) also collaborated to produce the qualification specification including predetermined aims, learning outcomes, mandatory content, and grading criteria to be delivered as part of each course (1st4Sport, 2017a; 1st4Sport, 2017b). Such documents are typical of quality assurance (QA) processes regulated by the government in England that aim to ensure consistently high standards of education provision. Once more illustrating how different stakeholders provide different inputs into a large coach education system. These publicly accessible documents are reminiscent of narrow predetermined competency-based assessments that have a long history in football (Chapman et al., 2019b; Twitchen & Oakley, 2019). The use of predetermined criteria and methods is potentially in contrast to the sharing of knowledge and power and the notion of self-directed learners as advocated in other parts of the learning strategy (e.g., in element 1). Interestingly, none of the participants interviewed explicitly referred to the qualification specification from an assessment perspective. Instead, participants tended to focus on the CCF. This demonstrated that policy continued to develop as discourse, despite the text developed with an external party (i.e., awarding body).

In sum, different stakeholders, each with their own experiences, perspectives, knowledge, and wider social, economic, and political considerations (i.e., HE research; industry knowledge; quality assurance procedures) influenced the new policy. Although the learning strategy relates to Priestley and Humes' (2010) process model, other stakeholders appeared to emphasise content (workshops) and outcome (assessment criteria) models. Thus, The FA coach education policy is, like others (Bernstein, 2000; Culver et al., 2019; Evans & Penney, 1995), the result of complex negotiated acts between internal and external stakeholders.

5.6.5 Theme 2: recontextualisation and confusion of policy

Throughout the interviews, participants also reported challenges with the 2016-2020 policy. To greater and lesser extents, the policy was recontextualised (Bernstein 2000). For example, the learning strategy argued for knowledge that is relevant to the learners' contexts and experienced through problem-based approaches. This appeared to be clear to some participants:

Social constructivism ... it's explicit in all our course material ... how we intend to interact, how the courses are made up. That wasn't clear at first, but hopefully, it is now. (SS)

I think it's trying to tailor how you can plan to meet the needs of the individuals on the course. So where is each learner at on that particular journey, what do they need? What have they got? Is there anyone that can help them? Can they help anyone else? (CCD)

In contrast, some coach developers commented that the key point of the 2016-2020 policy was the transmission of predetermined content and 'organisational messages':

With the scheme of work, we had PowerPoints and the instructions were that we don't alter the PowerPoints, which means we use the PowerPoints we were given ... I just feel there's almost an influence on how we'd [The FA] like you to deliver ... (CD – part time)

These different approaches reflect the influence of multiple stakeholders (i.e., Theme 1) as policy is disseminated. Griffiths and colleagues (2018) commented that policy develops via discourse, as stakeholders select and share information across education systems to inform pedagogical practices. During this dissemination, recontextualisation occurs, and potentially causes confusion. For example, participants reported confusion about the use of the CCF and its primary function. Staff members commented the CCF was:

Only to lead the design of the content of the courses (SS)

People who were driving the review of the Level 2 project made a call that the competency framework [CCF] shouldn't be shown to learners because they wanted to get away from the idea of tick sheets and they also made the call that the word 'assessment', essentially, should be banned (DL)

Another senior staff member, however, described how the CFF was a good learning development tool and should be used collaboratively with learners:

The competency framework is a developmental tool that you can go, 'yeah, I think we can develop you in these areas ... we can work on that' and I can chart the progress. (SS)

Through recontextualisation other participants suggested that individuals have used the CCF as a means of assessment:

Individuals have taken that [CCF] and created almost a competency-based assessment on some courses, others not. (SS)

Recontextualisation and confusion can occur when policy makers, course designers, and coach developers relay messages that have been interpreted in relation to their own biographies, experiences, and subjective understandings (Bernstein, 2000). For example, the historical dominance of competency-based assessment within The FA (Chapman et al., 2019b), may mean that individuals interpret the CCF in relation to assessment. Moreover, the extent to which a recontextualised message is further cascaded may reflect the power, vertical and horizontal discourse network (as discussed in chapter 3, section 3.7), and perspectives of individuals, rather than the completeness of their understanding. This has previously been observed in coaches (Stodter & Cushion, 2017), but the study herein finds a similar process amongst policy makers, course designers, and coach developers. Thus, when disseminating policy, confusion can be enabled by a myriad of dynamic social factors such as the power of

different stakeholders (internal and external), and the prior experiences of individuals. Of course, confusion can also occur if policy makers and course designers do not fully understand theory, such as constructivism, prior to dissemination.

5.6.6 Theme 3 – A restricted code when disseminating policy

When considering the three new elements produced in Theme 1, coach developers reported a desire for more training:

Just all new stuff and then no real training, I would say' (CCD)

I don't think training really told us about it [the changes]' (CD part-time).

The desire for further training is understandable given the complex philosophical tenets of social constructivism, which require education to avoid a naïve form of implementation (Cushion, 2013; Nelson et al., 2014). That said, the learning strategy, which details how The FA conceive social constructivism, was somewhat restricted from large parts of the workforce. The learning strategy remains an internal document and has not been widely disseminated to the part time coach developer workforce. As a result, full-time FA staff seemingly communicate via a restricted code, which offers a particularistic understanding to those 'in the know' but offers limited understanding or elaboration for those across the wider workforce (Bernstein, 1971, chapter 3, section 3.4). Furthermore, one department lead claimed:

The content that underpinned the theory, and research that underpinned the content of the courses was never shared. And, therefore, there is a gap between the full-time staff who designed the learning strategy and part time tutors running around on the ground making it happen. (DL)

From a Bernsteinian (1990) perspective, effective recontextualisation requires elaboration of policy. In the absence of elaboration, policy may be subject to multiple (mis)interpretations. To examine this further, future research should explore how educators on the ground practice the policy, which informed my own work within study 3 (chapter 7).

5.7 Some additional considerations

The three themes above illustrate that policy makers need to elaborate the underlying philosophical assumptions of constructivism. This may lead to considerations about what is conceived as social constructivism within a specific NGB, how stakeholders may thwart or enable policy informed by this epistemology, and how content and assessment processes can support coaches to socially construct relevant knowledge. The findings also illustrate that coach education is not an easy task, limited to on-course provision. Rather, policy makers operating within this system are faced with some complex challenges that researchers may wish to support. Firstly, while advocating courses meet the needs of learners in local situated contexts, NGBs such as The FA are also concerned with the consistency and quality of courses across large geographical areas. Secondly, as evidenced above, NGBs need to work with external stakeholders such as awarding bodies (i.e., 1st4Sport), who may have different perspectives and objectives on content and assessment. Thirdly, elaborating to a large, part time workforce can be difficult. Indeed, one department lead summarised the challenges facing NGBs:

We're talking about learning, which is complex. We're then talking about it in the largest NGB in the country, which is even more complex. We're then adding in 600 people being involved in delivering it, even more complex. Then we're adding in staff changeover, there's more complexity. Then we're adding in digital platforms that work and how we want them to work, so there's even more complexity. (DL)

5.8 Conclusion

This first study in my thesis offers an original contribution by exploring what components made up the 2016-2020 policy created by The FA. Secondly, the study examined how the current policy was created and disseminated. This is significant because research has called for formal coach education to be examined as a system (Culver et al., 2019), which in the context of The FA, is influenced by Government, senior NGB members, policy makers, course designers, department leads, and coach developers. Therefore, this study contributes by detailing how stakeholders interact to influence coach education policy. Findings suggest that:

- (1) A small group within The FA have produced a learning strategy informed by their understanding of social constructivism. Further internal and external stakeholders have also contributed to elements of the policy (e.g., content and assessment) and thus policy creation is not a simple act, but a negotiated and dynamic process.
- (2) Notwithstanding the guiding learning strategy, recontextualisation had inevitably occurred and some confusion was evidenced in relation to areas of the policy (e.g., the CCF)
- (3) This confusion may be confounded by concepts such as a social constructivist epistemology, which would benefit from further elaboration by sharing texts and adequately timed dissemination events.

The FA has continued a clear move towards coach education informed by social constructivism (Chapman et al., 2019b), but understanding of the learning strategy and indeed, the theory that informs it, remains varied. Policy makers, who may have different

economic, social, and political perspectives, including and beyond The FA, need to share an elaborating language code with each other, to ensure that there is coherency between a learning strategy, content, and assessment (Sullanmaa et al., 2019). Appropriately timed dissemination events may help elaborate key concepts throughout the workforce. This elaboration is particularly needed when exploring concepts such as constructivism that have many variants (cognitive, social, critical) (Philips, 1995), and are not simple prescriptions for teaching but complex epistemologies (Culpan & McBain, 2012). This does not, however, require a top-down (i.e., vertical) approach to policy development and dissemination, but rather an iterative approach to sharing knowledge between people across (i.e., horizontally) a NGB. This encourages decisions to be made at all levels from positions of explicit, rather than assumed understanding (Sullanmaa et al., 2019).

Future research could support NGBs and wider educational institutions who seek to implement a pedagogy informed by learning theory, such as social constructivism. Indeed, social constructivism is an area that requires greater levels of clarity if it is to be used as a central learning theory to develop coaches. Researchers could also explore which knowledge is selected and legitimised by policy makers. To this end, immersive methodologies such as ethnographic and collaborative action research approaches may provide analytical value. Conversely, while this study has examined how policy has been created and disseminated, there is a need to consider both ‘what’ content makes up The FA formal coach education courses (study two, chapter 6 below) and how coach developers and coaches experience the 2016-2020 policy. Related to this, pedagogical research may need to recognise that on-course practices are likely to be recontextualised practices. Thus, coach education research should build on the insights provided here and critically connect policy to practice (as researched in study three, chapter 7) in order to provide a more complete understanding of coach education as a system.

Chapter VI

Study two - An examination of content knowledge in formal coach education curriculum.

Given the findings from study one (chapter 5) above, there was a need to explore different aspects of the policy. For study two, I decided to focus on research question 3 which asked:

- 3) What disciplinary content knowledge was included to inform curriculum content of the formal coach education courses, and how was this content structured?

6.1 Introduction

For Biesta (2012, p. 38) “the point of education is never that students learn, but that they learn *something*”. However, little is known about the *something* that is taught to coaches as part of formal coach education curricula. This is remiss because curriculum construction is a social and political act, where stakeholders define, develop, and disseminate specified knowledge to influence learning and ultimately practice (Bernstein, 2000). Curricula are therefore not neutral, but contestable social constructs that privilege some forms of knowledge and ways of knowing over others. Indeed, Muller and Young (2019) recognise that curricula often represent the knowledge and concerns of those in power (e.g., government), or those who have increased forms of capital (e.g., perceived experts in their field), and may or may not meet the needs of learners. On this basis, formal coach education experiences are not merely idiographic episodes, but are constructed by multiple stakeholders within wider coach education systems who may influence the specified content knowledge

that is deemed necessary for coaches (Culver et al., 2019; Griffiths et al., 2018; Study one, chapter 5). Accordingly, curricula such as those on coach education courses, are an area worthy of investigation, as is the knowledge within them.

Scholarship exploring knowledge has highlighted how coaches require declarative (knowledge about a topic) and procedural knowledge (knowledge of how to do) to be effective (Abraham & Collins, 2011). This knowledge includes a range of ‘ologies’ such as physiology, psychology, sociology, and pedagogy, along with sport specific technical and tactical knowledge (Abraham, Collins, & Martindale, 2006). However, not only do coaches need to draw upon multiple knowledges, it is important that the knowledge made available is supported by a sound evidence base (Stoszkowski et al., 2020). The evidence base is necessary to ethically and effectively support coaches’ practices and the participants they work with. However, researchers have identified that not all knowledge provided to coaches is credible and pseudoscientific ideas (e.g., learning styles and neural linguistic programming) have pervaded the coaching domain via coach education courses (Bailey et al., 2018; Stoszkowski et al., 2020). Again, this suggests a need for a critical examination of the knowledge provided in formal coach education curricula.

While it is largely agreed coaches need a variety of evidence-based knowledge (Armour, 2014; Armour & Chambers, 2014), what knowledge to include in a coach education curriculum is not a straightforward decision. For instance, the ever-changing nature of practice requires coaches to draw upon multiple disciplines of knowledge to think, behave, and reflect in different ways that meet a myriad of dynamic requirements from stakeholders (e.g., athletes, fellow staff, parents, management, supporters). Research has recognised that coaches’ social environments might filter or reinforce knowledge that coaches have constructed on coach education courses (Stodter & Cushion, 2017; Stoszkowski & Collins, 2016). Specifically, content knowledge constructed on courses might generate thought,

understanding, planning, or action in a specific domain, or alternatively may be deemed irrelevant or inappropriate to a coach's context, and thus, 'dismissed'. Given this context specific nature of coach learning, it may be difficult to accurately predetermine what knowledge coaches need within their practice at any given moment (Potrac, Nelson, & O'Gorman, 2016), and therefore what knowledge to provide in formal coach education curricula. Further, Jones and Wallace (2006) suggest that coaches not only need to draw upon knowledge from different 'ologies', but may need to do this simultaneously, because coaching actions informed by one 'ology' (e.g., physiology) are related to, impacted by, or will impact another (e.g., psychology). From this perspective sport coaching is a complex phenomenon (Armour & Chambers, 2014; Abraham, Collins, & Martindale, 2006), which requires the integration of biopsychosocial knowledge to support participants. With reference to coach learning, this suggests there is not only a need to critically examine *what* content knowledge forms coach education curriculum, but also consider whether this knowledge is integrated.

In response to the above, this second study aimed to examine 1) what content knowledge was included within a coach education curriculum, and 2) how this content knowledge was structured. These aims were addressed by examining The FA intermediate (i.e., level 2) formal coach education course. The contribution this second study makes lies in supplementing existing research on formal coach education courses (e.g., Cushion, Stodter, & Clarke, 2021) and in particular football. For instance, Chapman et al. (2019b) demonstrated that coach education courses are socially constructed and reconstructed over time. Consistent with this, both studies one and three (chapter's 5 and 7) in my thesis also illustrate how FA courses are negotiated constructs developed by multiple stakeholders including policy makers both in and outside The FA, and coach developers on courses. Across these studies it has been shown that coach education is a complex and contested social construct, where multiple

stakeholders influence how coaches experience assessment, pedagogy and formal education. To date however, no study has examined what content knowledge is constructed by these policy makers, nor how that knowledge is structured as a curriculum to meet the needs of coaches. Accordingly, this study provides a novel analysis of a coach education curriculum that prompts course designers and wider stakeholders, including NGBs, universities and regulatory bodies to reflect on the *something* that coaches are taught.

6.2 Theoretical framework – Bernstein’s classification

Researchers in coaching (Griffiths et al., 2018) and physical education (PE) (O’Connor, Alfrey, & Penney, 2022) are increasingly using Bernstein’s socio-educational work to examine the social construction of curricula. Specifically, through interviewing course designers/learning development team and senior policy makers within The FA, Study one (chapter 5) identified the powerful dynamics that influence the construction of coach education policy. Additionally, study three (chapter 7) has used Bernstein’s theory (i.e., framing, chapter 3, section 3.6) coupled with empirical observations to illustrate how coach developers reproduce courses in-practice, with a particular focus on pedagogical practice. Yet neither of these studies, nor others, have explored what content knowledge is constructed in FA courses and this means that we have little understanding of the ‘something’ that football coaches in England are expected to learn. To address this gap, this study similarly draws upon the work of Bernstein. For Bernstein (2000), the decision of ‘what’ knowledge informs curricula occurs during a policy creation, development, and dissemination process that involves a negotiation between internal and external stakeholders. The outcome of this process results in a curriculum in-text and discourse that identifies what knowledge *should/could* be known by a given population of learners (Daniels & Tse, 2020). The text-based curriculum can manifest in lesson plans, schemes of work and curriculum documents

that classify what knowledge is deemed as legitimate for learners on a given course. This in-text curriculum can also be supplemented or replaced by curriculum as discourse on course. Therefore, this study adopted Bernstein's classification concept (as discussed in chapter 3, section 3.5), as a means of examining what content knowledge was constructed in-text and on course, as a means of understanding what content knowledge defines coaching as part of The FA intermediate coach education curriculum.

Bernstein's classification concept not only explains *what* knowledge is classified as desirable knowledge within a specified curriculum, but also considers the space *between* content within a curriculum (Bernstein, 1975; 2000). This space between categories of knowledge (i.e., disciplinary subjects of knowledge) potentially determines different discourses in the learning environment (Bernstein, 2000). Bernstein explained that classification can be seen as being either *strongly* or *weakly* insulated from other categories of knowledge. For example, traditional educational subjects such as English and Maths are strongly classified because each subject holds its own unique identity through strongly insulated categories and therefore the space between each category is typically impermeable (Bernstein, 2000). Weak classification on the other hand offers a far more permeable insulation, where boundaries are more likely to be blurred as part of a more integrated curriculum. For instance, a weak classification could manifest in a coaching curriculum which is permeated and connects both sociological and psychological constructs.

Depending on *how* knowledge is classified, curricula could be considered as either a *collection* or *integrated curricula* (Bernstein, 1975). A strong insulation of categories points towards a *collection* form of curriculum, where different disciplinary subjects are siloed from one another. In contrast, weak insulation between categories points towards an *integrated* form of curriculum, where links are made between disciplinary subjects and where concepts are connected (Bernstein, 1975). These boundaries between knowledge within curricula

influence what learners are likely to know, while also conveying what knowledge is deemed appropriate within a given context. Given the multifaceted and interdisciplinary knowledge required in coaching, it would seem appropriate that coach education curriculum are more integrative, than collective.

More broadly, classification of knowledge not only reveals what knowledge is classified as legitimate, and the form of a given curriculum, but also illuminates the distribution of power amongst policy makers and course designers. For example, as policy is disseminated down a hierarchical chain (as seen in study one, section 5.6.5), it presents an opportunity for individuals to influence the curriculum (e.g., by including and strongly insulating their preferred knowledge). Analysing curricula using classification begins to illuminate the influence of, negotiation between, and non-influence of various stakeholders who determine a curriculum. Thus, classification presents an analytical tool for critically examining *what* knowledge is deemed legitimate for coaches, considering what form of curricula is provided to coaches, and to further understand the powerful influences upon coach education systems.

6.3 Methodology

6.3.1 Paradigmatic positioning

This research was underpinned by ontological relativism (i.e., reality is multiple) and epistemological constructivism (i.e., knowledge is constructed and therefore subjective) (Lincoln, Lynham, & Guba, 2018) (as discussed in chapter 4, section 4.4), which led to me and my supervisory team exploring the social construction of FA curriculum for the level 2 coaching course. The methods and analysis detailed below demonstrate the explorative

approach to understand *what* knowledge had been included, and *how* it had been structured in a coach education curriculum.

6.3.2 The context of the course

The FA Level 2 Certificate in Coaching Football (1st4Sport, 2018) was primarily aimed at coaches working in GR football and was optional. The course was delivered by a combination of full-time and part-time coach developers employed by The FA. The focus of the course was on providing safe, fun, and engaging opportunities for players. At the time of study, approximately 5,000 coaches per year undertook this course. The course consisted of twenty workshops divided into three blocks of learning (Block 1 – 4 days; Block 2 – 3 days; and Block 3 – 3 days). Each course lasted ten days in total but was mandated to be delivered over a minimum six-month period to enable learner's time to apply their learning between blocks. Coach developers also carried out a minimum of two *in-situ* visits to support coaches between blocks two and three, and after block three (although from my own experience as a coach developer, this knowledge varied amongst different stakeholders). On-course, learners engaged in PowerPoint presentations, group discussions, individual planning, delivery of sessions, and evaluations of those sessions. Throughout the course, learners were assessed in three core areas: (1) attendance at all workshops (20); (2) completion of an individual learner project linked to The FA DNA, which is a key policy of The FA (The FA, 2020); and (3) delivery of 40 minutes or more appropriate practical delivery within the coach's own context.

6.3.3. Sampling

Over 200 Level 2 courses were delivered annually and so a purposeful and convenient case sampling approach was adopted for this second study (Sparkes & Smith, 2014).

Following university ethical approval, two courses were chosen to be observed in different parts of England. Contact was made with coach developers, who were gatekeepers to the courses. Across both courses a total of five FA coach developers (1 female and 4 males) were responsible for delivery and all agreed to participate in this study. Details of the participants have been included in table 3, but limited to support their anonymity.

	Coach Developer 1	Coach Developer 2	Coach Developer 3	Coach Developer 4	Coach Developer 5
Name (Pseudonym)	Jamie	Ashley	Blake	Taylor	Casey
Age (Years)	57	30	50	37	36
Highest Coaching Qualification (Held at time of course observation)	Level 5	Level 3	Level 4	Level 3	Level 3 (Undertaking Level 4 at the time)
Tutor Role	Full time	Part-time	Full Time	Part Time	Part Time
FA Tutoring Experience	20 years	3 years	19 years	3 years	3 years
Previous/Other Roles (i.e., if not full time in football)	Coach development officer, 1 st team manager, Director of football	(FA) Skills Coach, Football development officer, Teacher	(FA) Skills Team Leader. College tutor, FA County employee	School sport coordinator, own business (in football development sector)	Military role, Academy Coach
Number of Level 2's delivered up to the 2018/2019 season.	10-12 (since August 2016)	6-7 (since August 2016)	4 x full courses 4/5 x different blocks (1-3) (since August 2016)	6 (since August 2016)	6 (since August 2016)

Table 3. Coach developer information.

6.4 Data collection

6.4.1 Document analysis

Given that curriculum are negotiated social constructs that manifest as curriculum in-text, documents were used to enable 'social facts' to be observed (Bowen, 2009) and gain a better understanding of the Level 2 course and what it was trying to achieve (Chapman et al., 2019b). Documents (see Figure 4) were analysed to understand: (1) what content knowledge made up the qualification; and (2) how it was structured (via a scheme of work). Documents included:

- 1st4Sport/FA Qualification Handbook (QHB) (2018a)
- 1st4Sport/FA Qualification Specification (QS)(2018a)
- 1st4Sport/FA Unit Specification (US)(2018a)
- 1st4Sport/FA Delivery, Assessment and Quality Assurance Approach (DAQA) (2018b)
- 1st4Sport/FA Qualification Purpose Statement (2016)
- FA Scheme of Work (SoW) (Level 2) (internal FA document)
- FA Level 2 PowerPoint Presentations (x16)
- FA Level 2 Learner Journal (internal FA document)
- FA Learning Strategy (internal FA document)
- FA Coach Competency Framework (internal FA document)

Figure 4. FA level 2 documents.

In total, The FA, along with the awarding body (1st4Sport) created a combined 112 pages of documentation as part of the level 2 course. The FA themselves then created a further 234 PowerPoint Presentation slides for 16 of the 20 workshops (workshops 16-20 were classed as the same topic/theme and format), a 120-page A5 learner journal, and designed A2 posters (n = 12) were all examined.

6.4.2 Semi-structured interviews

To gather background and demographic data, interviews were conducted with the five coach developers, totalling 193 minutes (mean: 38 minutes). Two of the interviews were carried out over the phone prior to the courses starting, with the other three interviews carried out on-site (i.e., at clubhouse). These interviews were undertaken to understand the perspective of those who reproduce the curriculum on the ground.

6.4.3 Observations

Observations were used to enable policy to be viewed in practice, and to understand how coach developers were reproducing the curriculum in discourse. Fifteen days (105 hours) of observations across two courses in different parts of England were undertaken. Palmer and Grecic's (2014) framework for field notes were used as a basis for structuring observation because it had been developed for observing coach education, and because curricula can differ between written policy and actual practice (see appendix 4).

6.5 Analysis

Deductive analysis began by first examining *what* content knowledge had been included within the curriculum. This was followed by then examining *how* this knowledge was structured, in line with Bernstein's classification concept. To do this I (along with my supervisory team later) flexibly used procedures outlined by Braun et al. (2016). Stages 1-3 allowed me to read the documentation developed by The FA and 1st4Sport independently, where initial codes were then detailed and transferred into NVivo 12 (see appendix 2.1 and appendix 2.2). Further codes were constructed across multiple documents that led to the formation of initial clusters of codes informed by the classification concept (chapter 3,

section 3.5; as well as 6.2 above) (see appendix 2.3). I then generated initial themes from the data (e.g., implicit and explicit knowledge; strong classification of policy; use of specific disciplines). These initial themes were discussed and debated with my supervisory team, and an external colleague (Dr. Ed Cope) to inform further constructions of themes and ideas. Within this third stage, course observations were also read and coded against clusters of codes generated from the document analysis. Stages 4-6 saw further re-reading of documentation and course observations, as well as interviews to further code, debate, and amend themes generated. Continued discussions with my supervisory team created a messy, iterative set of debates until we constructed three themes that we felt best represented the data (e.g., implicit knowledge of industry around technical and tactical elements). These themes were debated all the way through, and then prior to submission of this study to be considered for review and potential publication. During the review process for potential publication, we used the comments from the reviewers, and resubmission to amend theme names, which were again revisited and altered (see appendix 2.4).

6.6 Rigour

Given the epistemological stance taken within my research, a collaborative approach was undertaken with The FA (as discussed in chapter 1, section 1.1). This support enabled rigour by providing access to course documents, coach developers, and courses and enabled the observations and document analysis to be undertaken. Collaboration also extended to my supervisory team and an external colleague (Dr. Ed Cope), who each brought their own subjectivities to the process. For instance, at the time of data collection, I was a practicing coach developer within The FA. This provided me with partial insider knowledge of the curriculum (policy) and a degree of capital to access coach developers and understand the coach education process. To manage my subjectivity, I kept a reflective journal that presented

an opportunity to document decisions, thoughts and feelings and to self-critically question these. Dr. Ed Cope also had experience of working at The FA, as a course designer. Again, this enabled an insider perspective, albeit from a different position. At the time of writing, we have both left our roles, but nonetheless our positions enabled access to resources, materials, knowledge and personnel to explore the classification of content knowledge on The FA Level 2. To ensure rigorous analysis the perspectives of both these, I was also challenged by my supervisory team which consisted of three members with experience outside of The FA (Dr. Colum Cronin, Professor Dave Richardson, and Dr. Martin Littlewood). In this way, the three acted as critical friends (Smith & McGannon, 2018; Sparkes & Smith, 2014). For example, I often discussed the practical elements of course experience. In contrast, they would challenge perspectives by focusing discussions on broader conceptual considerations (i.e., classification). We note these considerations here in order to offer a transparent and sincere approach to the research process (Sparkes & Smith, 2014). On this basis, I encourage readers to critically consider the theoretical transferability (Smith, 2018) of findings to their own context of course/curriculum design.

6.7 Findings

This section presents and discusses three themes from the data. Theme 1 and 2 use data included in Table 4, and has therefore been included below.

Workshop Number	Workshop Title	Workshop Theme and Aims (as set out within PowerPoint Presentations)	Disciplinary knowledge(s)	Sources of Knowledge		Grey Literature
				Explicit Theories/Models identified in Level 2 documents and resources.	Other concepts interpreted by researchers as implicit within curriculum materials	
Block 1						
1	Introduction to The FA Level 2 in coaching football	The assessment criteria and format for the Level 2 in Coaching Football Course learning culture The FA Vision for Coaching and how it relates to you and your coaching				England DNA
2	Coaching Philosophy	Your role as a coach What success might look like in your context Coaching philosophy	Philosophy		Relates to ICCE (2013) Vision and Strategy	England DNA
3	Social Corner	The potential of football in contributing to player’s social development Methods of how to most effectively communicate with people	Sociology		Life skill development	
4	Helping Players Learn	Coaching behaviour and its impact on player learning	Psychology Pedagogy	Abraham (2009) (adapted) Decision-Making Model is present on slides. Coach Analysis Intervention System (Cushion et al. 2012) Mosston & Ashworth’s (2002) – Spectrum of Teaching Styles. Vygotsky’s (1978) Zone of Proximal/Optimal Development concept.	Guadagnoli and Lee’s (2004) Challenge Point Framework	

5	Motivation	<p>What motivates players to take part in football?</p> <p>What motivates players to keep them involved in football?</p> <p>What constitutes appropriate coaching behaviours to promote player motivation?</p>	Psychology	<p>Self Determination Theory (name presented in slides but no authors included) (Deci and Ryan, 1985).</p> <p>Growth Mindset Theory (included in notes section, not on slides) (Dweck, 2006).</p> <p>Creating a learning environment – coach-athlete relationships (Mageau & Vallerand, 2003).</p>	<p>Weiner's (1986) Attribution Model.</p> <p>Nicholl's (1989) Achievement Goal Theory</p>	The FA's Youth Development Review 2012
6	Self-Esteem	Coaching behaviours that promote player self-esteem	Psychology		<p>Self-Esteem (Weiss & Ebbeck, 1996)</p> <p>Nicholl's (1989) Achievement Goal Theory</p>	
7	Practice Spectrum	Structuring coaching practice	Pedagogy	<p>Contextual Interference (Shea & Morgan, 1979)</p> <p>Variability of Practice (Wulf & Schmidt, 1997)</p>	Challenge Point Framework (Guadagnoli and Lee, 2004)	
8	Developing Skill	The process of developing technical skills	Skill Acquisition	<p>Development Model of Sport Participation (Côté, Baker, & Abernethy, 2007).</p> <p>Deliberate practice (Ericsson, 2006)</p>	<p>Zone of proximal/optimal development (Vygotsky, 1978)</p> <p>Game-based coaching</p>	
Block 2						
9	Review of How We Coach	Reflecting on practice	Psychology (Reflection)	Types of reflection (Schön, 1983)		England DNA

10	Player Potential	<p>Opportunity and experience and its impact on player potential.</p> <p>The implications of player age, gender, and maturity for coaching practice</p>	Physiology Psychology Pedagogy		<p>Novice – Expert spectrum</p> <p>Relative Age Effect (RAE).</p> <p>Maturation.</p> <p>Early Specialisation</p>	
11	Managing Difference	Demonstrate the use of the STEPS principle during practice in order to support player development.	Psychology Pedagogy		<p>STEP Model</p> <p>Constraints based coaching</p> <p>Challenge point framework</p>	
12	Managing Behaviour	<p>Differences in player behaviour.</p> <p>Methods to prevent player misbehaviour.</p> <p>Methods to promote appropriate behaviour during practice and competition.</p>	Psychology		Achievement Goal Theory (Nicholl's, 1989)	
13	Managing Mistakes	<p>Recognising mistakes as an important part of the learning process.</p> <p>Interventions to support player learning and independence</p>	Psychology			
14	The Physical Corner	<p>The physical development of players.</p> <p>The manipulation of practices to develop physical returns.</p> <p>Maturation and its impact on player development</p>	Physiology		<p>RAE</p> <p>Maturation</p>	
Block 3						
15	Review of course so far	None identified.	Psychology (Reflection)			
16-20	Planning/Delivering	None identified	Pedagogy			England DNA

Table 4. FA level 2 breakdown.

6.7.1 Theme 1. A curriculum partially informed by research

The FA level 2 consisted of a variety of knowledge from academic disciplines (Table 4., column's 5 and 6). This included knowledge and concepts mainly from sport psychology, physiology, and to a lesser extent, skill acquisition and pedagogy (Table 4, column 4). Of these disciplines, psychological concepts appeared most frequently, suggesting that The FA classified this as legitimate coaching knowledge. Physiology and sport psychology are relatively well-established disciplines within the sport sciences (Abraham, Collins, & Martindale, 2006; Stoszkowski & Collins, 2016), and it is not surprising stakeholders deemed these disciplines as appropriate sources of knowledge for The FA level 2 curriculum. This is noteworthy because the validation of knowledge often occurs over time, by disciplines creating and insulating their own unique epistemological identities (Muller & Young, 2019). In doing so, disciplines differentiate their particular 'academic' knowledge from everyday 'mundane' knowledge (Bernstein, 1975; 2000). Consistent with this, a body of foundational knowledge from sport psychology and physiology has been deemed credible by those stakeholders who constructed The FA curriculum. The presence of these explicit theories and research informed model's counters concerns regarding the prevalence of pseudoscience ideas in coach education (Bailey et al., 2018; Stoszkowski et al., 2020), as can be seen in Figure 5.

BECOMING A REFLECTIVE PRACTITIONER

Fundamental to your development as a coach is your ability to reflect effectively on your coaching. Reflection is the bridge between your coaching experience and learning, and forms a main part of what you have to do on all FA Education courses.

Therefore, it is crucial that we support your development of the knowledge and skills required to reflect effectively. While there are many reflective frameworks that you could draw upon to support your reflections, we have decided to use Donald Schön's concepts of reflection. This is because these align nicely with the stages of the Plan, Do, Review model that The FA uses.

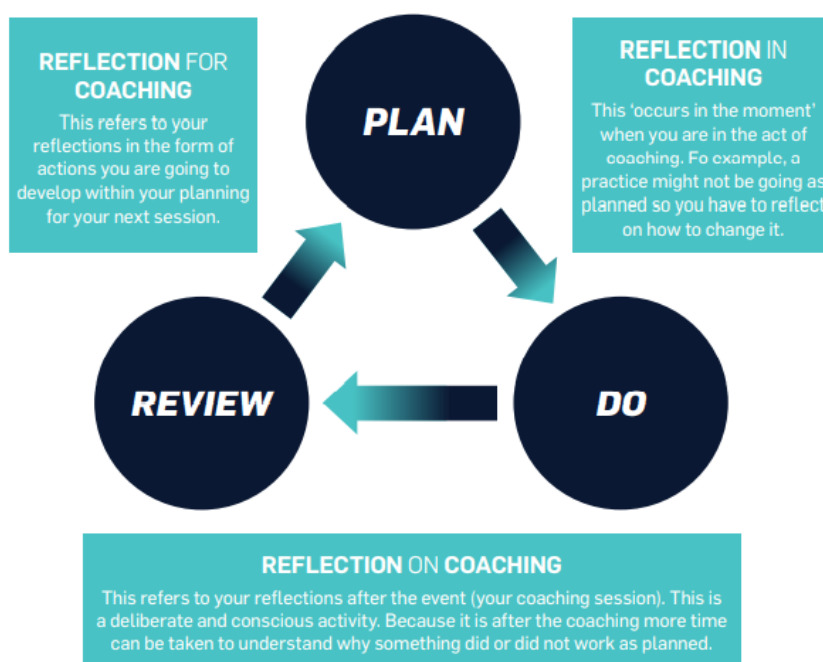


Figure 5. Schön's (1983) concept of reflection incorporated within learner journal.

Beyond knowledge from psychology, physiology, pedagogy and skill acquisition, the course also encouraged considerations of social and philosophical aspects of coaching. For example, in workshop 3 (the social corner) Casey (a coach developer) commented:

this (social) is the biggest thing for me in the game, in fact, it's not just the game, it's in life...growing people on and off the pitch, is what grows the game.

Learners also saw the value of this workshop, as one stated:

Listening to this (the social corner) has really hit home to me and how important it is to understand developing the person.

What is notable, however, is the absence of explicit research informed content knowledge on the social aspects of coaching. Observations revealed that the social workshop tended to encourage general dialogue with players and significant others (e.g., parents, coaches, welfare officers, etc.) but unlike other discipline areas (e.g., physiology), there were no obvious research ideas/concepts drawn upon. Research was referred to in a general sense, yet no specific evidence was presented (Figure 6.). Given the importance of social topics in coaching (e.g., power, identity, ethics, micro-politics, care), this coverage of the social elements of coaching seemed inadequate and not reflective of the needs of the coaches, their environment, nor the evidence base available from the sociology of coaching.

LIFE SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Research suggests that football can develop player's life skills.

However, what do you think this is dependent on ?

- **The coaching environment you create**
Players are able to focus on self-improvement and not being compared to others, rather than a prioritisation on winning
- **The coaching behaviours you employ**
Coaches are positive, supportive and provide players the opportunity to take responsibility, rather being critical of performance and controlling.

Figure 6. Workshop 3 (The social corner).

Further, these vague references towards ‘research’ presented challenges for coach developers tasked with delivering the workshops on the social aspects of coaching. In the absence of explicit research informed concepts on the in-text curriculum, discussions on the social corner were often cut short:

We won’t do the tasks (on the slide) because we are going outside and that’s the best place to learn this (Casey).

In highlighting the need for more research informed social and philosophical concepts, we do acknowledge that logistically not every aspect of coaching can be covered on a single course, particularly one of an intermediate nature. Related to this, Study one (chapter 5) described how course designers and department leads within The FA constructed coach education courses. With Bernstein’s (2000) view of curriculum as a negotiated process in mind, what theme 1 in this study demonstrates is how these stakeholders deem knowledge, particularly from psychological, physiological, and pedagogical disciplines as legitimate knowledge for sport coaches. It also demonstrates that while the social and philosophical aspects of coaching are recognised as important, they are less explicitly informed by research. This should prompt those who research the sociology of sport coaching and those course designers to consider how best to translate and integrate evidence-based research on the social aspects of coaching.

6.7.2 Theme 2. A strongly classified curriculum

Content on The FA level 2 was designed to be strongly classified and consisted of a *collection* rather than *integrated* curriculum. Table 4. illustrates this by providing a synthesis of the document analysis. Each workshop had specific aims (Table 4, column 3.) and these were typically well insulated from other workshops. The strongly classified approach to knowledge meant that there were limited crossing of disciplinary boundaries on the courses

observed. This could be problematic because coaches operate in dynamic contexts (Jones and Wallace, 2006; Armour, 2014), that require knowledge from multiple disciplines, and to understand how different disciplinary knowledge might interact to support positive sport experiences. This is because sport participation is always an interdisciplinary activity where physiological, psychological and sociological factors continually influence one another (Armour, 2014). However, observation notes from a discussion between myself and Ashley (Coach Developer) highlighted the lack of integration between theory (i.e., classroom work) and practical (i.e., pitch work), Ashley comments:

[Ashley discussing what he would say to learners] "What you've planned in the first day or what you brought onto your block two with you, just have a read of it, have a bit of a tweak, and then come and just show us,"...[what Ashley then discussed with me] so there's not really been a directive of, if we're taking this concept of planning for learning, has there been direct planning for learning in relation to workshop 13, managing mistakes, that goes from theory to practical? No, there hasn't.

In the policy text (i.e., scheme of work) (Table 4.), knowledge was represented as clear, accepted, non-contentious and as a consequence uncontested, and therefore strongly insulated. For example, psychological knowledge on motivation was largely insulated from physiological knowledge on maturation. This lack of integration in-text was further reinforced by the awarding body (1st4Sport) who wrote in their qualification handbook during the creation of the course:

Recognised Centres must adhere to the learning programme as the structure has been created to facilitate a learning journey that is appropriate to the qualification (1st4Sport, 2018a, p.10).

This resulted in a *collection* form of curriculum where knowledge was compartmentalised into discrete units of study (e.g., workshops) (Bernstein, 2000; Daniels & Tse, 2020). A collection curriculum may enable NGBs such as The FA to scaffold knowledge into

manageable portions of information, which learners can focus upon. This approach to curriculum design could also be seen as efficient and pragmatic because The FA are charged with supporting large numbers of coaches nationally. For example, a collection curriculum governed by strongly classified learning outcomes and subsequent knowledge means that if a learner missed a specific workshop on one course, they could access the same knowledge via the same workshop on another course. As alluded to in study three (chapter 7) in the next study, this structured approach to curriculum maintains consistent content, sequencing and pacing across courses. This enables the curriculum to meet the logistical imperatives of stakeholders' (e.g., The FA and the awarding bodies who quality assure courses).

This *collection* form of curriculum design ultimately directed the coach developers' pedagogical process on-course, who focused on the specified topic within designated workshops. For example, Blake (another coach developer) commented "we tend to stick to the format and order of the workshops throughout". Further observations revealed that there was little integration or revisiting of previous knowledge from other workshops. Coach developers on course were concerned about whether this approach helped coaches with the complexity of their contexts. Blake (a coach developer) explained:

The bit that I'm not always sure of is how they (the coaches) integrate it back all together...you go out and see the first in situ (visit) after block one and it'll be very much social-psych stuff.

To support coaches to integrate knowledge from different areas, Armour (2014) proposed and demonstrated the use of pedagogical cases as a relevant learning tool. The genesis of these cases lies in rich narratives from sport participants, multiple disciplinary analysis of the participants' needs, and the development of interdisciplinary pedagogical strategies to support participants. NGBs, such as The FA, could similarly develop pedagogical cases, to serve as materials that prompt coaches to consider how knowledge from different disciplines

can be integrated to support sport participants. Additionally, coaches themselves could develop their own pedagogical cases and integrate disciplinary knowledge derived from workshops to meet the needs of those they work with. This may however be a challenge because of the competing demands of NGBs and awarding bodies who also need to design courses in an efficient manner due to the large number of learners completing them (studies one and three, chapters 5 and 7). Thus, empowering coaches to develop their pedagogical cases, select appropriate content and explore that content in relation to their cases is a pedagogical strategy that requires co-ordination amongst multiple stakeholders. Nonetheless, pedagogical cases may support coaches to utilise the collection of content knowledge that is predetermined by stakeholders, and grapple with the complexity related to who they coach and what their needs may be.

In sum, theme 2 demonstrated a strongly classified curriculum in both policy documentation and practice. This may help developers to provide workshops clearly focused on discrete topics and for learners to access this knowledge in insulated episodes. This may, however, not reflect the complexity of coaching which requires practitioners to have time and space to integrate disciplinary knowledge for the benefit of coaches (explored further in study three, chapter 7).

6.7.3 Theme 3. The FA level 2 curriculum also includes ‘professional knowledge’

Largely through discourse, The FA level 2 curriculum contained knowledge derived from the football industry. This contrasts with the knowledge from academic disciplines where specific theories and concepts were prescribed in-text to coach developers and learners (e.g., self-determination theory). This means that The FA level 2 curriculum was not wholly comprised of strongly classified knowledge from academic disciplines, but also contained

knowledge derived from coach developers' experiences of the football industry (e.g., developers shared knowledge on topics such as combination play, defending in a 1v1 situation, or how to shoot across goal). Most prominently, this knowledge included 'the England DNA'. The England DNA is a framework created by The FA that describes their player development pathway (Figure 7.).



Figure 7. The England DNA core elements (5 pillars).

In text, this knowledge was represented in posters presented which espoused principles for player development (see Figure 8.)

5 - 11 FOUNDATION PHASE		
STAY ON THE BALL, MASTER THE BALL	EXCITE WITH THE BALL AND SEEK CREATIVE SOLUTIONS	CONNECT AND COMBINE CREATIVELY WITH OTHERS
Develop a mastery of the ball and the confidence to try new things.	Be exciting and positive in possession, playing with individuality and with elements of disguise and surprise.	Combine creatively and intelligently with others to create and score goals.
12 - 16 YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PHASE		
STAY ON THE BALL, MASTER THE BALL	EXCITE WITH THE BALL AND SEEK CREATIVE SOLUTIONS	CONNECT AND COMBINE CREATIVELY WITH OTHERS
Look to receive the ball in all areas of the pitch and be prepared to stay in possession.	Seek creative solutions to game situations particularly when outnumbered or in congested areas.	Stay connected with the ball and your teammates to retain possession, open up compact defences and score goals.
17 - 21 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PHASE		
STAY ON THE BALL, MASTER THE BALL	EXCITE WITH THE BALL AND SEEK CREATIVE SOLUTIONS	CONNECT AND COMBINE CREATIVELY WITH OTHERS
Retain possession with intent: both individually and as a team.	Open up compact defences with outstanding individuality and teamwork.	Use clever combinations to create and score goals.
TO LEARN MORE VISIT: ENGLANDDNA.COM		

Figure 8. England DNA principles of player development.

As materials from workshop 1 indicate, one of the overarching aims of the course was to:

Develop a greater understanding and awareness of the England DNA coaching fundamentals, the principles of play and the technical components of play (PowerPoint Presentation, slide 5, workshop 1).

However, as Figure 9 (below) illustrates, in-text (i.e., the scheme of work) technical, tactical and strategic football knowledge was very briefly prescribed, and unlike other areas across

workshops (e.g., psychological knowledge) there were no specific PowerPoint slides provided to share technical and tactical knowledge.

SCHEME OF WORK - WORKSHOP (16-20)

Workshop (mins):	Delivery Method:	Topic/Workshop:	Assessment Method ¹ :	Learning Activities:		Supporting Materials and Resources:	Notes / Comments:
				Tutor:	Learner:		
0 - 60	Guided Learning (tutor and learner led)	Planning		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate planning process This will either be in-possession, out of possession of goalkeeping (transition should be covered in either in or out of possession) Planning process to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> moment in the game number of players available formation player considerations Supporting and guiding learners to plan effectively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Show their planning process relating to their players This will either be in-possession, out of possession of goalkeeping (transition should be covered in either in or out of possession) Planning process to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> moment in the game number of players available formation player considerations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tutor PowerPoint Session Planner Learning Journal 	
60 - 70							
70 - 210	Guided Learning (tutor and learner led)	Delivering		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting and guiding learners to deliver effectively May support learner practically to deliver practical sessions if the learners requests help 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leading the delivery of a practical session Other learners to participate in session and/or take notes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practical Observation Feedback Sheet Learning Journal Session Planner 	

Note: Tutors should use this scheme of work as guidance to ensure consistency of delivery and reliability of assessment across courses. The scheme of work is not designed to be prescriptive, rather providing an outline from which the tutor must tailor their delivery to meet individual and group

¹ Assessment Methods: Portfolio of Evidence (PoE), Observation (O), Open Response Questions (OR), Closed Response Questions (CR), Role Play (RP), Multiple-choice Question Paper (MCQ), Alternative Response Question Paper (ARQ), Question and Answer (Q&A), Professional Discussion (PD), Written Examination (WE), Oral Examination (OE), Viva (V), e-Assessment (eA).

Figure 9. Workshops 16-20 (Block 3).

The limited prescription of *what* technical and tactical knowledge should form the curriculum within policy documentation, led coach developers to develop these aspects of the curriculum themselves. For example, coach developers used what agency they had to devise their own technical and tactical curriculum and to share this through discourse.

Noel: “does one (technical and tactical curriculum) exist?”

Ashley (Coach Developer): “just links to the workshops really and its outcomes”

Noel: “so how do you know what to deliver practically at L2?”

Ashley (Coach Developer): “I guess it’s down to the coach developer to bring the detail out”

Due to their professional knowledge, coach developers were well positioned to share such insights because they inhabit the same industry and similar contexts as the coaches (Lyle, 2018). This technical and tactical knowledge was not only shared in the workshops in block 3 (workshop 16-20) as per the brief scheme of work, but also during practical sessions in other workshops resulting in a weakly classified technical and tactical curriculum. For example, observations of workshop 4, which focused on coach behaviour and player learning, revealed that Blake showed learners posters of the principles of play/technical components, stating “have an idea of your intentions for your session, what do you want to get out of it?”. Here, they integrated technical football knowledge with psychological and pedagogical knowledge of how players learn. Similarly, when exploring practice design in workshop 7, Blake also encouraged learners to think about and integrate technical knowledge:

Blake “OK, I’m gonna complicate it a bit more now ...what happens before-during-after the ball arrived, tech(nique) carried out, after it’s gone!?”

In response to this prompt, observation revealed that learners considered technical information including “body shape, looking up, weight, trajectory, how I will pass (range)”

The weak classification of technical and tactical elements on the course was influenced by coach developer's own experiences and beliefs. For example, observations in workshop 3 revealed that Casey (coach developer) "values, a lot more the technical and tactical stuff".

Casey commented in their interview prior to the course starting that:

I think, for me, the big step up I see between Level 1 and Level 2 is the technical detail, the technical detail and how it then impacts on a player. I see a lot of Level 2 sessions where they're still facilitating a practice; they're not coaching a practice. That's what I try and get across, they've got to go in, got to impact upon a player.

In Casey's own words, "it's essential and you need to have it (technical and tactical knowledge). It's got to come before block three. It's got to". However, it should be recognised that coach developers across the two courses observed provided different technical and tactical concepts to the coaches on each course. Table 5 demonstrates the difference in practical activities delivered on each course observed. Here, different professional knowledge was shared via discourse by coach developers, with some sharing more knowledge of activities focused on improving performance, whereas others shared knowledge on increasing mass participation.

	Course 1	Course 2
Block 1	<p>Workshop 3 (the social corner) - Out of possession – defending the diamond (1v1/unit)</p> <p>Workshop 7 (the practice spectrum) – Retain and build possession & Defending principles</p>	<p>Workshop 2 (coaching philosophy) – 1v1 into 4v4 games (no explicit topic, linked to coach developer philosophy).</p> <p>Workshop 3 (the social corner) – Risky Business (wave practice)</p> <p>Workshop 5 (motivation) – Creating Space (collaboration with learner)</p> <p>Workshop 6 (self-esteem) – SSG (7v7) Playing into and through midfield.</p>
Block 2	<p>Workshop 11 (managing behaviour) – Switching play, Pass and Move, and Finishing (5 goal bingo).</p> <p>Workshop 13 (managing mistakes) – shooting/finishing and passing combinations</p>	<p>Workshop 14 (the physical corner) – 5x foundation phase mini practices linked to the physical corner (no explicit topic) i.e., Fox and Hound/Catch the Tail, 1v1s, etc.</p> <p>Also, youth development style practice around shielding the ball.</p>
Block 3	<p>Workshop 15 (review of course so far) – Goalkeeping (handling & footwork techniques).</p> <p>*Note – workshops 16-20 centred around: planning and delivery (no other explicit themes were included).</p> <p>Workshop 16 – in possession concepts (specific topic unknown).</p> <p>Workshop 17 – compactness in central areas and high press.</p> <p>Workshop 19 – pressing, counter pressing and counter attacking.</p>	<p>Workshop 15 (review of course so far) – receiving and shooting and passing and receiving.</p> <p>*Note – workshops 16-20 centred around: planning and delivery (no other explicit themes were included).</p> <p>Workshop 17 – defensive principles of play (specific topic unknown).</p> <p>Workshop 20 – defending wide areas.</p>

Table 5. Coach developer led practical delivery.

This demonstrates that in terms of technical and tactical knowledge, coach developers are powerful stakeholders that can influence the curriculum ‘on the ground’. This power arises from their industry knowledge and experiences and the absence of a prescribed technical and tactical curriculum in-text. It does however raise questions for future research to explore. For example, how do we know that the technical and tactical knowledge shared with learners meets their needs, rather than those of the coach developer? Where will learners access consistent technical and tactical knowledge, if it is not explicitly in the text of formal coach

education curriculum? To what extent is the technical and tactical knowledge provided on course credible? Given these questions, and because technical and tactical knowledge is part of the interdisciplinary knowledge required by coaches (Abraham & Collins, 2011), NGBs and universities may wish to continue exploring how technical and tactical knowledge derived from industry is constructed, codified, quality assured, and made accessible to coaches in-text, as well as, through discourse.

In sum, professional knowledge such as the technical and tactical elements of the game formed a key part of the curriculum as discourse, but was less explicit in-text. Knowledge of this framework was weakly classified across the workshops. Coach developers used their personal experiences to construct this aspect of the curriculum, and this meant that the technical and tactical knowledge shared was inconsistent across the two courses observed.

6.8 Links to wider literature

When considering the current findings in conjunction with existing literature, this study highlights two key considerations. The first, details that the current strongly classified approach taken within the level 2 curriculum is somewhat removed from the complex reality of coaching practice. Jones and Wallace (2006) highlight the complex nature in which coaches must try to navigate when aiming to orchestrate their coaching practice. This navigation, as being somewhat unpredictable and nuanced, means that coaches are often dealing with multiple disciplines simultaneously. The structuralist approach on the level 2, as being a framework to introduce content in an isolated way, may need to be loosened to offer more integration of multiple disciplinary knowledge. However, current findings would suggest that there appears to be little indication that this was or is the case in this instance. Given this reality, formal coach education may want to consider a weaker classification

assigned to a curriculum more broadly. For example, by adopting what Jones and Turner (2006) offer as a problem-based approach, allows coaches to consider ‘real-world’ problems they face in a coaching context. Here, integrating and collaborating with coach developers offers scope to solve potential challenges coaches have in-practice, using some theoretical concepts to support their coaching process. Cronin and Lowes (2016) offer similar discussion points when considering the application of experiential learning. For example, promoting space and flexible structure for learners to become aware of their context, and to reflect on the needs of their players can help inform future learning and practice. Coaches undertaking formal coach education are able to do this away from the course. However, course structure then is required to offer a degree of weak classification and space for coaches to reflect and discuss their experiences and future considerations. What must be remembered here is that neither approach offered above should be viewed as solving the potential issues of current formal coach education. Instead, both offer consideration to provide learners with a more integrative, flexible, and learner-centred curriculum structure.

Secondly, the findings of this current study also prompts future research to consider ‘what’ coaches are actually learning. More recent literature has offered insight into ‘how’ coaches should be learning (e.g., Paquette & Trudel, 2018a) and how courses should be constructed (e.g., Paquette & Trudel, 2018b). However, few have focused on what knowledge should be included in formal coach education, and why. The partially informed approach on the level 2 offered some suitable evidence to create content. This somewhat alleviated the concern of more pseudoscientific ideals and beliefs entering the coach education space in particular disciplines (e.g., psychology and physiology)(Bailey et al., 2018; Stoszkowski et al., 2020). However, pseudoscience will continue to be prevalent in areas of coaching more broadly and therefore requires efforts by researchers and practitioners to inform what is delivered across others disciplines (e.g., sociology, philosophy, pedagogy, etc.). Whitehead

and Coe (2021) more recently have gone some way to explicitly identifying some of the myths surrounding coaching. These efforts should be appreciated, but also act as a catalyst for future research to provide practical and applicable translation of a range of disciplinary content to suit the GR coach and their learning. Future research therefore should consider not just ‘how’ we learn to coach, but also ‘what’ we learn to inform coaching practice.

6.9 Conclusion

The aim of this study two was to provide the first examination of *what* content knowledge contributed to The English FA intermediate (level 2) formal coach education course, and *how* this knowledge was structured to form a curriculum. This is significant because while it is common for studies to examine *how* coaches learn (e.g., Cushion, Stodter, & Clarke, 2021), there has been little consideration of *what* coaches learn. In response, this study identified disciplinary knowledge borrowed from well-established disciplines across a wider education system that was strongly classified within the coach education course. Psychologically informed content knowledge (e.g., self-determination theory) was most prevalent within the case study course examined (i.e., level 2). This was supplemented by theories and concepts informed by physiology (e.g., maturation) and sport pedagogy (e.g., Mosston’s teaching styles) that were classified as legitimate coaching knowledge. Yet sociological and philosophical research, theories and concepts were largely absent from the curriculum. Typically, knowledge and concepts were strongly insulated from each other resulting in a *collection* rather than *integrated* curriculum. There was also a body of technical and tactical knowledge used on-course which was typically derived from coach developers’ own experience of the football industry, again illustrating how a wider system contributes to what is classified as legitimate coaching knowledge.

Based on the findings of my second study, some considerations have been offered below to prompt further reflection of formal coach education policy within and beyond the context of The FA. Firstly, policy makers, curriculum designers, and researchers may want to (re)consider the value of alternative disciplines to support coaches. For example, sociological and philosophical insights on power, micro politics, relationships, gender, race, and disability may warrant more explicit inclusion in future coach education courses. Cautiously however, I am not suggesting replacing one piece of content knowledge with another, but suggesting that across the coach education landscape, these disciplines may have much to offer coaches. Secondly, given the interdisciplinary nature of coaching, it may be worth academic and professional bodies authentically collaborating to develop integrative elements that connect physiological, psychological, and sociological knowledge. The curriculum examined herein structured these knowledges into discrete workshops, but there may be value in helping coaches to connect insights from different disciplines. Thirdly, within the current case and perhaps more broadly, technical and tactical knowledge was derived and reliant on the experiences and beliefs of coach developers. Coach developers used their power to weakly classify and share technical and tactical knowledge through discourse. This meant that the technical and tactical curriculum was somewhat idiographic and far from explicit. Given this, there may be value in further considering how technical and tactical knowledge, which is often generated in industry, could be demystified, defined, demarcated as quality knowledge and democratically shared to help coaches develop.

In sum, this second study offers a significant contribution to coach education by exploring *what* knowledge is deemed as legitimate within a level 2 formal education course, and *how* it was structured to support learners. In doing so, the questions provided here prompt further reflection and research on curriculum in coach education, knowledge in coaching, and the social construction of education systems, including the ‘something’ to be taught.

Chapter VII

Study three - Less may be more: how do coach developers reproduce “learner-centred” policy in practice?

Given the findings of both study one (chapter 5) and study two (chapter 6), there was opportunity to return to similar approaches undertaken in previous coach education research, course observation of coach developer practice more explicitly (study two had focused on course observation specifically related to content only). Unlike previous research however, the previous two studies within my thesis offered a more complete picture of the coach education policy (albeit never fully complete). Consequently, I could more easily align coach developer actions and behaviours against what had been created in wider policy (from study one, chapter 5). More specifically, my final study in this thesis looked to explore research question 4, which was:

- 4) How was the 2016-2020 formal coach education policy, that promoted learner-centred provision, reproduced by coach developers in practice?

7.1 Introduction

The recent introduction of Bernsteinian concepts in my thesis has offered a wider perspective of coach education that explores how internal stakeholders, including policy makers and course designers influence coach education policy (Griffiths, Armour, & Cushion, 2018; Study one, chapter 5; Williams & Bush, 2019). These policies, which are often devised by National Governing Bodies (NGBs) of sport, also reflect the priorities of a wider system of

external influencers, such as awarding bodies or government agencies (Culver, Werthner, & Trudel, 2019; Study one, chapter 5, chapter 2, section 2.4). Further, these policies are delivered by coach developers who are trained, to greater or lesser extents, to support coaches' learning and may further recontextualise policy. This means that for coach developers, implementing any coach education policy in practice is a complex, fluid, and inherently contested process (Culver et al., 2019; Young, O'Connor, Alfrey, & Penney, 2020).

Coach developers in The FA, a focus of my research across my thesis, have historically been associated with traditional and/or authoritarian practices (Chapman et al., 2019b). For example, the coach developer has been seen as the owner of football (soccer) knowledge, who has passed this down to coaches (Cope, Cushion, Harvey, & Partington, 2020). In contrast, recent coach education studies (i.e., Paquette & Trudel, 2018a) have encouraged NGBs to empower coaches to take ownership of their learning so that content is relevant to them and their players, something not explicitly seen in study two (chapter 6). Such approaches are often associated with constructivist learning theory, which posit that learning is a social process occurring through interaction within a contextualised world (Paquette & Trudel, 2018b). This understanding is prevalent in the 2016-2020 coach education policy created by The FA that aspires for coach education that is (a) "learner-centred", (b) a scaffold between what learners already know and new understandings they seek to know, and (c) uses problem-based and other "active" methods to enable "mass individualisation of personal development" (FA Education, 2016, p. 6). These changes were part of a response by The FA to criticisms from Sport England and the UK Government, who highlighted the need to increase the quality and quantity of coaches (Study one, chapter 5). Critically, Study one's (chapter 5) analysis of that policy process indicated that multiple stakeholders contributed to the creation of course materials including content and assessment.

Further, during the policy process, recontextualisation occurred and policy makers and coach developers interviewed in the study highlighted some elements of confusion. That said, study one (chapter 5) may have highlighted the complex nature of policy creation and recontextualisation, but up until now, I had not examined how the policy was operationalised by coach developers in practice more explicitly. Therefore, while recent research has shown how coach education policy, informed by social constructivism, is subject to multiple social influences (e.g., study one, chapter 5), there was a need to examine how these influences and policies are reproduced by coach developers on courses.

The practice of coach developers is also an important area of study because according to Stodter and Cushion (2019), coach developer training has traditionally been generic and its effect on coach developers' ability to support coaches is unclear. Study one (chapter 5) also alludes to the limited training experiences by those part time coach developers on new aspects (i.e., pedagogy, content, assessment) of the policy (chapter 5, section 5.6.6). Rather, prior learning experiences may be a larger influence on how coach developers practice (Cushion, Griffiths, & Armour, 2019). For example, Cushion et al. (2019) suggested that coach developers' practices were often ideological and reproduced current practice, as opposed to challenging it. This may include naïve claims to empower learners, but nonetheless impose the language and meanings representative of prevailing cultures. Such naivety stems, not from a Machiavellian intention by developers to ignore policy, but instead from their own experiential journey, where exposure to learner-centred methods may have been misrecognised, misused, or missing entirely.

In response to the observations above, my final study within my thesis explored how coach developers in The FA reproduced "learner-centred" coach education policy in practice. The English FA Level 1 course is a pertinent case study because circa 20,000 learners undertake this qualification per annum. Further, The FA has gradually attempted to move

from traditional tutor-centred courses towards learner-centred coach education (Chapman et al., 2019b). Consideration of The English FA level 1 in Coaching Football course is valuable as a means of understanding how a coach education policy, somewhat informed by social constructivism, is operationalised. The study therefore bridges the gap between understanding what policy has been created (in-text and through discourse) (study one and two), and how it is reproduced in practice. By addressing this gap, the study builds upon recent Bernsteinian influenced conceptions of coach education, as a wide dynamic system (Study one, chapter 5; Study two, chapter 6; Williams & Bush, 2019). Thus, providing a more complete picture of coach education from policy to practice. Moreover, the significance of the study extends beyond The FA and coaching, by understanding how wider education systems may impact learning.

7.2 Theoretical framework: Bernstein's framing

In order to address the aim of exploring education policy in practice, I once again turned to the work of Basil Bernstein. Over a long academic career Bernstein (1975, 1981, 1990, 2000) has demonstrated that education policy is socially negotiated by different stakeholders. Sadovnik (1991) recognised that Bernstein's early work "stressed the importance of structuralist enquiry" (p. 48). Bernstein's emphasis on structure reflects the influence of Emile Durkheim, on his work (Best, 2007). Specifically, Bernstein (1975) believed that "Durkheim . . . has shown us that the structure of society . . . reveals both distribution of power and the principles of social control" (p. 86), and thus structure, power, and control are key features of Bernstein's work in education. Since then, Bernstein continually developed concepts and terminology to explain the role of structure at the macro level and its impact upon agency at the micro level of pedagogic discourse (as seen in study one, chapter 5).

Importantly, through a sociolinguistic approach, Bernstein (1975) also recognised how individual actors may use their agency to recontextualise knowledge and (re)frame education policy inherited from powerful structures as part of a knowledge construction process. Here, agency could be seen from an ecological perspective as the resources and contextual factors that promote individual action, such as learner-centred practice, within a given situation (Priestley, Biesta, Philippou, & Robinson, 2015). Given the nature of previous coach education research (typically authoritarian), coach developers in English football may not have experienced much agency as learners (Cushion, Armour, & Jones, 2003). That said, while individual actions may be influenced by the prevailing structures of the social world, coach developers, as professionals, do have some autonomy to make their own choices and enact learner-centred practice (Hay & Hunter, 2006). Autonomy here is defined as “the quality or state of being self-governing . . . and the capacity of an agent to determine its own actions through independent choice . . .” (Ballou, 1998, p.105). Accordingly, although there is a body of evidence that suggests coach developers should use learner-centred methods (Paquette & Trudel, 2018a, 2018b), there is a need to understand if, and how, coach developers utilise their autonomy to reproduce such policies in practice, and what agency may be required to do so. To that end, the remainder of this section introduces the Bernsteinian concept of framing (as discussed in chapter 3, section 3.6) as a theoretical aid to examine how coach developers in The FA reproduce policy in practice.

To my knowledge, no study has explicitly used the Bernsteinian concept of “framing” (1975, 1981) to explore how policy is reproduced within formal coach education. This is remiss because framing is concerned with ‘who controls what’ at the micro level of pedagogic practice (Bernstein, 2000). Indeed, Bernstein (2000) developed and explained framing as control of the following pedagogic features: 1. Selection – who (coach developers or learners) chooses what is taught; 2. Sequencing – who chooses what is taught first, second,

etc.; 3. Pacing – who decides the rate at which something is taught, for example, how long to allow for activities, discussions, debates, and practical demonstrations; and 4.

Criteria/Evaluation – what is used to determine success. Thus, framing is concerned with “how” curriculum is taught and is a key concept to examine learner-centred courses.

For Bernstein (2000), framing can be considered as also being either strong or weak (as seen with study two, with classification, as both classification and framing were developed together by Bernstein, see section 3.5 and 3.6). Such terminology should not be interpreted at the level of positive or negative, or as strong in relation to better, and weak in relation to worse. Rather, strong framing represents educator (i.e., coach developer) control over the selection, sequencing, pacing, and evaluation criteria. Through controlling these features, educators can influence how learners develop and demonstrate competency (Aldous & Brown, 2010; Aldous & Freeman, 2017). In contrast, weak framing sees the learner have more apparent control over the features by drawing upon knowledge gained from outside the education institution (Aldous & Freeman, 2017; Bernstein, 2000). Bernstein (2000) identified that each of the control features of framing can be strongly or weakly framed independently of one another. For example, a lesson could be strongly framed in terms of sequencing (i.e., controlled by the coach developer), but have a weak frame when it came to pacing (i.e., determined by the learners). This is important because a mixture of strongly and weakly framed features can lead to a collaborative “learner-centred” course with insights from policy makers, course designers, coach developers, and crucially, the learners themselves.

Traditionally, learners on football courses have had limited control over their learning because courses have been strongly framed by policy makers (Chapman et al., 2019b). That said, Bernstein (1990) identified that educators do have the autonomy to frame knowledge, within the boundaries of the policy, and thus they can regulate communicative practice between themselves and learners on-course. Therefore, the Bernsteinian lens of framing

provides “a rigorous framework to illuminate the mechanisms of power and control” within a pedagogic space (Badger, 2010, p. 515). For example, coach developers or learners may choose to include information from a particular presentation slide, while excluding another. In essence, framing is a useful analytical tool to examine the interaction of “learner-centred” macro policy (structure) within the everyday practice of coach developers and learners.

7.3 Methodology

7.3.1 Paradigmatic positioning

This research was underpinned by ontological relativism (i.e., reality is multiple) and epistemological constructivism (i.e., knowledge is constructed and therefore subjective) (Lincoln, Lynham, & Guba, 2018). These positions manifest within this research through the subjective interpretations of my own understanding, and that of my supervisory team (as well as external colleagues), the views of coach developers, and the socially constructed policies of The FA. This is acknowledged, as the broader collective case study was conducted *with*, as opposed to simply *on* The FA (as made up of my entire thesis, please see section 4.6 for discussion on my case study approach).

7.3.2 Context of the case

Case studies, as used across my thesis, provide the capacity to develop an in-depth, holistic understanding of a particular issue, event, or person (Hodge & Sharp, 2017). Coach education courses are bounded milestones on a coach’s journey and thus, are suitable for situated and temporal case study research. This is alluded to in chapter 4, where acknowledgement of the power of each individual case (i.e., each of the three studies, chapters 5-7) offers their own

value, as well as offering value to the broader collective case approach (section 4.6) to my research and this thesis.

The FA Level 1 in Coaching Football is an entry-level course that was developed by full-time FA staff and is accredited by a regulator in England (The FA, 2019). Part-time coach developers, who were employed and managed by full-time FA staff, delivered most of these courses. Learners on FA Level 1 courses typically coach in the participation domain (Côté, Bruner, Erickson, Strachan, & Fraser-Thomas, 2010), with a focus on providing safe, fun, and engaging opportunities for players.

7.3.3 The level 1 course (The FA, 2019)

In 2016, The FA relaunched ‘The Level 1 in Coaching Football’. The course was made up of seven workshops, and three short online modules. These workshops included football-specific technical and tactical information and knowledge from a variety of disciplines such as physiology, sociology, and psychology (but with limited depth in comparison to level 2, as seen in study two, chapter 6). Each course lasted three and a half days. On course, coach developers engaged learners with PowerPoint presentations, group discussions, individual planning, and evaluation of practical football sessions. Learners were assessed in four core areas: 1. Completion of three online modules (introduction to coaching, long term player development, plan-do-review process); 2. Attendance at all workshops; 3. Completion of 11 workbook tasks in a ‘learner journal’; and, 4. Delivery of an accumulative 15-minute practical session on-course.

7.3.4 Sampling courses

In order to examine the policy in practice, a purposeful and convenient case sampling approach was adopted (Sparkes & Smith, 2014). This strategy enabled three courses, informed by the 2016-2020 policy to be observed in different parts of England. Details of the participants (see Table 6.) have been kept vague. Each coach developer is part of a small community of circa 300 practitioners and may become identifiable should more information be provided.

Course	No. of participants	Coach Developer Age	Coach Developer Gender	Highest Coaching Qualification	Coach Developer Experience
1	18	50	Male	Level 3	18 years as a coach developer for The FA Teacher
2	14	45	Male	Level 3	4 years as a coach developer for The FA Ex-academy coach Teacher
3	17	52	Male	Level 4	10 years as a coach developer for The FA Ex-Academy manager Teacher

Table 6. Coach developer information (level 1)

7.3.5 Data collection methods

Subsequent to institutional ethical approval, data were collected on the coach education policy (i.e., study one, chapter 5), the coach developer's interpretation of the policy, and how the policy was reproduced on course.

7.3.6 (Digital) documentation

To consider policy and curriculum, documents from The FA were examined. These were revisited during this research after initially engaging with them in study one (chapter 5) more broadly. These included: 1. The FA learning strategy; 2. Scheme of work and qualification specification (accredited by the awarding body 1st4Sport); 3. FA course specific PowerPoint presentations (n = 7); 4. FA posters that represent key messages to be relayed to learners (n = 12); and, 5. A learner journal given to learners on the course. These documents demonstrated how the policy was recontextualised into resources that coach developers and learners used. Documents created by coach developers, such as individualised schemes of work and worksheets given to the learners were also collected.

7.3.7 Semi-structured interviews

To understand how coach developers interpreted policy in practice, one-to-one semi-structured interviews were carried out with each coach developer on each course (n = 3). A narrative form of interview schedule prompted coach developers to share their stories of current practice. All interviews were audio recorded, took place on the course site (e.g., clubhouse), and lasted between 28–47 minutes (mean: 36 minutes).

7.3.8 Sensory observational field notes

To examine policy in practice, I recorded field notes based on 71 hours of observation on the courses. Palmer and Grecic's (2014) framework for field notes was used as a basis for structuring observation (as also seen in study two, chapter 6). The framework was amended for this study however to include a sensual approach to observations as the previous framework did not consider what may be felt by observers and participants, including

emotions, and nuances that “make” the event what it is. Indeed, Morris (2017) encourages observers to move beyond the “hegemony of the eye”, and consider what we hear, smell, touch, and feel. Examples of this include: the smell of freshly cut grass, the touch of a football, and the sound of children playing.

7.3.9 Photography

To understand the context in which the policy was reproduced, I also took photographs of the course environments (n = 28). Photographs detailed the layout of classroom spaces, as well as work produced by coach developers and learners. Images were captured to invoke a “feeling” for the context, and to enable my supervisory team and readers to see the environment in which policy was reproduced. This was appropriate because visual methods provide an opportunity to illuminate the sensual experiences (Pink, 2013). In order to protect the anonymity of participants, photographs did not include people on the course.

In sum, the four methods enabled data to be collected on the policy, the people reproducing the policy, the environment, and the practice itself.

7.4 Analysis

Braun, Clarke, and Weate’s (2016) six-stage approach to Thematic Analysis (TA) was used to analyse the data. This process involved abductive TA incorporating inductive observation and deductive reasoning. Within Stage 1 consisted of initial inductive analysis occurred through the reading and re-reading of observation notes, interview transcripts, and documentation to generate intuitive codes. During Stage 2 data were inputted into NVivo 11. Codes were assigned to observation notes, interviews, and documentation (see appendix 3.1 and appendix 3.2). Stage 3 continued the inductive analysis through discussions with my

supervisory team and one external colleague (Dr. Ed Cope). Initial codes were challenged and debated. These initial codes were then clustered together to form provisional themes (e.g., initial theme development focused on learner-centred pedagogy, new content on the courses, and assessment). Stage 4 required the lead author to go back and review the data. The Bernsteinian concept of framing was used as a theoretical aid at this point to analyse the clusters of codes (see appendix 3.3). Stage 5 further focused on a theoretical explanation as to ‘how’ and ‘why’ coach developers carried out their practice. Finally, Stage 6 involved my supervisory team and I discussing the generated themes and their rationale (e.g., theme idea: an attempt to socially construct learning). During this stage, photographs were used to inform, and affirm the themes identified (see appendix 3.4).

7.5 Creative non-fiction (CNF) representation

A composite CNF approach (Erickson, Backhouse, & Carless, 2016) involving the amalgamation of data from all three courses was used to report the findings. CNF involves narratives that are “fictional in form yet factual in content. It is grounded in real events and people’s lived experiences that a researcher has observed in some fashion” (Smith et al., 2015, p. 59). Literary techniques such as storytelling, and imagery were used to describe scenes, characters, and plots, while representing the data and themes. Indeed, each theme is represented through a first-person account including a fictitious coach developer (Richard), and also learner coaches whose voices are both delineated via italics. The CNF provides a level of confidentiality for individual identities (Erickson et al., 2016). The CNF also reflects the relativist ontology and constructivist epistemology of the study by including the voice of me as the researcher present throughout.

7.6 Rigour and quality

I (at the time of collecting data, and writing this third study) was a practicing coach developer and coach mentor within The FA. To manage subjectivity (discussed in chapter 4, section 4.3), it was decided not to sample courses within the region where I worked. A reflective journal that detailed the research processes was maintained and formed the basis of critical discussions with my supervisory team. For example, I often discussed the practical elements of course experience. In contrast, my supervisors challenged this by focusing discussions on broader conceptual considerations (e.g., framing).

With regards to the CNF, the findings should not only be a thought provoking read, but provide critical analysis (Denison, 2016). Accordingly, after each theme in the CNF, a Bernsteinian interpretation is presented to address the research question. Given the nature of case study research, and the small number of coach developers observed in this study, I do not generalise the interpretations from the sample. Instead, I encourage readers to critically consider the theoretical transferability to their own context (Smith, 2018). When doing so, readers may wish to consider O'Malley, Winter, and Holder (2018) who appreciated how qualitative research in general can be judged (e.g., rigour, transparency, impact), but also provide criteria specific to CNF (evocation, authenticity, coherence).

7.7 Findings and discussion

This final study examined how formal coach education policy was reproduced by coach developers in practice. A CNF narrative of the data analysed is presented in this section, to illustrate the following three themes: Theme 1. A course guided by a high volume of strongly framed assessment; Theme 2. A wide range of strongly framed content on-course; and, Theme 3. Attempts to weakly frame pedagogic practice. The CNF does not follow a logical

order of day one, two, and three. Instead, each theme encapsulates moments that best represent the data.

7.7.1 Theme 1 – A course guided by a high volume of strongly framed assessment

“I may not have been as specific or meticulous as I could have been, so can you turn to page 24 (task 2) and complete that page”. I was surprised to hear Richard say such a thing.

Typically, Richard was very structured, very organised. He had to be. There was no time to waste. Eleven tasks had to be done. Richard now paced around the room, but not in his usual enthusiastic and animated manner. Instead, the pacing said, “let’s get this done”. He bellowed, *“Those of you who do not coach, please sit with someone who currently has a team”*. There was a shuffle of learners as they searched for someone who had a team. Moving on from task 2, Richard briefly described task 3. Later he glided over to me, *“do you know what we have to do here?”* I sat and gave my interpretation of what I thought had to be done. Richard sarcastically commented; *“I would love to be in the meeting when someone decided this would be a good task three”*. I half agreed. The task is not the most fruitful for learners, but it had to get done. Richard went through stage-by-stage of how he wanted learners to complete task 3. The learners put their heads down. Continued to scribble. They sat, hot and sweaty from the morning spent in a learner-led practical session. The back door of the clubhouse slid open to allow the fresh breeze to fill the room and remove the stench of sweaty feet. The atmosphere in the classroom felt different than the pitch. It didn’t fill me with the joy and enthusiasm of the outdoor session. Richard swiftly moved to task 4.



Figure 10. Classroom layout.

Richard whizzed through each point on the slide before getting learners to discuss briefly in groups and bullet point their answers. Shuffling on seats, frantic pens on paper, the learners were “getting it done”. I trotted over to Richard in my socks, minding the bags and the boots flung on the floor. I could feel black pellets from the 3G pitch seeping between my toes. Richard was continuing to pace, to observe, wide eyed at the learners to gauge who’d finished. I asked him what value he felt those three tasks across 20 minutes brought to the course. I wanted his feelings, his emotions.

it’s an administrative task. I guess it’s good for learners to complete because if they go back to their journal in six months’ time, they may see one or two things. We are also told about, if an External Verifier comes in, it will cause some issues.

Richard was familiar with verification formalities including quality assurance staff checking the standards of learners’ work, his own marking, and the pass rates on the course. Tasks are important, but, wow, there was a lot of them!

7.7.2 Bernsteinian interpretation

Richard maintained control over the selection, sequencing, and pacing of all predetermined tasks, which subsequently limited learner input. From a Bernsteinian (2000) perspective, Richard's reproduction of policy could be shaped (intentionally and unintentionally) by other macro and meso level influences during policy creation. For instance, as a coach developer, Richard inherited a high volume of predetermined assessment that is monitored by an external regulator (i.e., 1st4Sport). 11 tasks are mandated to be completed. Thus, Richard could only partially control and influence a process already relayed to him by a wider coach education system (Culver et al., 2019), which reflects Bernstein's recognition of powerful structures. This means that Richard's ability to frame assessment is bounded by decisions made during knowledge production (macro) and recontextualisation (meso) of policy as it is cascaded down to him (as seen in study one, chapter 5). This process resulted in all learners completing 11 assessments that The FA and awarding body (1st4Sport) felt should be known in order to 'pass' or 'complete' a regulated qualification. This strongly framed approach to assessment may help achieve the strategic objective of increasing the quantity of coaches, but it does not necessarily build upon what individual learners may already know, nor support the notion of what could be known by these learners. Rather, assessment on the courses were predictable, linear, uniform and plentiful.

Marking and verification processes also appeared to influence Richard and he interpreted them as wider ecological factors that encourage strongly framed assessment. Priestley et al. (2015) and Young et al. (2020) have observed similar effects in school-based education, where prescribed assessment can limit educator agency. This stems from a much wider system of education, where performance management techniques such as verification and quantifiable key performance indicators (KPIs) assume great importance as quality

control mechanisms for ensuring consistency across learning provisions. Further, quality control processes may help coach education providers address strategic priorities, which in The FA's case, included increasing the quality and quantity of coaches (Study one, chapter 5; also discussed in chapter 2, section 2.4). Nonetheless, it has been noted, that standardised competency-based assessment may constrain learner-centred coach education (Collins, Burke, Martindale, & Cruickshank, 2015). This is because learners may become the subjects of, rather than dialogical collaborators in, assessment. Here, the predetermined and desired outcomes of institutions may disproportionately constrain the agency of coach developers and learners to co-create knowledge and assessment relevant to coaches' needs (Cope et al., 2020). As Richard's story and other research (Collins et al., 2015) suggests, predetermined assessment may be viewed as performative, and may not impact coaches' long-term behaviours.

Within the boundaries of the pre-prepared material, it is important to note that Richard had a degree of autonomy and perhaps learners could have completed tasks a different way (e.g., at home in their own time). Richard, however, felt he could not deviate away from prescribed tasks and that these had to be completed in a specific order. He appeared to lack a suitable degree of agency (i.e., an environment that encourages his independent choices) to select and sequence tasks with learners. Therefore, NGBs may wish to (re)consider how assessment orientated processes can encourage coach developers and learners to exercise their autonomy. To this end, those NGBs who desire individualised, learner-centred courses, may benefit from a less voluminous and more weakly framed evaluative process that assesses learners in relation to their own contexts, interests, and areas for development.

7.7.3 Theme 2 – A wide range of strongly framed content on-course

The calm transcended the early morning mist and fog. In the room, the heater was turned on. Richard sat back in his chair. We sat together and sipped tea, surrounded by tables set with flip chart paper folded, pens laid on top, and a PowerPoint presentation at the ready. We discussed the content that filled the course.

There's been loads of prep work to do because on level 1's, I can't tell you what the number is, but I'm going to guess off the top of my head here, over 200 slides. Going through all of those slides and deciding what to use, which ones to skip through, what to say about the slides is actually a massive prep task.

Richard's guess was almost correct; there were 193 slides provided to coach developers by The FA. In addition, twelve A2 posters with complimentary key messages. I offered to put the posters on the walls. *"Not all of them, I don't want to throw too much at them"*, Richard replied (Figure 11.).



Figure 11. England DNA fundamentals.

Good decision by Richard as he chose what information he felt would be best. Similar messages appeared in PowerPoints during workshops two, four, and six, as well as in the learner journal. I was convinced that the learners, who were trickling through the door, coffees in hand, bags around their shoulders, would know the NGBs messages by the end of the course. The morning progressed swiftly; *“Can we all be saying the same things nationally?”* Richard spoke passionately about the core messages. He sold them to the learners who listened with intent to understand why these messages were important. There were few interruptions.

These are good tips, that if you try and bring out in your coaching, will be good for your coaching practice. If you nail 3–4 of them today, great! If by the end of the course if you can do 6–7 of them, then brilliant, and you can build up to the 12 in your own coaching.

The learners’ flicked between glancing at the poster, reading the journal page they were on, and looking at the slide. They heard the governing body’s core messages, saw them on slides and posters, and later, on the pitch, experienced them. It’s there and there’s no way of getting away from it. The frantic note taking, and signposting of information was, on the one hand great, but blimey there was a lot of it. Swiftly moving through the morning workshop at a gallop, Richard was very conscious about stopping conversations to make sure we “moved on”. “We’ll come back to that, or, we’re visiting that in workshop X”. We rarely got back to it though. There’s so much to get through. I asked Richard about staying “on task”. I saw an element of guilt, or frustration at stopping some great conversations.

You can just go off on a tangent and I think it would still be valuable for these GR coaches, but then you deviate from the plan for the day. A little bit too much conversation and then, all of a sudden, you’re chasing time and might not get everything covered. So I just try and stay on target with the content really.

7.7.4 Bernsteinian interpretation

Like theme one, Richard adopted a strongly framed approach to the selection, sequencing and pacing of content. For example, Richard decided which posters to display and to discard. It could be argued that strongly framed content is useful to provide universal “key messages” to entry level learners (as detailed in study two, chapter 6). A strongly framed selection of content may also be appropriate if content needs to be acquired by learners before it can be contextualised (Aldous & Freeman, 2017). Richard’s use of strongly framed content is also understandable given Bernstein’s (2000) view that framing occurs at the end of a policy creation process influenced by different stakeholders. Related to this, study one reported that a small group of experienced full-time staff at The FA were responsible for developing content they deemed relevant to learners. Study two (chapter 6) also illuminated this content in a strongly classified manner to offer a collection form of curriculum. This structural influence manifested in Richard’s practice through key messages on materials such as posters, and PowerPoints, which Richard consistently emphasised. Interestingly, Bernstein (1975) commented that “curriculum defines what counts as valid knowledge” (p.85), and thus, in defining the curriculum, this group within The FA, have had a powerful influence on what counts as quality coaching. This defining of what counts as valid knowledge was further reinforced through close links between content (theme 2) and the assessment (theme 1). Thus, the insights and expertise of policy makers and course designers, have had a large influence on what knowledge was explored, and concomitantly what knowledge was worthy of certification (e.g., psychology, physiology, as seen in study two, chapter 6). In contrast, the specific cohort of learner coaches that worked with Richard had little influence on what knowledge was deemed important on course.

When considering Richard’s practice, it is also important to recognise that an educator who weakly frames content, could in fact be compromising the learner’s certification. This is

because the course requires learners to complete strongly framed assessment and demonstrate understanding of strongly framed content. In these circumstances, coach developers such as Richard and the learners primarily focused on the prescribed content and assessment. Indeed, examples of individualised or learner-focused practice that deviated from the prescribed content, were rare. There was little room for the learners themselves, to select, sequence or pace content, beyond the status quo. When learners did begin deeper discussions, Richard's interpretation that prescribed content needed to be covered led to some missed opportunities to centre learning in the interests of the coaches. Cushion et al. (2019) commented that such a process constitutes a vying for power, and that in this case, coach developers may feel they cannot override the assessment and content provided to them. This may mean that the coach developer's role could largely manifest through the technocratic transmission of a predetermined curriculum to achieve broader strategic aims. Such a limited view of the coach developer role would be remiss because coach developers are well positioned to not only transmit pre-prepared content, but also to critically explore content (e.g., technical and tactical content, as seen in study 2, chapter 6, section 6.7.3), to creatively consider how learners could apply knowledge in their own context, and to care for learners. Without time and space to do this, learners may not access knowledge that is relevant to their context. Consideration, therefore, should be given to forms of communication (Priestley et al., 2015) that encourage coach developers, such as Richard, to utilise their autonomy and co-construct the curriculum with learners. To this end, policy makers may wish to consider how coach developers can weakly frame some content in order for learners to select, sequence or pace knowledge that is meaningful to them. However, consideration must also be given to the ability and skill levels of coach developers to perform such processes (Cope et al., 2020). Subsequently, NGBs may wish to (re)consider the training requirements for coach developers, as well as the amount of content provided in what are short time-bounded courses

(Culver et al., 2019). Future research should also investigate if providing more training, time and space for coach developers and learners to collaborate and frame their own learning (i.e., select, sequence and pace content) could be beneficial. Potentially and paradoxically, this less prescribed approach to coach education policy, including content and assessment (Theme 1 and this theme 2), may actually lead to learning that is more relevant.

7.7.5 Theme 3 – Attempts to weakly frame pedagogic practice

I remember the speech Richard gave to the learners on day one of the course:

I really don't want you to stress about passing, I'm sure you'll all pass, these courses now are far more about a journey rather than coming on and doing an assessment, which is what it used to be, so it's far more formative now and I will be supporting you on that. I'm on a journey, just like you guys, I don't profess to know everything, you guys have experiences that I don't have, so I have no doubt I will be learning from you! If I can help you enjoy it more, that means you'll make it better for your players. I'm not here to show you how to coach, I'm here to provide some suggestions and give some advice.

This felt genuine. Richard wanted to help and support the learners. On the subsequent days, Richard used smiles and enthusiasm to greet the learners each morning, before probing them with the opening question. "Did you try anything in your session?" An inevitable starter question for anyone looking to be learner-centred. As always, the day moved at a canter, Richard walked round, diving into group discussions set on knowing the players the coaches worked with. In that moment, the room was vibrant, voices echoed, experiences were shared. I observed Richard as he tapped into the coaches' emotion and encouraged them to recognise players as people. Richard discussed children's home lives, how some children have very difficult lives, how the best part of their week might be that one-hour football session. It struck a chord with most coaches. They were focused, and no one wanted to break that focus. There was a collective empathy for the players, the children. It was a powerful moment. But

just a moment. There it was again, that perceived lack of agency from Richard. He felt there was no time to further explore how we could help; we needed to get through the rest of the PowerPoint, plan sessions, complete assessments and get on to the pitch to cover some material, didn't we?

After the PowerPoint, it was the learner's turn to deliver a practical session. Richard proclaimed *I have tried to get to know and find out what the group are like and what they need*. Based on this, Richard assigned each learner either an arrival activity (simple) or a game related practice (more complicated). I wondered if the learners could have chosen which one they wanted help with (Figure 12.).

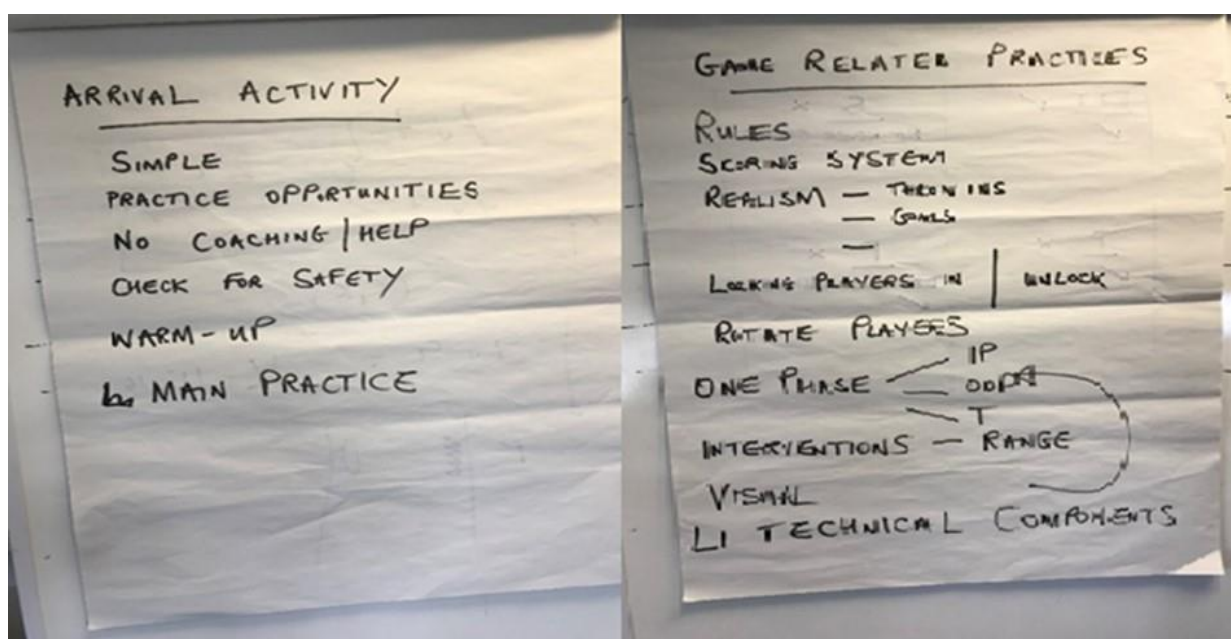


Figure 12. Coach developer flipchart notes.

Richard allowed as much time as he felt he could afford. They had 15 minutes to plan or tweak their sessions. He offered example templates of sessions, ideas to either copy or adapt. Most learners came prepared, as Richard had sent out their topic in advance. 15 minutes was

up, and Richard shoved his boots on. *“Who’s got the balls?”* Then, he rhetorically said to me; *“where has the time gone!?”* It’s nonstop! (Figure 13).



Figure 13. Learner resource and learner work.

During a debrief of a learner’s practical session, Richard asked the learners for their thoughts: *“you could tell that it had been planned”* offered Jeremy. *“Go on, what do you mean?”* Richard asked. Jeremy continued, *“the fact that you’d given it to us a few days before, I don’t know about everyone, but it gave me the opportunity to have a look at it. I had to adapt mine because of your rules, the tutor resource thing that you gave us, and the online thing that you sent out. So, I really had to think about it and adapt it.”* Other learners joined in, *“from what I saw the other coaches do, I had to really think about it, I had to plan it”*. Richard praised them all. There it was, a high-quality moment where coach developer and learners had benefitted from each other’s experiences. And you could feel the uplifting sense of achievement, joy and beaming smiles. Such moments were great, but rare.

7.7.6 Bernsteinian interpretation

Richard made authentic strides to create connections between the content and the learners. However, the interaction between both the macro (theme 1) and meso (theme 2) structures ultimately influenced micro-level pedagogic practice on-course, and meant that Richard maintained much control. Importantly, as Theme 3 demonstrates, throughout the course Richard welcomed coaches, built relationships with them, and asked questions to understand their perspectives. There were also rare examples of Richard adapting the selection, sequencing, or pacing of the course in response to this information (e.g., allocating learners to either an arrival or a game related activity). It would appear to some extent, Richard tried to instil a pedagogy shaped by a learner-centred approach, which may require a weakly framed approach to on-course practice. Similar to Young et al.'s (2020) Bernsteinian analysis of PE, however, Richard experienced a tension between strongly framed content/assessment, and a more weakly framed approach that promotes individualised learning. Related to this, Bernstein (2000) highlighted that educators' framing is often confined within the boundaries of wider discourse. In this case, FA courses have a long history of competency-based assessment and influential stakeholders leading coach education (Chapman et al., 2019b; also seen in study one, chapter 5). Similarly, the level 1 is dominated by predetermined assessment (macro) and a priori content (meso). Richard's attempts to individualise learning were framed within these boundaries. For example, his attempt to allocate different activities to different learners should be appreciated but demonstrated how selection of content remained within the boundaries of that prescribed by stakeholders. Further, he ultimately maintained control of the content, with learners having little control of the selection, sequencing or pacing of activities, discussions, and assessment.

Richard's strong framing is worthy of consideration because Morais (2002) argued successful learning depends on weak framing of pacing to enable educators to 'go off script' and respond to learner's needs. Similarly, Penney (2013) called for learners to have control of some framing features if courses are to support learner development more effectively. For example, perhaps learners could decide what content they discuss, apply, and critique in two of the seven FA workshops. Doing so may enable learners to access knowledge that they deem relevant, and suitable to their own practical contexts. Further, involving learners in the selection, sequencing and pacing of courses may prompt critical and creative contemplation of curricula. Of course, this does not mean that learners should have control of all features. On the contrary, policy makers, course designers, and coach developers, as professionals, have expertise. They should lead and strongly frame certain elements of courses. This may be particularly important on a level 1 course with novice coaches. Policy makers also have laudable strategic aims that need to be met such as increasing the quantity and quality of coaches. Nonetheless, perhaps weaker pacing would enable developers like Richard to build on their relationships with learners and further explore prescribed knowledge. Similarly, a weaker selection of content may also enable a balance between the purpose of policymakers and purposes of practitioners (i.e., coach developers).

7.7.7. A concluding scene

Walking back in from the last practical of the course, I caught up with a learner, Steve. He coached an U10's team. He was a big bald bruiser of a man. I would never argue about a throw-in with him. He declared:

I'm 56-years-old and I've been coaching on and off now for nearly 25 years. I've learned so much from this course. I thought I knew about football, but what I've learned, has completely changed how I acted and behaved on Tuesday night. I wasn't ranting and raving. I let the kids try and make the decisions and when they did, I just

praised them for that, the smile on their faces! I actually went home feeling like a new man and it was just a revelation.

7.8 Links to wider literature

The current findings in this study highlight the influence that power and culture have within the context of The FA and their coach education provision. For example, the strongly framed approach towards both assessment and content on the level 1 demonstrates a wider system influencing not just the design of their curriculum, but the approach of pedagogical practice by coach developers (Culver et al., 2019). Previous literature has illuminated the conflict of the perceived difference of a desirable approach (e.g., learner-centred approach) versus the reality of what actually happens on-course (e.g., largely didactic approach) (e.g., see Stodter & Cushion, 2014). More recently, Downham and Cushion (2020) identified that power can never be removed, but reconfigured within the boundaries of an educational space. Subtle, albeit powerful discourse, ultimately influenced how practice was undertaken by coach developers on the level 1. Coach developers who are having to negotiate and consider their pedagogical space and navigate policy into practice often align to what could be perceived as the cultural norms. Such power and subsequent influence therefore confines coach developer practice, as has been demonstrated more historically within The FA (Chapman et al., 2019). Although every coach developer has autonomy, they are often influenced by the cultural agency afforded to them in both education settings (e.g., Downham & Cushion, 2020) and within industry (e.g., Stodter & Cushion, 2019). However, previous literature has focused more on examining the practice and retrospective thoughts of those involved (i.e., coaches, coach developers). This current study extends such work by linking policy back to practice to offer a rationale for why coach developers reproduce policy the way they do.

7.9 Conclusion

This study examined how formal coach education policy was reproduced by coach developers in practice. The Bernsteinian concept of framing provided a mechanism to understand the reproduction of policy on the ground, as detailed through creative non-fiction vignettes. What must be remembered is that strong framing (i.e., controlled by the coach developer) does not mean good, nor weak framing (i.e., controlled by the learner) bad, or vice versa. Instead, it is about who controls what. With this in mind, my supervisory team and I found The FA Level 1 courses in this case study had: 1. A high volume of strongly framed assessment regulated by an external provider, 2. A wide range of strongly framed content provided by the NGB, and 3. Coach developers who attempted to weakly frame pedagogic practice. The high volume of assessment and wide range of content, in part, influenced the pacing of the coach developers' practice. However, the strong pacing was also amplified by the coach developers' interpretation of policy and feelings of limited agency in determining how the learning environment could be structured. This meant, that for much of the course, learner coaches had little control over the selection, sequencing, pacing, and evaluation. Such observations, appear incongruent with learner-centred approaches to coach education and may prompt readers to consider and question, would less strongly framed practice mean more meaningful learning? That said, as noted in the concluding scene, strongly framed courses can also benefit learners, and thus a balance is advocated.

As the study concludes, what must be acknowledged, is that different coach developers outside the sample herein, might have interpreted policy differently. Nonetheless, this deconstruction of The FA level 1 course has identified the macro and meso influences on coach developer practice. Given Richard's efforts to socially construct learning within the boundaries of these influences, it would seem important to acknowledge his endeavour, and not only deconstruct practice but offer ways where reconstruction could occur. To that end, if

NGBs desire learner-centred provision, then there is a need to consider (a) how adult learners can co-construct curriculum relevant to their needs, and (b) how coach education as an ecological system can enable coach developers to do so. There may be a number of potential ways of achieving this. First, course designers and policy makers should continue to observe and listen to coach developers' interpretation of policy, as I have done here. This would give a clear idea of whether policy has been understood and interpreted in the manner intended. Second, if course designers espouse a learner-centred pedagogy, they may want to consider a less voluminous and a narrower range of prescribed assessment and content. A "selection box" metaphor (explored and offered in chapter 8, section 8.4 below), where some space and time are allocated for learners to explore areas of their choosing may be helpful here. Thirdly, Bernstein's concept of framing, which is introduced explicitly to coach education for the first time in coach education, could serve as a useful reflective mechanism for coach developers to use. Framing features including selection, sequencing, pacing, and evaluation could help NGBs shape and guide course design with external bodies such as funding regulatory agencies. Of course, we appreciate that for coach education providers such as The FA, designing and delivering learner-centred coach education is neither easy, nor straightforward. Moreover, using Bernstein's framing concept within this third study has identified that constructivist epistemology and learner-centred courses are not immune from the social influences and the power of wider policy development. Thus, this study also highlights the need to further examine who influences learning, where, when, and how. Such consideration is timely, given the current pandemic (at the time of writing this study) and recent dramatic changes in coach education. Here, in the immediate present, coach education, and indeed wider education, is likely to embrace online learning (as seen in The FA's new 2021-2024 policy), and may be provided by new organisations. As demonstrated within this study, the priorities and perspectives of wider macro and meso influencers may shape how education is

framed in everyday practice. Post Covid-19, at a time when it may be needed most therefore, it is important to consider who selects, sequences, and paces knowledge, and for what purpose.

Chapter VIII

Discussion and pragmatic implications

8.1 Introduction

The aim of my thesis has been to critically explore the creation, dissemination and implementation of formal coach education policy. This examination included exploring how policy was created, disseminated, and reproduced in practice. Within this chapter, a balance between a critical theoretical discussion and links to practical considerations that reflects the nature of my PhD are offered. My positionality as a researcher-practitioner very much influenced the decision to approach this chapter in this combined manner. My background and roles as a coach, coach mentor and coach developer led to wanting to offer something that could be ‘used’ in industry. This approach was also hugely supported by my supervisory team. These considerations are based upon, but not wholly determined by the theoretical lens of Basil Bernstein (Chapter 3). These considerations demonstrate how the use of Bernsteinian theory has moved coach education literature forward within the three studies (Chapters 5-7) and how it offers future avenues for research. Subsequently, the two practical outputs are proposed from the experience(s) gained throughout this PhD journey, as well as my extensive experience as a practicing coach, coach mentor and coach developer (discussed further below in sections 8.3 and 8.4). Both outputs aim to support policymaking at the macro (policy evaluative framework for policy makers, section 8.3), and meso (‘selection box’ coach education framework for course designers, section 8.4) levels of national governing bodies. These outputs may prompt future discussion and research beyond this thesis.

8.2 Theoretical implications, contributions, and future research – Basil Bernstein’s contribution

Bernsteinian concepts supported the examination of formal coach education policy across this thesis. For example, the pedagogic device (Bernstein, 2000, chapter 3, section 3.3) supported the understanding of *how* symbolic control was seen within the policies developed by The FA at level 1 and level 2. Symbolic control, as defined by Bernstein (1990, p.134), as “the means whereby consciousness is given specialised form and distributed through forms of communication which relay a given distribution of power and dominant cultural categories”. A range of individuals and departments across policy making sites, such as those in The FA, carry differing degrees of power to enforce a particular discourse as it cascades down a hierarchal chain (e.g., pedagogy informed by constructivist principles, content, CCF, as shown in study one, chapter 5). Power, in the form of specialised discourse (e.g., England DNA principles, competency-based assessment) helped maintain control. Avner and colleagues (2017) demonstrated similar findings when considering Canadian coach education, as they found forms of dominant discourse drove what ‘effective coaching’ should look like. In the case of my thesis, despite the surface level rhetoric (e.g., encouraging a constructivist informed pedagogy), dominant discourses demonstrated other elements drove policy informed directly by The FA and other stakeholders. For example, the creation of a wide range of predetermined content knowledge (study two, chapter 6 and study three, chapter 7), and a high volume of predetermined assessment (e.g., predetermined tasks, study three, chapter 7) resulted in a confusing and contested policy to reproduce (study one, chapter 5 and three, chapter 7). Therefore, my thesis extends the concept of symbolic control by illuminating how particular forms of discourse (i.e., England DNA, CCF, constructivist pedagogy) are influenced further up the hierarchical chain (e.g., restricted and elaborating code, chapter 3, section 3.4, and study one, section 5.6.6). As a result, coach developers and

learners had very little opportunity to recontextualise a curriculum from policy makers and course designers.

Vertical and horizontal discourse also became apparent across the thesis (first discussed in chapter 3, section 3.7 and included in study one, chapter 5, section 5.6.5). Vertical discourse “takes the form of a coherent, explicit and systematically principled structure hierarchically organised as in the sciences, or it takes the form of a series of specialised languages with specialised modes of interrogation and specialised criteria” (Bernstein, 2000, p.157). Horizontal discourse on the other hand is ‘usually typified as everyday or ‘common-sense’ knowledge’ (p. 157). Bernstein (2000, p.157) continued, “it is likely to be oral, local, context dependent and specific, tacit, multi-layered and contradictory across but not within contexts”. Both definitions, according to Bernstein take discourse as “criteria forms of knowledge” (p.156). Vertical discourse was apparent in this thesis, with the inclusion of the England DNA materials and discourse throughout both the level 1 and level 2 courses, as well as the DNA Coaching Fundamentals (although this was not a sole focus applied in my research). These provided specific terminology that shaped what The FA felt represented a “good” coach in GR football. The power exerted through vertical discourse, as seen in study three (chapter 7 above), limited, but did not completely erase, horizontal discourse at the level of classroom (between learners, and to an extent, coach developers). For example, the predetermined assessment and content made it very difficult to engage in more common ‘everyday problems’ relating to the coaches themselves. This limited the engagement of socially constructing a coaching process relating to the specific needs of the coaches on-course. How we achieve and value a more authentic horizontal discourse between learners and coach developers on courses still requires further collaborative efforts beyond this thesis. Vinson, Huckle and Cale (2021) go some way to exploring this concept, using cross-sport boundaries as a means to free coaches somewhat from prevailing cultures and

judgements perhaps felt previously. Their findings demonstrate a democratisation of potential knowledge and learning. This means, coaches learn from others, in different contextual spaces (i.e., different sports, different environments) and offer new lines of inquiry, challenges and debate. My thesis demonstrates a need for such a move to consider *what* knowledge was directed to be known (study two, chapter 6). There is a need therefore to consider *what* knowledge *could* be known that may broaden coach learning and coach education in the future.

Bernstein's classification (discussed originally in chapter 3, section 3.5) was used in study two (chapter 6) to provide a framework for examining *what* content knowledge was used, and *how* that knowledge was structured to form a particular curriculum in practice. From the findings, FA personnel decided which knowledge to include, exclude and how this knowledge was structured. Such knowledge structure offered little in the way of choice or space for coaches to explore and understand how or what 'other' knowledge could in fact be useful in the future. McCleery and colleagues (2021) allude to notions of *what* and *how* coaches learn are based on notions of coaching itself. Their study, which identified 15 core coaching practices to improve coaching practice opens up discussion of what coaches may need to learn in order to meet player needs. They caveated these core practices however by stating that there is a "need for adaptation and conversation among coaches and coach developers to shape practices specific to context" (p.70). Study two brought about the consideration of *what* knowledge(s) in relation to context and *who* decides which knowledge is required. The FA in this instance held power over what the coaches needed when advocating their England DNA principles and coaching fundamentals. It must be acknowledged however that The FA were only one of a number of key stakeholders influencing policy (e.g., 1st4Sport, DCMS, etc.). Webb and Leeder (2021) found similar findings where they perceived dispositions of coaches were being challenged, but only in line

with what the NGB were promoting (e.g., a games-based approach). It must also be acknowledged that when I refer to ‘The FA’, I am in fact talking about people, a select number of people in the instance, who influenced policy in its initial stages of creation and development. Those creating short formal coaching courses are never going to please everyone and an appreciation of this is also acknowledged. However, the predetermined curriculum governed by The FA, which explored specific disciplines (e.g., psychology, physiology) maintained control of what learners came to know, with little challenge to such an approach. A weaker classification of knowledge may help coaches to socially construct their own learning in a more integrative fashion related to their experiences as a coach. This however, requires further exploration beyond this thesis.

Through Bernstein’s framing concept (originally discussed in chapter 3, section 3.6), study three (chapter 7) explored how policy was reproduced on-course. Framing is concerned with *who* controls *what* at the micro level of pedagogic practice. Findings from study three demonstrated that coach developers maintained control over the selection, sequencing, pacing and evaluation of core policy requirements (i.e., delivering specific content and undertaking predetermined assessment). Because of this, coach developers, despite their best efforts were left with little agency to help learners explore concepts and ideas that may have been relevant to them. Although previous research has demonstrated a lack of space for coaches to explore and practice (Stodter & Cushion, 2014), this thesis illuminates why this may well be the case. Despite The FA somewhat valuing coaches’ biographies and backgrounds, as advocated by Stodter and Cushion (2017), little space or time were afforded on-course to support how coaches could develop their knowledge and practice in relation to their context. This is somewhat unsurprising as coach developer training often maintains a generic process that supports the reproduction of current messages and practice disseminated via vertical discourse (Cushion et al., 2019; Stodter & Cushion, 2019). It meant that learners on-course

were recipients of a curriculum influenced higher up the coach education system, rather than co-constructors of their own curriculum relevant to their context.

Given the above considerations, Bernsteinian concepts have enabled me to advance coach education research by demonstrating the challenges of developing policy advocating for social constructivist principles. Bernstein (2000) appreciated that pedagogic discourse was above all else, a social construct. Despite research continuing to shift away from the perceived didactic and technically-driven approach to coach education across different contexts (Trudel, Milistetd, & Culver, 2020), progress still appears limited in practice. The FA in this thesis made genuine attempts during initial policy creation (during 2014-2015) to create and disseminate policy informed using social constructivist principles. They also did this despite little research in sport coaching/coach education space informing research-to-practice suggestions. More recent work (e.g., Paquette & Trudel, 2018a) now provides ‘best practice’ ideas for developing these provisions (Paquette & Trudel, 2018b). Efforts to create such provisions in HE for example (Milistetd, 2018) and through NGB coach education provisions (this thesis) are a positive and well-intentioned step in providing relevant education for coaches. Future research must continue to move beyond isolated course evaluations and focus on how macro and meso influences impact policy development more specifically. This focus should be collaborative (Lyle, 2018b), with the relevant stakeholders included to help educate and inform decisions higher up the hierarchical chain. With the consideration of constructivist coach education in mind, the next section provides considerations of constructing a process-led approach.

8.2.1 Considerations of constructing a process-led curriculum

The critical analysis and considerations from the three studies in my thesis raises questions of who controls the curriculum, from creation, to reproduction. Bernstein, throughout his writing wanted one fundamental thing; to liberate the learners from the language structures imposed upon them (Bernstein, 1975, 2000). Those considering coach education and symbolic control may wish to value the relativist ontological stance within the area of sport coaching. To suggest ontological realism and epistemological superiority of objective knowledge that is relevant lacks suitable foundations. This is due to the diverse realities of the coach and their context. Rather, coach education should embrace the fragmentation of course structure and offer a weaker classification and framing of coach development as a whole. This would allow coach developers to exercise greater agency, as more time and space could be allocated to focusing on the needs of the learner, rather than on predetermined content and assessment. Coach developer roles could become one of supporting learners to co-construct their curriculum relevant to their context. This would allow for a more bespoke pathway that coaches could explore (e.g., selection box framework, section 8.4 below). Such a structure also removes the linear approach to course design within the context of GR football more specifically. Doing this presents a more exploratory approach for coaches by providing choice, while also putting the emphasis back onto the coaches to reflect on what it is they feel they need. In other words, by providing less prescribed content and assessment, with more time and space to explore coach's needs, formal coach education could move to a more authentic 'learner-centred' approach (Paquette & Trudel, 2018a, 2018b).

By combining the Bernsteinian concepts (explored in chapter 3) with a process-led curriculum from the work of Preistley and Humes (2010), coach education could offer a more co-constructed pathway for coaches. A process-led curriculum as described in studies one

(chapter 5) and three (chapter 7) is one that has been advocated in recent research, using a range of terminology (i.e., learner-centred; student-led; constructivist-informed) (Paquette & Trudel, 2018a, 2018b). Kelly (2009) promotes a process driven curriculum as one that focuses on the development of the pupil (i.e., learner) above the need of predefined content, or how to evaluate that knowledge. Kelly (2009) caveats this by acknowledging that no curriculum design is value-free. This means that there will always be some form of influence when involving people, all of whom have differing backgrounds, areas of expertise, and preferences. With this in mind, the process-led curriculum provides a conceptual stance of a model for consideration in the context of football coaching at this stage. Its stance is that coaching is a complex, sociocultural endeavour. Valuing the coach as being well placed to understand their practical needs and contexts, and the particular environment they reside in. Understanding such complexities also offers coach education the opportunity to emphasise and support an individual within the specific context that they reside. For example, I value the GR coach as someone who gives up their time, often in a voluntary capacity, to support the participation and enjoyment of others playing sport. Therefore, a process model seeks not to prescribe content, but to develop the coach who is a key stakeholder within their context. To do this, the following paragraphs describe how process, content and outcome *could* be co-constructed to enhance coach learning.

Process: Learners come on-course with the recognition that they carry a range of personal experiences of a sport (e.g., watching, playing, coaching, etc.), and therefore hold a range of dispositions to its practices (Webb & Leeder, 2021). Coach developers may engage learners through getting to know and detail the context in which they operate (e.g., clubs, community centres, schools, etc.). Context and purpose of coaching could be discussed and documented at the beginning. From these discussions, general and broader themes/topics could be identified that begins to shape a given course. These topics could then be ranked in

order of perceived importance in a collaborative discussion between learners and coach developer(s). A learning process may build from this point including relevant experiences and discussions shaped by the needs and wants of the learner(s).

Content: based on the recognition of the person on-course, learners could co-identify some content they feel they need with coach developers. This content could then be divided into relevant modules of learning by the coach developer that fits around a broader purpose of what learners need/want to know. This is not to say that all content needs to come from the learners. As stated in studies two and three (Chapters 6 and 7), NGBs have the opportunity to identify and provide key information they also feel may be important. This may be especially true within an introductory course (i.e., level 1). However, within this form of curriculum, the classification of knowledge could benefit from being weakly classified (Bernstein, 2000, section 3.5), and an appreciation of the interdisciplinary nature of coaching is more likely to occur (Armour, 2014). Knowledge would also benefit from being weakly framed (section 3.6) in selection, sequencing, and pacing (within reason) to allow learners to form their own curriculum on-course (Bernstein, 2000). Again, dialogue at the outset, and during a course can enable learners to sequence and pace their learning (as discussed in study three, chapter 7).

Outcome: Given the individualised nature of course design, it would seem logical to offer an individualised assessment process, if one was required at all. This process could benefit from a case study approach (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Thomas, 2011), where learners identify 1-2 critical moments (positive and/or negative/challenging) experienced during their current coaching practice. This could allow learners to plan, deliver, and reflect upon each of these moments that are relevant to the context in which they operate. The learner-centred nature of assessment does not necessarily mean that there would not or could not be criteria to achieve. However, such criteria could come in the form of broader, or more general

principles (explored further in 8.4.6 below). The role of reflection would be an important element of this assessment. However, acknowledgment must be had on the degree of usefulness and potential barriers of undertaking reflective practice (Knowles et al., 2006). For example, Downham and Cushion (2021) highlighted the view that reflection is not a neutral tool and there is a need to challenge its place within the coaching context you reside. Their sociological view that reflection is entwined with power relations (i.e., reflective practice within the remit of a NGB approach to coaching for example) poses future actions around this process. As a tentative suggestion, future considerations could stem from a learner-to-coach developer critical discussion and action planning session. This could be informed by Whitehead and colleagues' (2016) 'Think Aloud' concept for example, as a potential method to explore, given the applied nature of *in* and *on* reflective practice.

Role of the Coach Developer: Within this type of curriculum, coach developers are required to be highly skilled facilitators, where active listening, problem solving, and creative skills are required to construct meaningful and relevant courses for those in attendance. The collaborative nature of specific course design requires coach developers to be knowledgeable in a range of disciplines (although not experts in any). More importantly, coach developers would also need to demonstrate a level of humility to acknowledge when an area may sit outside of their remit. This requires them to then be proactive to search and signpost learners to other points of learning (i.e., online modules, community spaces, articles, books, other people, etc.). Learner-centred teaching in this way could aim to empower learners, value their input, and scaffold relevant knowledge from a range of sources, as well as experiences. This approach to curriculum design means the role of coach developer moves away from 'judgement-maker', to one more aligned with a collaborator, or leaning towards a mentoring approach. As we have seen across the three studies within my thesis, if we want coach developers to reproduce a process model approach, we need policy makers and course

designers to (re)evaluate their existing courses and consider how well those policies support such an approach.

To do this, the next section will introduce an original policy evaluative framework to prompt policy makers to consider if their existing system(s) is/are meeting the needs of learners and consider how best to develop it.

8.3 A coach education policy evaluative framework

In order to help those working in coach education policy and practice, I now propose a coach education policy evaluative framework. This framework offers policy makers a practical tool to recognise and detail who influences the policy making process and how, from its initial creation, through to its reproduction. This framework is designed to act as a ‘reconstruction tool’ for future provisions, by reflecting on what currently exists within a particular policy. The intention here is to give ‘something’ back to practitioners (e.g., policy makers, course designers, coach developers, etc.) that can inform future practice. The framework also comes from valuing my own (and others) practitioner insights and experiences. For example, some frustrations I have felt when delivering coach education courses (e.g., confusion at some elements, such as the CCF, limited time) alongside my learning and development across my PhD supported this output. Finally, this was also incredibly well supported by my supervisory team who valued giving ‘something’ back to industry to help try and solve problems, as opposed to simply asking questions about problems. With this in mind, this evaluative framework offers a collaborative tool to enable researcher’s and practitioner’s to work *with* one another to construct something better than what has come before.

What this section of the chapter initially shows is an introduction to the blank template of the framework, with accompanying explanations of each of the four main

sections. The four main sections of the framework are based on the studies I have undertaken using Bernstein's (2000) pedagogic device (as used in study one, chapter 5). It also includes sections related to classification and framing principles that I have used in my thesis (study two, chapter 6 for classification, and study three, chapter 7 for framing). A fifth section has been included to help conclude final implications and considerations for future coach education provision(s). Finally, this framework is not proposing what should be done when creating policy. Instead, I present a retrospective evaluative framework that can be filled, debated, amended, and cascaded as a development tool for future work. I do this, because I appreciate the knowledge of policy makers and coach developers, but also that they are influenced by a range of social, economic and political factors. An example of this sits under the four explanations as a 'completed template' (8.3.1 below) based on the findings within the three studies in this thesis. Its purpose is to serve as an elaborating code mechanism (Bernstein, 1964), that could prompt policy makers to reflect and understand the influences on their coach education system. This coach education evaluative framework could also be disseminated and revised by other stakeholders within the wider system, such as other sports and other NGBs.

Coach Education Evaluative Framework				
Section 1: Because policy is socially constructed – who and what have been the key influencers/influences on your coach education system?				
Key Influencers (informed by Bernstein's pedagogic device)	Influence (macro, meso, micro)	Who	Role	How have they influenced the coach education system?
Who has influenced policy in the initial phases of its creation?				
What changes/adaptions were made during development and dissemination of policy? And by who?				
What influences have impacted the reproduction of policy? Who has influenced this?				
Notes/Comments across these areas:				

Section 2: Because knowledge is socially constructed, what knowledge has been constructed into your coach education system?			
Disciplines	Topics	Comments/Notes on specific theories, models, approaches informing curriculum.	
<i>Notes/Comments/key messages</i>			
Section 3: Because knowledge is also socially structured/classified, how have you structured the course topics/disciplines? Are they separated or linked?			
Disciplines & Topics	Separated	Linked	Rationale/Notes
<i>Initial Reflections:</i>			

Section 4: Because you have three elements of curriculum design (teaching, content, and assessment), who has been selecting, sequencing, pacing, and evaluating these on-course?				
Framing	Selection (Who picks)	Sequencing (In what order)	Pacing (At what pace)	Evaluation (who/how is assessment done? If any)
Assessment (on-course)				
Assessment (in-situ)				
Content				
Teaching Methods (Pedagogy)				
<p><i>Notes, comments, key points...</i></p> <p><i>Initial reflections:</i></p> <p><i>Implications:</i></p>				
Section 5: Implications for future coach education provision(s) – considerations and action points				

Table 7. Coach education policy evaluative framework (blank).

Section 1: Key influencers/influences

Different personnel with differing degrees of influence are often able to influence wider policy creation and development procedures (Preistley et al., 2021). This was the case within my research which saw individuals both enabled and constrained by different parts of The FA 2016-2020 policy (e.g., pedagogic approach, assessment process). When considering this, Preistley and colleagues (2021, p.13) gave a concise breakdown of the sites of activity when considering policy making. They include macro, meso, and micro to contexts that incorporate global influences through to the in-classroom considerations of practitioners. The above framework presents an opportunity for policy makers to recognise who influences policy, at different stages, to what degree, and how. This section of the framework has been informed by the results of study one (chapter 5), which found multiple stakeholders across the policy making process (both internal and external) influenced FA coach education. For example, study one (chapter 5) demonstrated the influence 1st4Sport had in relation to the level 1 and level 2 courses needing to be designed with predefined outcomes already existing within the 1st4Sport qualifications framework. It would be important therefore to outline *who* influences *what*, at what stage, and to what degree. By clearly identifying these influences(ers), policy makers may be able to understand how their system has been constructed, and on the basis of this, provide transparent boundaries for future policy developments. Such boundaries may also make apparent the type of curriculum design possible, either by choice, or requirement (e.g., CIMSPA, Aldous & Brown, 2020). Specifically, the framework provides space to consider Bernstein's (2000) three rules of his pedagogic device (distributive, recontextualisation, and evaluative rules). Akin to study one, doing so enables initial insight into who's voice, or what power relations dominate initial policy creation and development (Enright et al., 2018). Reflecting on this could assist policy makers to become aware of the influences on their coach education systems and disseminate this information through their

own system. While some stakeholders will be obvious, taking the time to consider the wider system of influence could help others to recognise the taken-for granted influencers that tacitly influence coach learning.

Section 2: Key knowledge

Policy makers may also wish to reflect on the existing content knowledge informing their curriculum. Doing so may allow for further exploration of specific content (i.e., models, theories, research, etc.) that fills a course, and prompt the questions of ‘why these disciplines? And why not others?’. These questions stem from study two (chapter 6) where findings demonstrated the influence of disciplines such as psychology and physiology had on The FA level 2 course, while little knowledge was included around sociology or philosophy for example. Identifying existing content knowledge in a curriculum can allow for discussions and debate about the usefulness within a given context (i.e., participatory coaching). This may raise ideas for future policy and curricula. A version of the framework could then be cascaded down to other members of staff for critique and discussion (e.g., to course designers and coach developers), to offer a top-down, bottom-up approach to policy creation (Sullanmaa et al., 2019). Prestley and Philippou (2018) commented on the multifaceted and non-linear process of curriculum development across multiple sites. Such an approach puts transparency and debate at the forefront of policy evaluation and could inform future course content.

Section 3: Classification of knowledge

Once policy makers and/or course designers reflect on *what* content knowledge have been included in a curriculum, they can then begin to consider the classification of that knowledge within that curriculum. Strong classification of content knowledge may not be overly

desirable, given the interdisciplinary nature of coaching (Armour, 2014). However, policy makers may choose to separate or link (integrate) specific elements of a course to provide different types of information. This can therefore be seen by breaking this part of the curriculum down within the evaluative framework. As we have seen from studies two and three (chapter's 6 and 7), the classification of content knowledge within The FA 2016-2020 policy resulted in somewhat of a collection, rather than integrated form of curriculum. Here, policy makers and course designers could reflect on what already exists and how such knowledge was classified. This may allow them to distinguish what knowledge they may want to keep strongly insulated from another in the future, while discussing a more integrative set of topics in another area of course design. For example, The FA may wish to strongly classify 'coaching ethics' (example offered in section 8.4 below) and 'safe practice' (section 8.4) to provide clear boundaries of acceptable practice standards. On the other hand, The FA may then offer a weaker classification of how growth and maturation (i.e., physiological knowledge) could have implications on player motivation (i.e., psychological) and interactions with other players and staff (i.e., sociological). This could be further extended by considering how both then influences practice design (i.e., pedagogy) and performance detail (i.e., technical and tactical elements) by the coach. Deciding 'when is each classification good/useful?' presents space for policy makers and course designers to build a more relevant curriculum in line with the needs of coaches in the GR game. It may also impact how information is delivered. For example, with the rise of online courses/modules, policy makers may distinguish between what could be taught via online platforms, and therefore more strongly classified, and which may be more suited to other platforms and methods of teaching, and perhaps more weakly classified. For example, an online module could inform learners of the sociological and physiological benefits of coaching and playing football. The module could then inform a face-to-face practice design

and practical workshop offering an integrated view of games-based approach to coaching. In this way, reflecting on the existing classification of knowledge could prompt new ways of imagining coach education.

Section 4: Framing

Framing comes as a result of the consideration and decisions made within the field of production and recontextualisation phases of policy development (Bernstein, 2000). Study three (chapter 7) illuminated the issues coach developers had when aiming to reproduce policy in-practice. These findings demonstrated how three coach developers interpreted and reproduced policy that intended to offer a curriculum informed by social constructivist principles (i.e., learner-led, build on experiences, contextual needs). Therefore, policy makers may wish to provide initial outlines for who they may want to frame a course within the: selection, sequencing, pacing, and evaluative elements of the course. At this point, consideration may also be had on who is best placed to frame knowledge ‘on-course’, and the evaluative framework prompts this reflection. This reflection could include insight from the previous three sections of the framework. For example, given the findings in study two (chapter 6), where content knowledge was identified as predetermined to courses, it is now not surprising that knowledge was not selected, sequenced or paced by learners in study three (chapter 7). Thus, framing allows policy makers to reflect on how well choices align throughout the policy making process, as well as clarifying the role of the coach developer within a wider system of influence (Culver et al., 2019). This process may also benefit from discussions with coach developers at this time. Coach developers could discuss, from a practical perspective, potential benefits or implications of strongly or weakly framed elements of the course to be communicated back up the hierarchical chain, in order to inform secondary stages of policy development (Sullanmaa et al., 2019). Utilising framing in this

way allows for a reflection of who is best suited to select, sequence, pace, and evaluate at a particular time on-course.

The coach education policy evaluative framework provides policy makers with a template to reflect on their existing coach education system. It does not advocate for a particular policy to be designed. Instead, it provides an opportunity for a transparent insight into what, at a particular point in time, policy makers have already created. This framework could then serve as a key referencing tool to utilise during future policy making processes and could be cascaded through the hierarchy during development phases to inform internal debates, ideas and decisions. This process could help create an elaborating communicative structure within an organisation also, where language is made explicit, so taken-for-granted concepts and ideas are not restricted from those who experience the policy more directly, such as coach developers and coaches.

8.3.1 A worked example of the policy evaluative framework – a retrospective account of The FA 2016-2020 formal coach education policy

Based on the explanations provided above, this section presents a working example of the policy evaluative framework of The FA 2016-2020 formal coach education policy examined within my thesis. By including the example, I wanted to present readers with an idea of how this framework could illuminate specific issues and/or debates within the policy making process. For example, as The FA were aiming to create a curriculum that was informed by social constructivist principles, I contend that they had the intentions to follow more of a process model of curriculum design. Therefore, this evaluative framework could allow for reflections of these attempts. The use of this framework is not intended as a destruction of people's previous work. Instead, this framework provides a tool to help inform and build

upon the well-intentioned work of others across previous policies which had many positive features, such as blocked learning and in-situ support visits. As such, a deconstruction of The FA 2016-2020 policy in this instance allows for a positive reconstruction of future coach education policies within The FA and beyond.

Coach Education Evaluative Framework				
Section 1: Because policy is socially constructed – what and who are the key influencers/influences on your coach education system?				
Key Influencers (informed by Bernstein's pedagogic device)	Influence (macro, meso, micro)	Who	Role	How have they influenced the coach education system??
Who has influenced policy in the initial phases of its creation?	<p><i>Macro</i></p> <p><i>Macro</i></p> <p><i>Meso</i></p>	<p><i>Government Departments (e.g., DCMS)</i></p> <p><i>Awarding Bodies (e.g., 1st4Sport)</i></p> <p><i>Education Institutions (e.g., universities, ICCE)</i></p>	<p><i>Development of coach development framework</i></p>	<p><i>Increased number of coaches (quantity not quality per se) (as per findings in study one)</i> <i>Evidence from study one (chapter 5):</i> <i>The Commission Report 2 (The FA, 2015) identified that:</i> <i>“The overall numbers of coaches holding B Licence level (level 3) and above need to be increased substantially ...in particular the Commission would argue that The FA needs to provide the right encouragement to coaches below the top levels so that they are motivated to pursue higher level qualifications” (The FA, 2015, p. 38).</i></p> <p><i>Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) informed Total Qualification Time (TQT) (European Commission, 2020).</i></p> <p><i>Prescribed outcomes to be achieved</i> <i>Evidence from data collection in study two (chapter 6):</i> <i>1st4Sport (Unit Specification):</i> <i>“Understand how to plan, deliver and review technical and tactical linked and progressive coaching sessions within the laws of the game (p.6)</i></p> <p><i>Different disciplinary knowledge – move towards social constructivist principles (as found in study one and previous researching advocating for such as an approach)</i> <i>Evidence from study one:</i> <i>Senior Staff declared: “What do we feel is the latest research in terms of how you could and should design and deliver learning? [social] constructivism came as a result of that”. (SS)</i></p>

		<i>FA staff – policy makers; senior leaders, course designers</i>	<i>Creation of coach education framework – FA learning strategy (2016)</i> <i>CCF</i>	<i>Social constructivist approach (a bit like a process model).</i>
What changes/adaptions were made during development and dissemination of policy? And by who?	<i>Macro</i>	<i>Awarding Bodies – reaffirmation of outcomes</i>	<i>Outcomes embedded as part of course design.</i>	<i>Example of learning outcomes identified in study two (chapter 6): “Develop a greater understanding and awareness of the England DNA coaching fundamentals, the principles of play and the technical components of play” (PowerPoint Presentation, slide 5, workshop 1).</i>
	<i>Meso</i>	<i>Academic influence (personnel, articles, etc.)</i> <i>NGB staff – course designers; department leads</i>	<i>What knowledge/theories/Models; evidence, guidance.</i> <i>Course design - Format of course(s); length; blocks; time; assessment</i> <i>CCF</i> <i>Integration of England DNA and DNA coaching fundamentals</i>	<i>Explicitness of theories; How much influence? Psychology and physiology dominated (from study two findings). Examples include: Weiner’s (1986) Attribution Model; Nicholl’s (1989) Achievement Goal Theory; Self-Esteem (Weiss & Ebbeck, 1996); Relative Age Effect (RAE); Maturation; Early Specialisation.</i> <i>Predetermined workshops number (i.e., 7 on level 1, 20 on level 2) and content (each having predetermined focus and content included prior to learners coming on-course).</i> <i>Disseminated as mechanism of assessment across level 1 (partially) and level 2 (more explicitly) – although how to use the CCF caused confusion (study one findings)</i>
What influences have impacted the reproduction of policy? Who has influenced this?	<i>Micro</i>	<i>Coach developers – full time</i>	<i>Dissemination of policy to regional team of full-time coach developers.</i>	<i>Following of a curriculum informed by perceived social constructivist principles.</i>
			<i>Interpretation of policy</i>	<i>Granted access to FA learning strategy to use as mechanism for understanding – more likely to follow policy as written (and through discourse)</i>

		Coach developers – part time	<p><i>Reproduction of policy</i></p> <p><i>Interpretation of policy</i></p> <p><i>Reproduction of policy</i></p>	<p><i>Sticking to policy advocated through official/vertical discourse channels.</i></p> <p><i>Access to information not explicit to part-time staff (elaborate code from study one; although not elaborated down to part time coach developers).</i></p> <p><i>Confusion of elements of policy – namely the use of the CCF (study one) and division between getting through content prescribed and allow learner experience to inform a course (study three).</i></p>
<p><u>Notes/Comments across these areas:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Academia plays a part within policy making process. 2) Social and economic influence seems to have a great influence (e.g., increase in number of coaches; 1st4Sport outcome approach) 3) FA learning strategy advocating social constructivist principles (somewhat like a process model) 4) However, strategy also advocating 1st4Sport outcomes to be achieved (prescribed outcome to be achieved). 				
<p>Section 2: Because knowledge is socially constructed, what constructions have and should be used in your coach education system?</p>				
Disciplines	Topics	Comments/Notes on specific theories, models, approaches informing curriculum. (This information has been extracted from findings in study two (chapter 5) within this thesis)		
Psychology	Confidence; motivation; coach-athlete relationships	<p><i>Explicit knowledge offered:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Abraham (2009) (adapted) Decision-Making Model (present on slides). - Self Determination Theory (name presented in slides but no authors included) (Deci and Ryan, 1985). - Growth Mindset Theory (included in notes section, not on slides) (Dweck, 2006). - Creating a learning environment – coach-athlete relationships (Mageau & Vallerand, 2003). - Development Model of Sport Participation (Côté, Baker, & Abernethy, 2007). <p><i>Implicit/interpreted knowledge by author from study two:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lacy & Darst's (1984) Arizona State University Observation Instrument (ASUOI). - Mosston & Ashworth's (2002) – Spectrum of Teaching Styles. 		

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vygotsky's (1978) Zone of Proximal/Optimal Development concept. - Weiner's (1986) Attribution Model. - Guadagnoli and Lee's (2004) Challenge Point Framework - Coach Analysis Intervention System (Cushion et al. 2012) - Creating a learning environment – coach-athlete relationships (Mageau & Vallerand, 2003).
<i>Sociology</i>	<i>Care in coaching; health and wellbeing; mental health;</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No inclusion of explicit models or theories (as seen in study two). - implicit acknowledgements occurred in workshop 3 (the social corner) – very little wider sociological considerations built upon however.
<i>Physiology</i>	<i>Growth/Maturation; training loads.</i>	<p><i>Implicit/interpreted knowledge by author from study two:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relative age effect. - Growth and maturation. - Muir, Morgan, and Abraham (2011) early specialisation (could be included in number of disciplines, but was focused alongside above two references). - Age and stages of development (i.e., fundamentals).
<i>Philosophy</i>	<i>Understanding self; Beliefs, values.</i>	<p><i>Implicit/interpreted knowledge by author from study two:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Somewhat relates to ICCE (2013) Vision and Strategy
<i>Reflection</i>	<i>Coach; players; environments; practice design, etc.</i>	<p><i>Explicit knowledge offered:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Types of reflection (Schön, 1983)
<i>Pedagogy</i>	<i>How people learn; how we could teach; games-based approach; constraints led, problem-based learning, etc.</i>	<p><i>Implicit/interpreted knowledge by author from study two:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deliberate practice (Ericsson, 2006) - England DNA/Coaching fundamentals advocating high ball rolling time, which could be related to a more games-based approach.
<i>Game/Sport Specific</i>	<i>Technical and tactical elements of the game; NGB specific playing philosophy.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Left to the knowledge and inclusion of the coach developers. - Some technical and tactical points made on A2 poster (study two).
<p><u>Notes/Comments/key messages</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Heavily weighted towards both psychology and physiology. 2) Limited sociological, philosophical, and sport specific knowledge. 3) Inclusion and influence of the England DNA throughout the courses. 4) How can these disciplines be linked better? 		

Section 3: Because knowledge is also socially structured/classified, how have you structured the course topics/disciplines? Are they separated or linked?				
Disciplines & Topics	Separated	Linked	Rationale/Notes	
Psychology	Yes	Somewhat	e.g., workshop 5 – motivation, workshop 6 – self-esteem.	
Sociology	Limited	No	A lack of informed disciplinary knowledge integrated through the level 2 course.	
Physiology	Yes	Somewhat	e.g., workshop 14 – the physical corner.	
Philosophy	Limited	No	A lack of informed disciplinary knowledge integrated through the level 2 course.	
Reflection	Limited	Somewhat	Used in a range of workshops but ad hoc, with little integration of informed disciplinary practice.	
Pedagogy	Limited	Somewhat	Limited informed disciplinary knowledge discussed – more practical information from coach developers that came more from industry.	
Game/Sport Specific	Limited (course dependent)	Yes	Coach developers decided on topics and practice design when on course.	
Initial reflections: 1) Disciplines often isolated from one another 2) Range of evidence-based work in some disciplines (e.g., physiology, psychology) 3) Limited evidence in other areas (e.g., sociology, philosophy). 4) Reliance on coach developers to integrate technical and tactical elements of coaching with different disciplines.				
Section 4: Because you have three elements of curriculum design (teaching, content, and assessment), who has been selecting, sequencing, pacing, and evaluating these on-course?				
Framing	Selection (Who picks)	Sequencing (In what order)	Pacing (At what pace)	Evaluation (who/how is assessment done? If any)
Assessment (On-course)	FA Coach Developer	Coach developer	Coach developer	Level 1 – FA created predetermined workbook assessment tasks (study three)

Assessment (in-situ)	FA	Coach developer	Learner and coach developer (select and agree date of in-situ)	Coach developer - Level 2 – FA conducted a minimum of 2 in-situ support visits (plus learners required to complete project). Used CCF as assessment framework (some of the time – findings from study one).
Content	FA	FA/coach developer	Coach developers	Coach developers - Level 1 – achievement of completed workbook tasks. Coach developers - Level 2 – completion of individual learner project against the five strands of the England DNA.
Teaching Methods (Pedagogy)	FA Coach developer	FA/coach developer	Coach developer (on-course) Learner (away from course when completing Level 2 project)	Full time coach developers (CCD's) conducted semi-organised visits to observe coach developers delivering on-course.
<p>Notes, comments, key points...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Linear course given range of assessment and content already included. - Coach developers trying their best to contextualise and construct meaningful learning. <p>Initial reflections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More space and time for learners to include what they would like to explore in more depth (choice of topic). - Reducing predetermined content and amount of assessment <p>Implications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coach developers as competent facilitators. - Curriculum designed around bespoke interests of the learners. - Time and space to discuss, debate and explore. 				
Section 5: Implications for future coach education provision(s) – considerations and action points				
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) What are our objectives for coach education? And how are these disseminated (now and in the future)? 2) Do we have a coherent policy and curriculum design between pedagogy, content and assessment? 3) What knowledge are we using and not using? Possible consequences and signposts? 4) Can we structure courses to allow learners to lead some of the course based on their experiences? 				

Table 8. Coach education policy evaluative framework (FA formal coach education policy, 2016-2020).

The completed evaluative framework above illustrates The FA's attempt to create a coach education policy that was somewhat informed by social constructivist principles. However, the framework demonstrates some of the struggles from a policy perspective when considering the four sections (influences, knowledge, classification, and framing) during the policy making process. For example, influences in section 1 (e.g., outcome approach towards increase numbers and 1st4Sport objectives to be achieved) ultimately had an impact upon section 4 (framing on-course). These can be seen in studies one and three (chapters 5 and 7). The frameworks usefulness lies in the ability for key points of a policy to be included in one document. Each section is able to offer insight and demonstrate the influence it has on another. This can support the discussions and debates during the policy making process. It can also be presented as a dissemination tool if shared through the hierarchical chain of an organisation. This function allows for an elaborating dissemination of policy intentions and actualisations to support explicit understanding, and limit taken-for-granted assumptions (as seen in study one, chapter 5).

From the findings in this thesis, and the policy evaluative frameworks' potential to give a more transparent view of coach education policy, attention now turns to a curriculum framework that appeared to be desirable from The FA. The section below presents a 'Selection Box' framework of formal coach education (8.4). This outlines a process model approach of curriculum design that builds from the following considerations found in the policy evaluative framework above:

- 1) Process-led approach shaped by learner context and needs.
- 2) Integrative mix of multidisciplinary content to support learners in their contexts.
- 3) More space and time for learners to explore topics they find interesting.
- 4) Choice of assessment that is more bespoke to their needs.
- 5) Coach developers as facilitators to support learner needs on-course.

8.4 A formal coach education ‘selection box’ framework – building a working example of a new curriculum design

From the above implications demonstrated using the policy evaluative framework (8.3.1 above), I now present an original ‘selection box’ coach education framework to generate further discussions of developing formal coach education provision for NGBs such as The FA (Figure 14 below). This framework is proposed to try and support future development of coach education. This has stemmed from my desire to want to help and support coaches and NGBs. Also, from the findings across my thesis, as well as my experiences as a learner, coach, coach mentor, and coach developer (see chapter 4, section 4.3). Like the policy evaluative framework (8.3 above), the selection box framework offers ‘something’ back into the industry for future coach education development. From my findings, this framework also helps bring the three case studies together (chapters 5-7) in a constructive manner, where findings have influenced this coach education approach. This has also been done in an attempt to close to research-industry gap by offering a transferable and translatable framework for industry to consider (Lyle, 2018; Santos et al., 2022). However, the selection box framework alone is not enough, and the text that accompanies each section offers potential information to offer a potential rationale for future dissemination (if desirable).

The inclusion of specific elements serve to identify examples and rationale, rather than presenting a concrete ‘must-do’ application of the framework. It entwines the findings of my thesis, alongside my views at the time of writing. A key consideration is that findings within my thesis are already dated, and The FA have already moved on to their 2021-2024 policy for coach education. Therefore, consideration of the current landscape must also be considered (e.g., post Covid-19), as well as the rate in which policy is produced and reproduced in practice (typically over a four-year cycle), which in itself is problematic. This

framework is based on an epistemological perspective of learners being able to socially construct knowledge relevant to their own world. This knowledge is therefore made, by coaches in a specific context (e.g., deprived area where coaching sessions are used to develop harmony within a local community). I offer these considerations through the frameworks design and process. Finally, it must be acknowledged that this framework does not aim to offer the utopia of coach education design. It is offered from a perspective shaped by findings and theoretical considerations from the work of Bernsteinian concepts such as classification and framing in particular. This framework is represented in Figure 14 and detailed in the sections that follow.

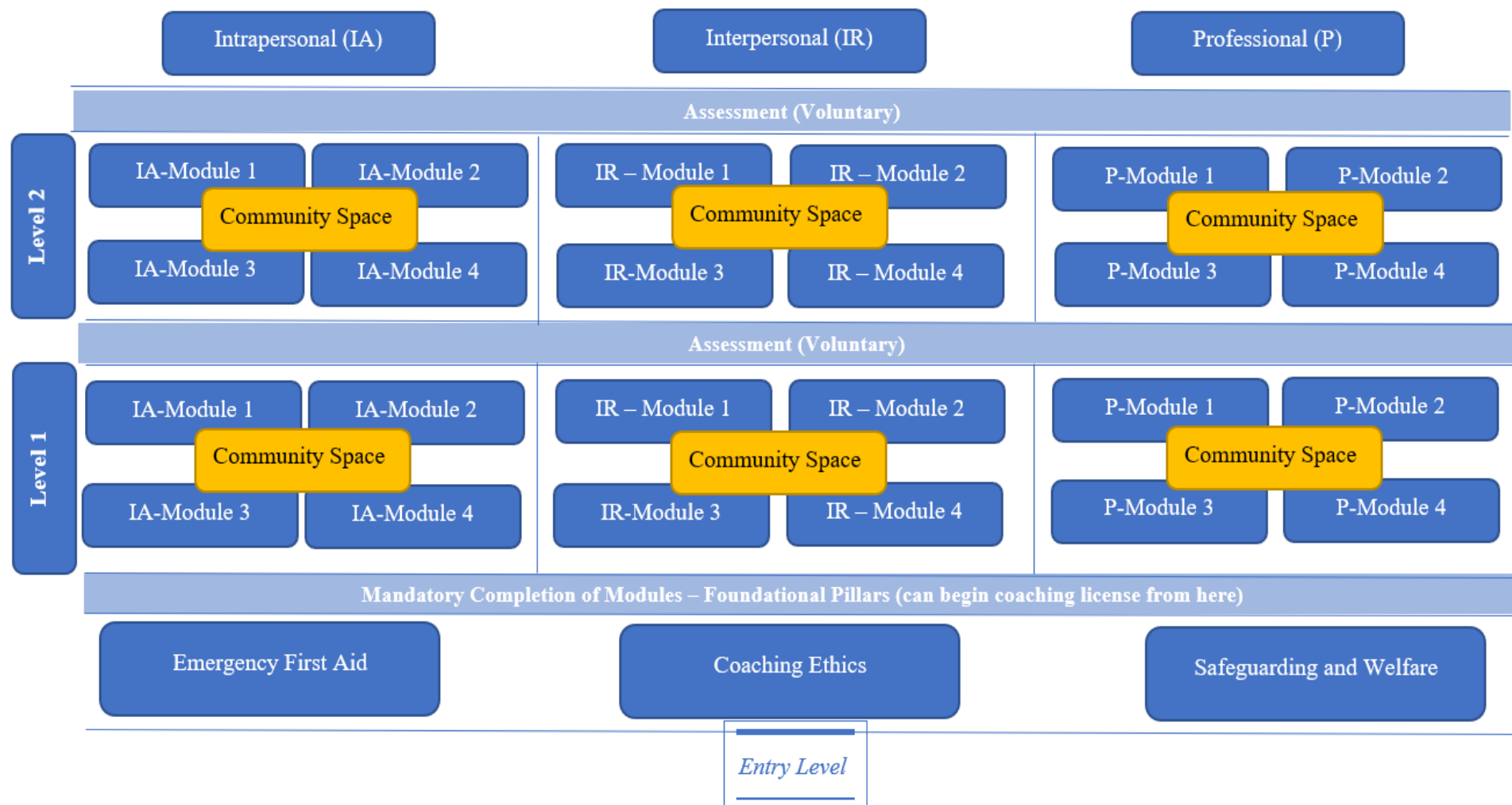


Figure 14. 'Selection Box' coach education framework

8.4.1 Three strands of learning

The work of Côté and Gilbert (2009) and Gilbert and Côté (2013) informed the three strands of knowledge development (i.e., intrapersonal, interpersonal, professional) within this framework. Although both focused on the development of effectiveness and expertise in coaching, Côté and Gilbert (2009) also recognised the importance of coaching context, and proposed the four domains of coaching for consideration (i.e., participation coaching for children, participation coaching for adolescents and adults, performance coaching for young adolescents, and performance coaching for older adolescents and adults). More recent work in industry by Sport Scotland (2020) has seen the incorporation of these strands, as well as examples in academia by Mallet, Rynne, and Trudel (2021). It also serves well that both the ICCE (2021) and European coaching framework (Lara-Bercial et al., 2017) utilise the same three strands. This informed approach provides a suitable starting point to build a formal coach education framework. Given the multitude of disciplines that could be accessed through these three strands, as seen in the evaluative framework above, learners would have the opportunity to consider their context, and begin to map what it is they need to develop within their coaching process. Prior to the focus on selection box modules, three mandatory modules could be accessible, in the first instance, to engage in as a foundational set of coaching pillars.

8.4.2 Foundational pillars – mandatory modules

Previous research advocates for the development of socially constructing coach education to help meet the needs of an individual's coaching process (Paquette et al., 2014; Paquette & Trudel 2018ab). This includes the introduction of some initial content to learn about (Côté & Gilbert, 2013; Stoszowski & Collins, 2016). This was also evident in study three (chapter 7), where I advocate for The FA to give some strongly framed sessions to novice coaches as a

starting point. As an example, I have provided three mandatory modules within this framework that learners could be required to attend. The three modules include: 1) coaching ethics, 2) safeguarding and welfare, and 3) emergency first aid. All three modules could be completed as part of a one-and-a-half-day course (e.g., 3x3 hour modules) for example to provide initial consideration for coaches. These modules could be created within a strong classification of ‘need-to-know’ content and pedagogical knowledge shaped around health and safety, child protection, and moral and ethical considerations of coaching within the participation domain. This strong classification could give specific detail (e.g., how to perform CPR, information on abuse of children) of knowledge needed prior to starting a coaching journey. It could also be designed with a strongly framed approach, where selection, sequencing, and pacing are shaped by course designers and coach developers to ensure all relevant information has been delivered. By providing these foundational pillars in such a way could provide opportunities for coaches to reflect initially on what helps support ‘safe’ coaching, from a social, medical, legal, and moral perspective. I suggest that based on these three example modules, coaches could be ‘licensed’ to begin their coaching, if licensing is a desire or requirement of wider NGBs/institutions (e.g., see CIMSPA, 2022).

8.4.3 Horizontal and vertical development – levels

The integration of ‘levels’ as it currently stands offers a current outlook that exists within the area of coach education within the UK. For example, The FA 2016-2020 policy sat on the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) and was used to inform Total Qualification Time (TQT) (European Commission, 2020). Providing a ‘levelling’ example of the framework supports the economic and political influences that impacts current coach education. This has been seen in study one (chapter 5) through the influences of 1st4Sport and the chairman’s commission report (2014) advocating for more coaches at differing levels across the coaching

spectrum (namely UEFA B/Level 3 as in the chairman's commission report). Across The FA 2016-2020 policy (level 1 and level 2 courses) had a combined guided learning hours of 106 hours (33 hours for level 1, and 73 hours for level 2 respectively). Based on these hours, this selection box framework provides a bespoke approach to how those hours could be accumulated. Here learners are able to frame their learning through 'selection' (i.e., study three findings demonstrated a distinct lack of this when considering framing) of which journey they may wish to go on. For example, each module could represent 5 hours of guided learning time (120 hours across 24 modules on two levels), made up in a number of ways (explained in section below). Here, learners would be able to accumulate hours through access to both level 1 and level 2 modules before assessment takes place (see assessment section 8.4.6 below). This allows choice of whether coaches may wish to develop a broader range of coaching knowledge across multiple strands (i.e., intra, inter, professional), or a deeper level of knowledge across one particular strand. Levels, in this instance, do not apply in the context of accreditation, but in the depth of information explored. What it also grants is access to a continued range of resources for those more recreational coaches over an extended period of time (Rocchi & Couture, 2018). Access to 12 modules at level 1 for example could serve as both formal coach education requirements, with the remainder being accessed as further, informal CPD as/when required or wanted.

8.4.4 Selection box modules

Subsequent to the licensing, if desired, of coaches who complete the mandatory modules (i.e., foundational pillars in section 8.4.2 above), the core framework in this example could be made up of a range of modules (24 in this instance). Each module could set broader aims, rather than specific objectives that are predetermined (see study two, chapter 6) (e.g., to explore the importance of coach-athlete relationships). Limiting language within objectives

that focuses on ‘must’, ‘should’, ‘can’, ‘demonstrate’ could be replaced with language such as: ‘explore’, ‘discuss’, ‘debate’, and ‘collaborate’ to provide a non-judgement focus on the engagement with topics and cases. This change in language supports a weakly classified and framed curriculum, where content, time, and space can be allocated to support learners to construct knowledge relevant to their context. This consideration stems from the findings in studies two and three (chapters 6 and 7) that saw strongly classified and framed level 1 and level 2 courses (level 1 attempted to weakly frame pedagogic practice by coach developers however). It also coincides with study one (chapter 5) findings that advocated this desired approach to individualise learning for coaches coming on courses. This can be viewed above in the policy evaluative framework (section 8.3 above) more concisely also. Such a process aims to remove the notion of assessment *of* learning, to collaboration *for* learning related to the needs of the coach and their players (more information in assessment section 8.4.6 below).

As for the modules themselves, each could combine access to a number of resources (e.g., internet pages/websites, podcasts, reading materials, etc.), and modes of teaching, (e.g., online learning space, and face-to-face episodes, in-situ visits). For example, in study three (chapter 7), coach developers demonstrated that they did not have time to embed learner experiences into the modules given the high volume of content to be covered as required by policy. Consequently, course designers could design each module structure individually, rather than a one-size-fits-all approach (i.e., each module having the same approach and same weighing of approach). Some modules could be led by practice/practical, where understanding of practice first requires the need for practice to take place. For example, in study two (chapter 6), practical’s were often associated to the classroom outcome that proceeded it (e.g., workshop 5 – motivation). This focus on a specific psychological topic often took away the technical and tactical elements of the game. Here, affording a module

focused on practice design, for example, to bring about a primary focus of in-game principles could support the integration of other disciplinary topics (such as motivation). This would then allow for the technical and tactical elements being the explicit focus on that part of a module, while integrating other considerations. Given the levels outlined here, although learners hold a range of potentially valuable experiences and dispositions, on-field practice is likely to be an area for initial development. Focus therefore may be suited to observing, and critiquing current coaching practice of learners. Supporting methods within a practice orientated module for example could take on a flipped classroom approach when it came to practice (Cronin & Lowes, 2016). Online modules, alongside blogs, articles, or podcasts could be engaged with prior to the more practical elements.

Examples of online module development could follow similar work by Professor Sophia Jowett (Loughborough University, 2021), or the more recent application of Whitehead and Coe's (2021) book turned into an online webinar series. Here, collaboration with academic experts in a number of disciplines could support a relevant evidence-based approach as a supplement to specific modules (e.g., module could focus on coach-athlete relationships). As demonstrated in study two (chapter 6), multidisciplinary content knowledge is required by coaches simultaneously in practice. To expect coach developers to know all of these disciplines is unrealistic and therefore it would be useful to integrate leading academics and practitioners to support such a process. Lyle (2018a) acknowledges this as a need to translate academic research into meaningful application for the practitioner. This was somewhat done by The FA when informing their learning strategy. Study one (chapter 5) revealed their reach into social constructivism, and in study two (chapter 6), where they made explicit reference to some academic theories, models, and processes, as identified in the policy evaluative framework above (section 8.3) (e.g., reflection, they used the work of Donald Schön). Within this framework this could be proposed in an introductory

and condensed space, where modules developed in collaboration with HE institutions could support NGB quality, while also alleviating some of the pressures on both course designers and coach developers having to understand a range of topics and disciplines.

By constructing the modules in such a way may allow learners to form thoughts and choice of what they may want from each module, and what modules they feel would be most useful to them (in a particular moment). This recognises the agency of the learner and a desire to provide autonomy for those coaches wishing to shape their own coaching journey. A future research avenue could explore coaching autonomy/choice within a coach education framework such as this, using a psychological framework such as Deci and Ryan's (1985) self-determination theory for example. It is suggested that each module, upon its completion (i.e., attendance) offers recognition in its own right, by certification (electronic or paper based). This can support the application of 'levels' (as above within a specified framework) by logging the accumulative hours required for assessment, if desired. The nature and design of the selection box framework also supports learner development through experiential learning (Cronin & Lowes, 2016). This framework promotes a more individualised focus on the process of development, at the rate in which coaches deem suitable for themselves. The purpose of the selection box framework, ultimately gives learners a choice. This choice is shaped in part around what is available within the strands of learning (i.e., inter, intra, professional), but also, in what interest(s) the learner has (de Andrade Rodrigues et al., 2021).

8.4.5 Community space

As part of each strand across the two levels of modules, there is the inclusion of a 'community space'. This space acts as an informal component of the selection box framework, where coaches are able to join a community space with other coaches, coach

developers, or mentors (if available through the NGB). This has the potential for coaches to share experiences to support moments of learning, both for themselves, and for others. The allocation of time and space stemmed from the findings in study three (chapter 7), where coaches may have benefitted from having both to discuss and debate topics related to their context. In addition, the findings from study two (chapter 6), where strong classification of content knowledge caused topics to be taught in silo's could be applied in a more integrative fashion in this space. Experiential space could support learning, application, and reflection over one, or a number of modules attended by coaches within a particular strand. This scope provides learners with the opportunity to select and sequence discussions in an informal forum of support. Vinson, Huckle, and Cale (2021) advocated for a community of practice that stretched across differing landscapes. It must be acknowledged here that providing such a space does not necessarily present learners with a community of practice. Although Vinson and colleagues study observed cross-sport interactions, this framework could, for example, adopt a cross-context perspective (e.g., GR, development centres, age ranges being coached, etc.). Here, coaches from different backgrounds and locality could interact with one another, mentors, and coach developers to inform and debate areas within the strand of learning. Walker and colleagues (2018) identified that coaches like to learn from other coaches in a particular space, but also learners learn well independently. This community space could provide opportunity and choice for interaction with others within a broad strand of development (i.e., inter, intra, professional knowledge).

The use of experiential learning (Cronin & Lowes, 2016) offers learners the opportunity to tell their story of a moment. It also provides the space to engage in rich description and consideration to reflect upon in critical coaching moments (Douglas & Careless, 2008). The power of storytelling also provides opportunities to share, not just in what happened, but how a particular moment made the coach, and others feel (Garner & Hill,

2017). This consideration came from theme 3 in study three (section 7.7.5, chapter 7) where coach developers made genuine attempts to weakly frame pedagogic practice. This resulted in coaches on those courses co-creating powerful pedagogic moments that appeared to have a positive impact on the coaches experience on-course. Providing space presents coaches with a perceived shift in power dynamics between themselves and the coach developers who could support such a space. This is likely to offer a more learner-centred approach, where learners lead, and coach developers support those needs (de Andrade Rodrigues et al., 2021; Weimer, 2013). Finally, within the creation of these spaces, other opportunities for continued building of relationships between coaches could also occur. For example, coaches could invite other coaches and coach developers to visit their club(s) and team(s) to observe, and generate further debate and reflection. This emphasises a responsibility on the part of the coach(es) to engage in their own development. Whatever the potential opportunities, a community space within this framework promotes the active learning of coaches over a longer period of time, and away from semi-structured modules. This community space could also serve coaches on numerous occasions, as each interaction could offer another scenario or case to consider, mimicking the complex, and often unpredictable nature of coaching (Jones & Wallace, 2006).

8.4.6 Assessment

Finally, the consideration of assessment within this framework is advocated with a voluntary approach, or choice as to whether coaches want to be assessed or not. This approach is justified within this framework where study three (chapter 7) demonstrated a detailed insight into how assessment tasks often took up time and space on-course. This led to a strongly framed course being delivered. Given the participatory nature of GR coaching, it is common for coaches to attend short courses, or take up other informal means of acquiring pieces of knowledge. Such an approach is often taken due to the limited time available to most

coaches. Therefore, beyond the requirements of attending and completing the three mandatory pillars (as stated in section 8.4.2 above), assessment here has been offered as a choice. The FA designed a similar approach within their previously taught FA Youth Modules 1-3 (e.g., The FA, 2015, for FA Youth Module 1 example only). Coaches had the choice of whether they wanted to be assessed once coaches completed all three modules in order to achieve the 'FA Youth Award'. If not, each course offered its own certification of attendance to coaches. Outcome-led approaches and issues around its approach have already been identified across this thesis. For example, study one (chapter 5) identified the confusion caused by the use of the CCF and its use due to a restricted dissemination code being applied. Regardless of the method to assessment, outcome is often still very much predetermined. Within this approach, assessment is wanting to demonstrate the value of continued collaboration with coaches.

One method for consideration and further exploration in future research may be that of Patton's (2018) principles-focused evaluation to assessment. Patton (2017b) created the acronym GUIDE to illustrate that principles of assessment needed to: 1) offer guidance (G); that they needed to be useful (U); they needed to be inspirational (I); needed to be developmental (D); and finally, they needed to be evaluable (E). Within the context of this thesis and my idea around assessment, principle focused evaluation is targeted in a similar fashion. Here, if we use the example of principles such as safe, fun, and engaging as outlined by The FA (2015), each presents what Patton (2017a) distinguished as overarching principles to shape course assessment (Patton emphasised shaping course creation). Principles provide direction, but not prescription and relate to similar views of assessment detailed by Collins and colleagues (2015) around the notion of competence. Collins and colleagues' (2015) commented that competence resonates more closely with the uncertainty and ambiguity of coaching more generally. Patton's (2018) work has been applied at the policy making level

within the medical field also. Here a principles-focused approach helped shape and form policy and assessment approaches (Turner & Cromhout, 2020).

The FA's (2015) safe, fun, and engaging ingredients into coaching directs three fundamental principles to base coaching practice on more broadly. Here, safe, fun, and engaging could extend to before, during, and after training sessions and games, where actions of the coaches aim to fulfil all three in a participation (i.e., GR) environment on a consistent basis. A principle-focused approach advocated by Patton (2018) therefore, rather than a competency-based approach, may offer a beneficial progression. For example, consideration around questions that support the creation of a case to assess from more broadly could include: 1) What does it mean for your children/players to be safe in your context/environment? And how are you implementing this? 2) Who can offer support to enhance the safety of your players, and how do you engage and communicate with these individuals? 3) What would your players see as a fun session with you? And why? 4) How will you aim to plan and deliver a fun session within your environment?, 5) Picking three players you feel this session could support the most, could you detail how you aim to engage each one of them within your session?, and 6) What strategies have you used in the last 3-4 weeks that have engaged the parents and wider club officials to value how well the players have been doing? The posing of questions could come as part of the co-construction of the evaluative operating principles, under the three broad overarching principles of assessment (e.g., fun, safe, engaging) (Patton, 2017a). These questions could be shaped in turn to the context and environment where the coach operates. By providing space for the coach and coach developer to co-create their assessment, the coach may be more likely to invest time in their approach to it, as it is seen as a more authentic mode aiming to enhance their practice. Harris, Cale, and Hooper (2021) saw similar improvement in physical education settings when a considered change to pedagogical approaches occurred. Also, Weimer (2013)

discussed this aspect as giving back the power to the learners, as they become empowered to be part of the assessment process, rather than being recipients of it. We can see the lack of this power within study three (chapter 7) more specifically, where delivery of content and completion of assessment tasks took precedence over process of coaching. It must be acknowledged however that limited research exists within the sport coaching literature around the use of principles-focused evaluation. Therefore, future research may wish to explore such an avenue.

In summary, the ‘selection-box’ framework of formal coach education presents an original and significant contribution to a more authentic learner-centred approach to coach development. The framework is also empirically based on the findings within this thesis and offers future research and professional avenues for its consideration and development. Despite the inclusion of levels within itself, the condition of assessment being a voluntary endeavour could allow learners to move both horizontally and vertically through the modules and community spaces to help promote a wider coach development journey, rather than a formal coach education pathway in isolation. The merging of modular episodes, combined with opportunities of community collaboration and support of coach developers also presents a more interdisciplinary and messy process related to the practice of coaching (Jones and Wallace, 2006).

8.5 Concluding thoughts

Formal coach education is part of a wider system of influence on coach development more broadly (Culver et al., 2019). Those who can influence the coach education system however must contend with the continual negotiation and compromise of policy creation and development in order to fulfil multiple outcomes simultaneously. In practice, this leads to

how coaching courses are delivered and how coaching is subsequently perceived and understood by the learners on-course. This chapter has offered the theoretical contributions of Basil Bernstein as well as two practical outputs that could be considered for future exploration in both academia and in practice. These outputs have been developed from the findings across the three studies of my research (chapters 5-7) that have built upon past literature. Below offers a concluding summary of these findings and considerations.

Across this thesis, Bernstein has added value through his development of the pedagogic device. The pedagogic device (Bernstein, 2000) has illuminated a system of powerful individuals across different phases of the policy making process at The FA. The heavily negotiated process of The FA 2016-2020 policy for coach education resulted in components being created (i.e., pedagogy shaped around constructivist principles, content, coach competency assessment process). These components caused some confusion (e.g., assessment process from study one, chapter 5). These findings from study one initially demonstrated the contribution of Bernsteinian concepts to support the examination of coach education systems more broadly. In addition, Bernstein's classification concept, which was built into his pedagogic device over time also highlighted the structure of curriculum during creation and development of the courses themselves. Classification also supported the examination of *what* knowledge was included and subsequently excluded on The FA level 2 course. Finally, on-course observations turned to utilising Bernstein's framing concept as a basis for viewing policy in practice (study three, chapter 7). Previous research over the past two decades especially, has tended to focus on what coaches should know, to improve coaching practice (Abraham et al., 2006; Côté & Gilbert, 2009; Gilbert & Côté, 2013). However, having conducted studies one and two (chapters 5 and 6) using Bernsteinian concepts informed the process of observation more critically to wider policy processes. It allowed for framing to interpret the reproduction in a novel way.

From the findings of my research, two practical outputs have also been offered. Firstly, the creation of my ‘coach education policy evaluative framework’ has been presented above (section 8.3). My rationale for developing this framework stems from the findings of my three studies, as well as the appreciation of the contested and complex space of policy creation and development. Having been exposed to this FA policy first hand as a coach developer and coach mentor, I felt the disconnect of policy elements, namely constructivist informed pedagogy and assessment processes. My initial naivety towards wider policy led to the three studies in this thesis and has resulted in offering a retrospective analytical tool. Its value lies in the interactive design of ‘check and challenge’ around intentions and influencers/influences all within a single document. Its scope to include evidence, personnel, processes, outcomes, and viewing areas of compromise and challenge offers a useful framework to build future coach education provisions from.

Finally, and with future coach education policy in mind, I have presented a ‘selection-box’ coach education framework (section 8.4 above). This advocates a process-led approach, in comparison to a content or outcome-led approach that has existed within the negotiated FA 2016-2020 policy. The above considerations of a selection-box coach education framework invites initial stimulus for future discussions of the development in a contextually relevant space of GR (i.e., participation domain) coaches. The intentions of the selection-box is to afford choice. Choice of topics, choice of time, and of assessment. The selection-box aims to move away from a linear process of coaching accreditation to a more individualised process of coach education and learning. This framework serves as a novel but unfinished contribution, offering support for future coach education provisions across NGBs. This contribution has been possible through extensive research, analysis and dialogue with my supervisory team on a passion of mine to help support coaches in the GR game of football in England.

Chapter IX

Conclusion

9.1 Introduction

My thesis has critically explored the creation, dissemination and implementation of a formal coach education policy within the specific case of The English Football Association. This match funded project enabled me, as the researcher, to examine the processes of policy creation, policy development, dissemination of policy, and the reproduction of policy across two football coaching courses (i.e., level 1 and level 2). Despite a push of scholarly activity towards formal coach education promoting constructivist principles to curriculum design (Hussain et al., 2014; Paquette & Trudel, 2018ab) and accounts of coaches' experiences on course (Piggott, 2012; Stodter & Cushion, 2014), there still appeared a significant gap in the wider literature. Specifically, prior to the thesis, our understanding of wider policy making influence in coach education was limited (Culver et al., 2019; Stodter & Cushion, 2014). Consequently, my thesis viewed coach education beyond a singular course, and instead as part of a wider system of policy creation and development processes. The overarching aim of my research was to critically explore the creation, dissemination and implementation of The FA's 2016-2020 formal coach education policy. In order to examine this, the research focused on four questions:

- 1) What was created by The FA as part of its 2016-2020 coach education policy?
- 2) How was current policy disseminated and perceived across the organisation (e.g., from strategic apex (policy maker) to delivery (coach developer))?

3) What disciplinary content knowledge was utilised to inform curriculum content of the formal coach education courses, and how were they structured?

4) How the 2016-2020 formal coach education policy, that promoted learner-centred provision, was reproduced by coach developers in practice?

In reference to those questions, it is important to acknowledge that recent literature (e.g., Culver et al., 2019; Griffiths, Armour, & Cushion, 2018; Piggott, 2015; Williams & Bush, 2019) has offered insight into the complex and negotiated nature of developing coach education provisions. However, my thesis extends this work by offering a thorough examination of the processes involved in policy making and dissemination within The FA. Significantly, my thesis helps provide a broader view of the formal coach education landscape. It does so by illuminating the macro (e.g., government, NGB policy makers), meso (e.g., awarding bodies such as 1st4Sport, NGB departments), and micro (e.g., people and departments within The FA) factors influencing policy making, dissemination, and reproduction. In addition, the integration of a theoretical framework established by Basil Bernstein has also provided a novel contribution in this area of study. Bernstein's work (e.g., pedagogic device) had been partially introduced into the coaching and coach education literature (Griffiths, Cushion, & Armour, 2018; Williams & Bush, 2019). I have further introduced and utilised other Bernsteinian concepts such as classification (chapter 3, section 3.5 and chapter 6), and framing (chapter 3, section 3.6 and chapter 7) into this thesis. Bernstein's sociological perspective not only helped identify procedural understanding (i.e., how policies were created), but also presented a rationale for why such actions occur. To further explain this, my final chapter will: 1) summarise my thesis' contribution to knowledge within the area of formal coach education policy and offer considered implications, 2) offer

limitations of my research so that others may move beyond the current work produced, and 3) offer future academic considerations to extend research within formal coach education policy beyond this thesis. I will then finish with a few concluding reflections and remarks.

9.2 Contribution to knowledge and implications moving forward

My thesis makes a significant contribution to the formal coach education landscape by broadening our understanding of the influences and processes impacting coach education policy. A summary of the theoretical contributions and implications of Basil Bernstein have been offered in chapter 8 (8.2). Although more recent research has alluded to stakeholder influence within the social construction of courses (North, 2019; Griffiths, Armour, & Cushion, 2018), an existing gap in the literature required a systematic understanding of the processes that occurred when developing formal coach education policy. From the three studies in my thesis, key findings can be summarised as:

- A range of stakeholders (both internal and external) influence a complex, heavily negotiated, and socially constructed process of policy making and dissemination within The FA (Study one).
- A restricted dissemination process (e.g., via a restricted language code, Bernstein, 1971) caused some confusion around the core elements of policy (i.e., pedagogy, content, and assessment). This impacted upon the coherency of messages that were desirable from central FA and its consistency to approaches adopted on-course by coach developers (Study one linked to study three).

- Content developed as part of The FA formal coach education course was partially informed by research. For example, sport psychology and physiology were most prevalent. There was however a lack of evidence-based research from other disciplines, such as sociology and philosophy, as well as football specific technical and tactical content (Study two).
- Within the curriculum design, disciplines often did not link and instead offered insulated and siloed episodes of specific disciplinary content (i.e., psychology) on-course (i.e., level 2) (Study two).
- Despite The FA advocating for a pedagogical approach informed by social constructivist principles in policy text, coach developers struggled to reproduce this in-practice. This was due to the high volume and wide range of predetermined assessment and content created as part of the course (i.e., level 1) (Study three).

Given the above findings presented, my thesis brings a significant contribution and originality to the academic field of coach education through:

- Describing the processes of a policy system within The FA, as outlined by Culver and colleagues (2019). These processes show different stages of the policy making process, from intentions and purposes, to the different people at different levels impacting upon them.
- Identifying and detailing the social construction of this policy. My work has been able to make explicit the actions of different people with different roles who

influence and cascade policy. Both these points are significant as it has made explicit the system processes at work within a large NGB.

- Illuminating the need to consider ‘what’ content knowledge participants learn. More recent focus has targeted ‘how’ participants should aim to learn (i.e., using social constructivist principles, Paquette & Trudel, 2018ab). However, there is now a case for more attention to be paid to the different disciplines and topics prevalent in future coach education development. Here, significance lies in meeting future needs of coaches within GR football.
- Presenting the case of ‘curriculum modelling’ into coach education more explicitly, utilising the work of Preistley and Humes (2010). The recognition that any curriculum design encompasses a pedagogical process, content, and assessment parameters is not new. However, my research has identified the perception of a process-led curriculum often espoused was not achieved in The FA 2016-2020 policy. Researcher’s and NGBs may want to explore designing of curriculum and negotiation with stakeholders to create a more process-led curriculum in the future (as offered in chapter 8, section 8.2.1).
- As recognition of a negotiated policy more broadly, and the role course designers play in selecting an appropriate curriculum model to support the coach education design, the role of the coach developer must also be reconsidered. Here, previous criticism aimed at coach developers (i.e., Stodter & Cushion, 2014) is acknowledged, but my work now illuminates that coach developers are recipients of policy cascaded down.

From the contributions presented above, I also offer two original frameworks to formal coach education more practically through:

- A ‘coach education policy evaluative framework’ to support policy review (chapter 8, 8.3). This is offered to support policy makers and course designers with the retrospective reflections of previous policies to help inform future course design.
- A ‘coach education selection-box framework’ (chapter 8, 8.4) to support future coach education curriculum design. Here, a framework is put forward advocating a process-led approach.

My findings bring to the forefront 1) the processes of a wider system at play, 2) detailing how personnel work within a system, from creation through to reproduction, 3) the consideration of ‘what’ content knowledge goes into a curriculum, 4) wider consideration of relevant and applicable curriculum models to build formal coach education on, and 5) empathy towards the role of coach developers in the current coach education landscape. The findings therefore reposition coach education to appreciate and further investigate a wider system that needs exploring. Moving forward, no policy should be viewed within the confines of the singular pedagogical approach taken on-course (e.g., evaluation of a course adopting constructivist principles) (Stodter & Cushion, 2014). This is because the creation of policies have political, economic, cultural, and societal influences impacting on them (i.e., DCMS, 2015; Griffiths et al., 2018; Piggott, 2015). These recognitions can aid in future development and are therefore useful to policy makers and course designers when building

and debating coach education policy. These findings also offer academia a broader picture of the complexity of developing such policies. By broadening our horizon of policy making, we as academics may be able to offer support and guidance, having gained a more complete picture of the policy landscape (if not ever fully complete). By finding a balance between academia and the day-to-day processes of NGBs during policy development, this research presents the need for an evidence-based approach that support objectives across multiple stakeholders.

Finally, given my contribution to the field of coach education, the work of Basil Bernstein has also offered an original and significant contribution to the academic field from a theoretical perspective by:

- Offering a symbolic framework to analyse macro-to-micro processes of policy development. These include: the pedagogic device, language codes, classification, and framing (Bernstein, 2000). Each concept, despite being partially introduced to coach education previously (e.g., Griffiths et al., 2018; Williams & Bush, 2019), has been offered in extensive detail throughout my thesis (e.g., chapter 3) and the three individual studies (chapters 5-7).
- Allowing me, through the work of Bernstein, to shine a light on ‘who controls what’ at different stages of the policy making process. Bernstein’s pedagogic device, and his distributive and recontextualisation rules in particular, offer significant insight into the multiple discourses disseminated through the hierarchical chain. This influence also illuminates the power influential stakeholders exert both vertically and horizontally (e.g., more qualified coaches, Chairman’s commission report, October, 2014).

- Consequently, the above points offer an explanation as to why policy may not be reproduced in-practice. Bernstein illuminates the policy-to-practice gap in a large system of influence and provides us with a more empathetic view towards NGBs. This is because Bernstein illustrates, in a structuralist manner, how symbolic control, from those creating and developing policy may differ from those reproducing it on the ground.

Bernsteinian theory has offered my thesis, and coach education more broadly, a new sociological lens to view wider coach education policy development. This is significant because it moves the field forward by shining a light on the need to understand, from a wider system perspective, the objectives and processes of those who have the potential to affect policy. In relation to the rules making up Bernstein's (2000) pedagogic device, Bernstein comments, "the rules are not codes but the sources for codes, differently resourced by different groups realising different distributions of power and principles of control" (p. 202-203). In the context of my work, each stakeholder within a policy is vying for some degree of control, through their positioning and resources available to offer, with the best of intentions, support for coach development. However, given the hierarchical chain, inclusive of personnel at each stage, messages can become lost or reframed. Ultimately, a fundamental flaw in practice is creating policy that policy makers believe will or has been cascaded but lack any strategic intent to ensure collective understanding. The appropriateness of Bernstein's work has illuminated this messaging system. At its heart, Bernstein (2000) conveys this via discourse that generates and governs ways of thinking. What Bernstein offers in this case is a recognition of the disparity often associated to: 1) the desires of what those in positions of power want, 2) those designing channels for such discourse, and 3) those receiving it. Recognising these structures offers researchers the opportunity to use Bernsteinian concepts

to analyse policy development in a more systematic way. It also presents the needs to develop greater understanding of the macro processes that ultimately govern key aspects of coaching policy.

Given these original contributions of Bernstein in coach education, there must also be a recognition of what coach education has offered when considering Bernsteinian theory. Firstly, by using Bernsteinian concepts within my work, I have had to modernise concepts (e.g., classification, framing) into coach education. This has required simplifying, without losing the appreciated complexity, of what Bernstein wrote. Decongesting, at times, some of the overly complex writings of Bernstein (a limitation identified in chapter 3, section 3.8) presents others with more appetite of his ideas and potential use in future coach education work. It must also be acknowledged that Bernstein wrote a lot of his work in relation to mainstream education policy and practice. Although education and sport align in many aspects (i.e., learning, curriculum design, assessments, etc.), there are nuances when it comes to influence. Bernstein wrote about the mainstream education sector, that has key stakeholders throughout. However, sport, and NGBs must deal with different types of stakeholders (e.g., governmental, commercial, charitable, leagues, clubs, etc.). These each bring out different intentions to consider when building policy. Within this, there must also be an appreciation for the different position coaches are in compared to teachers. Teachers, often full-time, teach to a national curriculum within more specific subject areas. Whereas coaches, who can be full-time, part-time, or volunteers, navigate different spaces across formal, informal and non-formal learning spaces, as well as the nuance of their own coaching environments. Consequently, consideration of more influences not considered by Bernstein (given scope of his writing in education) is needed in this context. Therefore, appreciation that Bernsteinian theory, although hugely significant, must be considered in the modernised

form of what coach education currently is, and what future trends may come (e.g., further integration of technology, volunteerism, post Covid-19, etc.).

9.3 Limitations

Despite the significant and novel contributions offered within this thesis, it is not without its limitations. Some of these limitations have already been identified and discussed. Namely, theoretical criticisms and considerations of Bernstein, which are located in chapter 3 (section 3.8) have been covered. Therefore, this section will briefly detail considerations not focused on as part of this research that must be considered as part of a wider coach education system.

Firstly, the research undertook a more generic view of formal coach education from the perspective of learners, as they were not fundamentally the main focus of my research. I did however include a learner perspective in study three (chapter 7) centred around their experiences of the level 1 course. This offered a partial insight that moved beyond the framing of the course. This presented some insight into the well-intentioned work undertaken by the coach developers, and of the course itself. However, it must be acknowledged that this does not offer sufficient data of learner experiences on-course more generally. This was intentional, as previous literature had alluded to the experiences of learners on-course (e.g., Nash & Sproule, 2012; Piggott, 2012). Consequently, we knew little about the processes taking place in the creation and development of policy in formal coach education. Therefore, I chose to concentrate on The FA policy more broadly, including the overview of the curriculum and pedagogy. As a result, this allowed for the examination of policy considerations within The FA that were undertaken within my thesis. This is not to say that learner insight would not have been valuable. Despite some of the critical findings across my

thesis, this does not mean that learners on-course had a good or bad experience. Therefore, I make no claim as to how learners perceived their courses throughout my work.

Secondly, my research makes no claim to offering the contributions to a specific population, such as female coaches or coaches from minority ethnic backgrounds. Although there were female and people from minority ethnic backgrounds included across the three studies (i.e., course designers, coach developers, and learners), this by no means offers a true representation of their stance or perceptions of the policy. More broadly, there has been a disconnect between societal and cultural differences in coach education that has impacted coach learning negatively across different populations (Gearity et al., 2019; Lewis, Roberts, & Andrews, 2018). Norman (2008), for example, alluded to the bottleneck effect in a culture that left female coaches short of opportunity and progression. Unfortunately, Norman and Simpson (2022) highlighted similar findings 14 years on, where organisational culture contributed to the discriminatory actions towards high performance female coaches. Within my thesis there was the recognition of power that influences policy making processes. However, this referred to the policy actions on curriculum more broadly, and not towards specific populations. Newman and colleague's (2022) call for future research to be aware of contemporary societal issues in coach education and development serve to offer equity and equality for all. Therefore, an appreciation and commitment to any future research in policy development must offer an emancipatory and inclusive process across wider coach education provisions (Callary & Gearity, 2019; Vinson et al., 2016). We as researchers must also be critically reflective of our own positions as we research, and critically question policy processes to include equity, inclusion and diversity (Newman et al., 2022).

Finally, there were a number of elements that caused areas of frustration and restriction that may be common in the dynamic workplace of NGBs such as The FA. There was a constant need to (re)check availability and access to personnel. This occurred prior to

the PhD starting as The FA went through an organisational restructure in 2015. It also saw key personnel leave during the PhD funded time (between 2017-2020) who were involved in the initial policy making and dissemination process. This made it difficult to access all personnel concerned, with some perspectives not being gained. There was also limited access to other personnel given their status and time (e.g., Chairman, Technical Director, Head of Education, etc.). This is to be expected when collaborating in academic research with a large NGB such as The FA. With the consideration of time in mind, time also posed a challenge when related to both the number of courses I could realistically attend and also due to logistical planning by county (i.e., regional) FA's. For example, some course dates were replicated (evenings and specific weekends) for the same courses in different parts of the country during the 2018-19 season. This affected my attendance on allocated courses (as seen in study two, chapter 6).

Given the limitations identified, it is important for me as the researcher to acknowledge these. I intentionally offered a different perspective of formal coach education courses that had come before (i.e., policy perspective rather than learner perceptions). Therefore, I do not wish the reader to draw conclusions on learner experience or learning. The reader is also encouraged to consider that despite the contribution of my work stated in the section above, it does not generalise towards female and people from minority ethnic backgrounds. This requires the reader to critically consider how my findings fit (or not) within those populations also.

9.4 Future research agendas and recommendations

This section now provides considerations for future research that could be undertaken. Six fundamental paths are offered from the findings of my research, which include: 1) more

critical research aimed at macro policies (e.g., UKCC, CIMSPA, Sport England, DCMS) that impact meso and micro processes of curriculum design and dissemination, 2) a (re)examination of coaching needs in GR football, 3) an action-research approach to coach education and the ‘policy evaluative’ and ‘selection-box’ frameworks, 4) a further exploration of the role of assessment in formal coach education, 5) an examination of the use of technology in coach education, and 6) more collaborative research involving different disciplinary experts. Each of the sections below offer a concise overview to consider moving forwards.

These areas could be significant in both research and in practice because they could help recommend and extend:

- The need for NGBs and policy makers to examine future influences impacting upon their own provisions (linked to 9.4.1 below).
- The need for course designers to have an updated perception of the coaching landscape, from the coaches, including the coaches needs within GR football in England, to help design suitable coach education provisions (linked to 9.4.2 below).
- NGBs considering other curriculum models (e.g., process-led model) to help develop their coach education provisions in collaboration with HE institutions through collaborative action research. More specifically, and in the case of my research, utilising the policy evaluative and selection box frameworks may offer a new perspective (linked to 9.4.3 below).
- The use and usefulness of assessment in formal coach education, within the context of GR football in England. Given the recommendation above (9.4.3), there may be a need for course designers and coach developers alike to help

create collaborative and authentic assessment linked to the context in which a coach resides (linked to 9.4.4 below).

- The integration of technology into formal coach education provisions, and its subsequent impact on coach learning (linked to 9.4.5 below).
- The collaborative processes among academics from different disciplines to offer a more integrated perspective of coaching and coach development (linked to 9.4.6 below).

Each of the above recommendations is now offered below in more detail for future consideration:

9.4.1 Critical research at the macro policy level

This thesis has illuminated the breadth and influence that macro stakeholders (e.g., DCMS) have on policies at meso level organisations such as The FA. For example, 1st4Sport were the awarding body of both The FA level 1 and level 2 and subsequently had an impact on the perceived outcomes required on the courses. Duffy and colleagues (2011) set out with the intention of showing coaching as having potential to be professionalised. However, a more recent review by North et al. (2018) alluded to the influence and subsequent criticisms of the UKCC framework, which 1st4Sport advocated, as being too controlling and of operationalising an approach of ‘managerialist tendencies’ (p. 7). If NGBs and other education institutions want to design courses more centred around a process approach (i.e., Paquette & Trudel, 2018b), then focusing on outcome simply is not suitable at this stage. My thesis somewhat supports North and colleague’s argument and thus illustrating how macro policy can influence coach education. Another example of macro policy influencing coach education was the need to have ‘more’ coaches (The FA, 2015ab). This ambition for a greater

quantity of coaches at the upper echelons of policy making subsequently created a discourse that then drove meso development of curriculum focused around outcome (i.e., more qualified coaches). Taylor and Garratt (2010) allude to the drive of ‘professionalisation’ across wider policy development and enactment to demonstrate increase in numbers (i.e., quantifiable data). Therefore, there needs to be a (re)focus of who and how these initial policies are produced, understanding fundamental rationales, and the influence these are likely to have as they are cascaded down. A starting point for this could be a re-evaluation of the UK Coaching Framework that aspired to create: 1) a cohesive, ethical, inclusive and valued coaching system, 2) develop skilled coaches to support children, players and athletes at all stages of their development in sport, and 3) have a system that was regarded as number one in the world (Sports Coach UK, 2008).

More recently, CIMSPA has evolved as a body that offers a new line of accreditation within the UK context. CIMSPA define their mission as “*Our purpose is to shape a respected, regulated and recognised sector that everyone wants to be a part of, and that others are confident interacting with. We work with stakeholders across and beyond the sector to achieve this*” (CIMSPA, 2022). However, Aldous and Brown (2021) question whether CIMSPA are moving away from a market-orientated approach to creating a ‘regulated sector’. For example, CIMSPA offer a ‘chartered status’ applicable within different routes that ‘costs’ money in order to be seen as ‘professional’ in their view. Therefore, future research may want to explore whether there is simply a rebranding of a process that has been seen before, that drives similar outcome-led managerialist processes? Or, is there a genuine shift in the landscape of what it means to be ‘professional’ within a given context (i.e., GR football) that support relevant, individualised development? These macro influences such as funding streamlined from the DCMS and Sport England ultimately

drive policies developed further down the hierarchical chain in a range of contexts (e.g., sport coaching, education, etc.) and are therefore worthy of further examination.

9.4.2. A (re)examination of coaching needs – domain particularity

Utilising the extensive work of Professor John Lyle and his (and other colleagues) work around ‘coaching domains’, as well as the consideration of coaching as ‘orchestration’ (Jones & Wallace, 2006) provides an avenue for future (re)examination of coaching needs. Lyle and Cushion (2010, p.244) commented that ‘any attempt to focus on the generic nature of coaching process masks the very distinctive and different forms of coaching throughout sport’. Such a statement elucidates the need to focus learning to enhance the coaching process within the contextually relevant and nuanced environment that a coach inhabits (Jones & Wallace, 2006; Lyle and Cushion, 2010). Nelson, Cushion, and Potrac (2013) examined, using both questionnaires and interviews the desires to inform coach education in a range of sports. More recently, North and colleagues (2020) conducted similar research (i.e., survey) highlighting the issues/problems coaches feel they face in coaching in the UK. Responses were collected from over a thousand coaches across 47 different sports. Given the wide range of coaching levels (i.e., levels 1-4), as well as different sports (e.g., football, tennis, rugby union, canoeing, etc.), consideration of domain specific needs related to different sports, demographics (urban vs. rural) and contexts (male, female, disability football for example) is now desirable, and also needs to be explored further.

In the specific case of my thesis, future work may want to examine the needs of GR coaches in football in the England. Throughout the 2016-2020 policy The FA went some way to individualise learning (i.e., via in-situ support visits, and learner led projects, although these were still shaped around the DNA principles), more needs to be done. Lyle

(2018b) focused on the desire for ‘particularity’ which I perceived here as needing to delve beyond the initial ‘domain’ specificity and break down further contexts, purposes, and environments. Jones and Wallace (2005) identified these ambiguities within specific contexts, where coaches require learning to tackle specific ambiguities occurring within their roles. More recently Corsby, Jones and Lane (2022) examine the perceived uncertainties from a range of coaches, each operating within different contexts, environments and constraints. Without the explicit contextualisation of domain, and more particularistic appreciation of contexts and purposes driving future policy, we could be stuck in a reoccurring theme of misconception of what coaching looks like in different contexts and with different groups (e.g., female, minority ethnic groups, disability, etc.). At present, The FA continue to advocate for coaches to ‘unite the game’, which coincides with Sport England’s (2021) ‘Uniting the movement’ policy. The active focus of enhancing equality, fairness, inclusion, and diversity in their ‘Time for Change’. However, The FA 2021-2024 (The FA, 2022) strategy is still shaped around the principles of the national teams (youth, men, women). (Re)examining the needs of coaches in a more particularistic manner may well support change and evaluation of more domain specific coach education pathways.

9.4.3. Action-research for the policy evaluative and selection-box frameworks

Future research may also want to consider the examination of different curriculum models (e.g., outcome, content, process, Prestley & Humes, 2010). To date there has been limited explicit consideration of curriculum models in coach education. Exploring the perceived/actual explicitness of curriculum models to courses could allow future research to present ideas and/or solutions when designing future courses. For example, within my thesis, utilising the policy evaluative framework (as seen in chapter 8, section 8.3) could help identify the specific strengths of policy and key areas for development. This may include

reviewing *what* intentions drove policy from its inception (linked to suggestion 8.4.1 above). Using the policy evaluative framework could help locate the explicitness (or lack) of intentions towards a particular curriculum model, as well as subsequent objectives, contestations, and debates. Such evaluation is a good basis for both horizontal and vertical dialogue that could help form a greater level of consistency and coherence from the start in order to manage a more effective dissemination of policy processes (Sullanmaa et al., 2019). In addition, future research could also be to develop a ‘selection-box’ framework (as seen in chapter 8, section 8.4) as another option of coach education towards a process-led curriculum model. This route is required in order to support the continued effort to drive relevant and useful development, as well as offer a more evidence-informed and robust framework.

Both approaches could benefit from future research being undertaken in collaboration with NGBs. This would require an action research proposal. Williams and Bush (2019) demonstrated the usefulness of collaborative action-research (CAR) when informing a CPD programme in a local rugby club. Their use of Bernsteinian concepts (e.g., pedagogic device in the main) also demonstrated theoretical transfer of theory into practice. Future research in the context of my own work could see different collaborative engagements with stakeholders at the policy making and course design levels in this first instance. CAR could support those ‘at the table’ through offering informed ideas (e.g., evaluative framework and selection-box framework) around supporting the evaluation of policy through more dialogical and reflexive processes (Cope et al., 2021). It could also offer unique insight into the complexity and challenges faced by those stakeholders’ creating policy. Secondly, CAR could be used to design, deliver and evaluate curriculum design of future formal coach education courses. Both levels of potential research could also be theoretically informed by the work of Bernstein. For example, the use of his pedagogic device (Bernstein, 2000) (chapter 8, section 8.3) underpins consideration of the evaluative framework created. While the selection-box

framework could make use of both framing (Bernstein, 1975) and classification (Bernstein, 1975) when designing, delivering and reflexively adapting curriculum design.

9.4.4. The role of assessment in formal coach education

Assessment had not been examined within the coach education policy across my thesis.

Despite advocating a curriculum design incorporating pedagogy, content, and assessment, my research focused predominantly on the first two. It must be recognised that study one (chapter 5) highlighted and somewhat questioned the use of a coach competency framework (CCF) as designed by The FA as part of their assessment strategy. However, given the process of how the CCF was used, which was a focus primarily on The FA level 2, my decision was to focus on the content of that course instead of assessment. Consequently, I do not aim to offer a full and accurate account of The FA assessment process. Recent work by McCarthy, Vangrunerbeek, and Piggott (2021) have introduced this area as a key focus of future inquiry. This has built upon the desire for assessment to be built as part of the learning process more explicitly, as opposed to assessment of the learning taken place (McCarthy, Allanson, Stoszkowski, 2021; Paquette and Trudel, 2018ab). This drive towards exploring more authentic and collaborative assessment processes, which could be seen as a valuable and progressive route, therefore requires continued inquiry to improve the wider coach education system.

9.4.5. An examination of the use of technology in coach education

The use of technology continues to be a prevalent endeavour for many institutions aiming to support coaches in a range of settings (e.g., Oakley & Twitchen, 2018; Stoszkowski, Collins & Olsson, 2017; The FA, 2022b). However, the examination of the use of technology and its

impact on learning is still unclear (Cushion & Townsend, 2019). In the context of my research within The FA, the use of technology continues to grow. For example, the new FA Introduction to Coaching Football (The FA, 2022b) is currently delivered entirely online, offering live sessions and resources (e.g., video links, documentation, session plan ideas, etc.). Its influence on coach learning and development more broadly offers an initial examination option. Also, future research may also need to move beyond whether technology is useful or not in-practice. Staying within the frame of my own research, there is a need to examine the perceived intention of the use of technology from the perspective of different stakeholders when creating coach education policy. Therefore, there is a need to continue to investigate the use of technology, its perceived intentions from those stakeholders pushing for it, and its purpose in terms of whether it acts as a complementary mechanism to support course design and subsequent pedagogical processes, or incorporated to simply ‘move things’ online.

9.4.6. Collaborative multidisciplinary research

Finally, to support the retrospective evaluation of previous coach education policies (i.e., using policy evaluative framework) and progressive development of future coach education frameworks (e.g., selection-box framework), there appears a need for greater collaboration among academics from different disciplines. Lara-Bercial et al. (2022) commented on the need for greater authentic collaborations in their most recent ICCE position statement. This was offered to drive evidence-based progression of coaching. Across my thesis there has been a recognition of multiple influencers (e.g., policy makers, course designers, coach developers, etc.), all whom have different backgrounds, objectives and processes. Study two (chapter 6) also highlighted the various disciplines included (in differing capacities of inclusion) within coach education curriculum (e.g., psychology, physiology, pedagogy, etc.). Consequently,

research informed by academics from a specific discipline(s) (e.g., sociological or psychological perspective) will always be partial, or worse, assuming thoughts on different perspectives. Therefore, future research may wish to extend examination higher up the hierarchical chain to more macro and meso factors influencing coach education policy development. A research question such as: What are the financial considerations of nationwide coach education curriculum design? and how finance opens/constrains such design(s)? affords multiple perspectives. Here, finance and business research could offer useful insight into the possibilities and restrictions imposed on coach education.

Educationally orientated research could support the interaction with curriculum design more broadly. Future research could extend to integrate multiple perspectives, across multiple tiers of policy development, dissemination and reproduction. Such a case is not put forward as a quick fix, but instead makes explicit a need to move beyond findings of this research. As a result, future research may want to focus on the wider system of collaboration and influence needed to drive formal coach education and development forward.

9.5 A final set of reflections from my research journey – where I am now

Returning to some of my own reflections, which were initially offered in chapter 4 (section 4.3.1). I now write these words in a far more appreciative manner for where I now am, as a researcher, as a practitioner, and as a person. Casting back to some original reflections, I alluded to my initial struggles regarding who I was interacting with during data collection in study one (chapter 5). For example, the research illuminated the discrepancy between the coach competency framework and its purpose in the findings (section 5.6). Some individuals (e.g., CCDs) did not know some of its other perceived intentions (e.g., to shape content on-course, to use with learners as an informative development tool). Lahman et al. (2011) commented that a responsive researcher must be attuned to the sensitive nature of the cultural

space. This, I will be honest and say, I struggled with at times. Call it passion or naivety, but there were moments of a ‘bull in a china shop’, and when I reflect back now, I felt I could ask whatever I wanted. This certainly came from my biography (chapter 4, section 4.3), which made me headstrong and overly blunt at times. I can be perceived as rude or inconsiderate. I hope, over time, that perception has changed internally and externally.

A lot of my struggles also came because I was still so invested from a coach developer/coach mentor ‘practitioner’ perspective. I was ingrained in the practice element of also being a coach, which often meant that the conceptual focus was lost in the beginning. This occurred due to struggles to be reflexive in my role as a researcher and the impact my other roles had on my thinking and interpretation. This often resulted in naïve thoughts, comments and discussions on my part with my supervisors. For example, I would be frustrated and think, ‘why can’t everyone just get in the same room and make sure this course aligns?’ I could not see the bigger picture of how a wider coach education system could have a broader societal impact (exercise, social inclusion, developing communities, etc.). This often came out in discussions with Dr Colum Cronin on course creation, the purpose of courses, and how I banged on about technical and tactical detail! From this, the journey towards acknowledging and managing my positionality really began. I will be honest again and say upon writing this section now, at times, I still struggle. The struggle is more emotional than anything else; it often came, and still comes from frustration of not being able to support or help coach education the way I thought I could. It might be another naïve thought, or the idealism of thinking I can change the world with one thesis. Or that my studies would be taken and used far more explicitly by The FA to progress their formal coach education provision. What I now recognise however, is that by doing good research, and supporting people, departments and organisations that want help, I can at least play a very small part to try and impact positive change if I am asked.

Given my developing stance above, and based on the research I have undertaken, and the knowledge I have come to possess, I decided in February 2021 to hand in all my remaining coach developer licences (after already handing in my UEFA B coach education licence in August 2020) and notify The FA that I no longer wished to be considered for a coach developer role in the near future. This decision came primarily from my recognition that many wider social, political and economic factors influence coach education, far beyond the influence of a single coach developer or researcher. Again, from a biographical perspective, maybe it is me wanting to be heard more than I deserve. Given some frustrations (whether warranted or not) and my pursuit of wanting to engage in more academic work, my own self-care and emotional state resulted in moving forward in a new direction to (I hope) support coaches in other ways in the future. Despite the frustrations, I can say that I am far more accommodating and accepting of people's views and opinions, both academically, and across the football industry.

With regards to my development across my thesis as a researcher, what can be said with a high degree of confidence is that the findings from my thesis are my own interpretations of the data collected, analysed and presented across the three studies (chapter 5-7). I also now feel confident in not having to apologise for that statement; and developing academic processes, such as using TA, as an example, was instrumental in this. Expanding on this, I hope, and to some degree want, for my interpretations to be challenged and my TA process scrutinised. I believe this can help me continue to form a positive academic identity. This is because I believe that my methodological choices and the development of my process of using TA throughout my research is justified and articulated against wider theoretical foundations (Trainor & Bundon, 2020). When aiming to complement and appreciate the messiness of TA for example, while aligning a collective case study approach with multiple methods, all feels like a justifiable approach to have utilised. My methodological approach is

also coherent with the paradigmatic stance taken within this research (Braun & Clarke, 2021; Trainor & Bundon, 2020). For example, the subjective and iterative process coincided with the qualitative methodology (section 4.5) undertaken throughout. This allowed for a flexible interpretative approach for meaning and sense-making of the data collected, analysed, and interpreted. It therefore aligned with the epistemological position of subjectivism, and ontological relativism (section 4.4). For example, the subjectivist view was pertinent across my own interpretations, the interpretations of my supervisory team, my collaborators outside of the team, and the participants themselves. Also, the relativist stance appreciated the subjective and temporal nature of the research at that time. Therefore, my own positionality, along with reading, experiencing, discussing, and *doing* data collection and analysis, offered a rigorous process (linked to section 4.9). This, I can say would not have been possible to do, let alone articulate in the first 12-18 months of my research, and for that I am incredibly appreciative of the opportunity to undertake this research project.

Finally, I have had time to reflect on the approach taken when writing my thesis, and how I chose to structure it. For example, the inclusion of three separate and structured studies. As part of this structure, I submitted all three studies for review in well-respected journals (e.g., *Sport, Education and Society* & *Sports Coaching Review*), with all three being successfully published. There were a number of reasons for this. Firstly, being able to write very specific studies provided me with the structure I needed to form clear and coherent arguments to help offer a new lens and further consideration around coach education policy. It also allowed me to focus on very specific Bernsteinian concepts (e.g., classification, framing, language codes), which previous literature (e.g., Griffiths et al., 2018; Williams & Bush, 2019) did not necessarily do, as they used multiple concepts together. Given this approach, there is an argument that could be made that some depth of critical discussion more broadly may be lost throughout the thesis. I would acknowledge such a comment, but want

the reader to consider that by reading across the three studies within my thesis, the story of The FA formal coach education policy is one that incorporated a range of concepts, ideas and nuances. This, as well as the separate discussion and implications section of my work is therefore able to tell a more complete (although not ever fully complete) story of formal coach education policy than has previously been offered.

In addition, by allowing for each study to be considered as separate publications, I was trying to engage with and support a wider academic community that I wish to be a part of in the future. By undertaking a process of critical and rigorous research, I was required to apply academic industry standards, such as adhering to word counts, and writing in a clear and coherent manner. By presenting a small progression of academic research within the field of coach education, I aimed to gain some small form of capital and credibility within such a community. More broadly, and I suppose selfishly, this could not only help me pass my PhD, but help develop some further credibility as an academic researcher when looking for future roles. I have to date been fortunate enough to gain some form of credibility and in recent times been asked to review for two different journals within the area of sport coaching and coach education. The learning of skills and qualities from reviewers during my own publication process have helped me when beginning to review manuscripts myself. Such a process, stemming directly from my PhD journey has supported my continued development as an academic up to this point.

So where am I now? Well, I consider myself to be quietly confident about my own research process, as opposed to previously being loud, and naïve. This has been due to my own development as a person through this PhD journey over these past five and a half years. The criteria offered in chapter 4 (section 4.9) around rigour and judging quality, I have used to develop myself, not just as a researcher, but also as a coach, a mentor, a partner, and a father. I now consider myself to be a far more quiet, humble, and authentic person because of

this journey. If we consider these characteristics as demonstrating good quality research, then I feel a great sense of pride and desire to want to continue to develop these further. I am also now valuing my combined academic-practitioner identity, that influences both in equal measure. This is a far cry from when I first began, and certainly through the early stages of my academic journey. I am not perfect, I have a long way to go in order to be a really good researcher, but I feel this journey has set me on the right path.

9.6 Concluding remarks

This thesis has offered an extensive examination of how formal coach education had been developed and reproduced within the GR football setting in England. This in-depth exploration offers a significant contribution to enhancing our understanding of policy making processes within formal coach education. By taking a step back into the creation and development of courses, this thesis has been able to offer a more complete (but not fully complete) picture of these provisions and processes. This thesis has built upon some influential literature around coach education more broadly (e.g., Griffiths, Armour, & Cushion, 2018; Paquette & Trudel, 2018ab; Piggott, 2012, 2015; Stodter & Cushion, 2017; Williams & Bush, 2019) and combined it with the theoretical framework of Basil Bernstein. Bernstein's work, which traditionally has been used in mainstream education, has offered a novel perspective on policy making processes in formal coach education. For example, Bernstein's (2000) pedagogic device, language codes (Bernstein, 1971), classification (Bernstein, 1975, 2000), and framing concepts (Bernstein, 1975, 1981) have all offered conceptual and analytical tools to support the examination of policy making processes in FA coach education, from their inception through to reproduction. This framework has been able to illuminate the complex and heavily negotiated nature of formal coach education policy development that seemingly occurs across educational institutions more broadly.

The significance of this thesis therefore lies in its findings of the wider social, political, economic, and cultural influences impacting upon formal coach education policy development. By identifying these factors, future research can begin to delve deeper into, and offer ideas for the (re)construction of such policies like The FA GR courses. This in turn offers possible support not just to NGBs and wider educational institutions but also to the recipients of such courses (i.e., the learners). However, in order to achieve this, research must now move beyond the isolated course observation, into viewing coach education as part of a much wider influential system. By viewing coach education provisions as part of a wider system (Culver et al., 2019), we can continue to broaden and search for what Bernstein and Solomon (1999) discussed as “who is ruler” and what impact do they have on policy (i.e., who influences what? How? Why? And to what extent)? The findings from this thesis can support these questions and move the academic literature and practical policy making space forward by considering: How do we achieve coherency and consistency of a policy with multiple stakeholders? What knowledge is used (or not used) to inform formal coach education courses in the future to support wider societal objectives? And what is/should be/could be the purpose of the ‘formal’ aspect of coach education within the wider coach development system? Within each of these questions lies future opportunities to explore and support the coach education landscape, from policy maker, to coaches on the ground. For now, my thesis supports those policy makers and coach education course designers by extending current literature and detailing what policy was created, how, and why within FA GR coach education.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 - Study One – Thematic Analysis

Appendix 1.1- Stage 2. Initial coding

Future developments in FA coach education	But not always...	Specificity through using DNA
Additional support beyond courses	Misconception of 'old'	The Chairman's Commission Report that refocused grassroots coaching
Creating bespoke learning pathways	'new' brought to the forefront	The change in approach within the FA Youth Awards
Developing a curriculum of coach development	Resistance to 'Change'	The reaffiliation and recruitment of the tutor workforce
Digital platforms for more accessible learning	Do we know what's going on, or are we just using blind faith	The Youth Development Review
Limitations of online learning	How we (employees) feel about working for FA	Let's just get people through the qualifications
Removing levels, let's just make them good coaches	Influencers generating change	Logistical Problems
Support 'away' from course more impactful	A move to a new home, our St Georges Park	Power Perception
The good intentions of FA coach education	A new direction in coach education through recruitment of personnel	Trajectory poor of 'good ideas'
A new era of a learning based culture in grassroots coach education	A 'will' to change and influence learning	A new learner culture
Cultural change (old to new)	An organisational restructure	A pedagogic shift
'Check and Challenge'	How the England DNA has influenced FA coach education	Academic & Pedagogical Approach
Forgetting the tutor knowledge sometimes	Learner Profiles	good intentions of a new assessment approach
Tutoring to meet the needs of the learners	Role of formal coach education	Good intentions of people wanting to make others better
It's about the learners journey	Shaping new coach practices	Perceptions of courses so far.....
A move towards academia over football	the positives of In-situ visits	The political considerations of coach education
Approach taken by tutors - delivery	Tutor biographies shaping opinions	A consideration around cultural openness to discuss developments
Cognitive thought process of coaching	Wash-out	Do as you're told...
Quality control of workforce	What does a L1 coach look like	An appreciation for size and scope
What research.....	what does a L2 coach look like	Heavy workload experiences by staff
Coaches Role	good intentions during development phases	Let's remember the context of GR football
Key messages for FA courses	Ambiguity of the 'what next' in developing courses	Assessment Approach
Lack of training for tutors	The potential to become a disguised dictatorship	A lean towards a social constructivist approach to teaching and learning
Ambiguity around Assessment	Using my gut feeling when 'assessing'	expectation of learner workload too high
Clarity of the endpoint in formal coach education	New formative approach	Keeping some of the 'old'
Coaching Competency Framework	or is it continual assessment	Recontextualising messages from policy
A 'new' standard of competency	Old assessment approach	Remembering the 'game' when coaching
Fear and perception of Assessment methodology	Quality assurances in assessment process	Social and Economic considerations...
Improving the assessment process	The competency of coaches	The dichotomies of formal coach education
Lack of Transparency of approach	Communication issues in organisation	at times it seems like it's football vs education
Need for Standardisation	Improving communication through the hierarchy	The influence of 'social architects'
New format 'easier' to pass	Pedagogic considerations informing change	Dispensing with the 'old'
Using my 'experience' when assessing	Cognitive development over 'on the grass' coaching	

Appendix 1.2 – Stage 2 – initial coding (10 extract examples)

Initial Codes	Transcript example
Future developments in FA coach education	The use of technology, the shift in how it's delivered, more in situ visits, and the shift in how it's delivering in terms of number of days, using technology, and the training of the tutors, I think. There's lot of emphasis on the training of the tutors, which is I think is fantastic.
Additional support beyond courses	formal coach education serves one very small bit of that journey, so let's just get that bit right and then maybe invest more in things like mentoring, coach development and support in situ, maybe not even necessarily aligned to the actual course.
Creating bespoke learning pathways	If we had a curriculum and we had all this content that linked to different bits of the curriculum, there's face-to-face stuff in there, and there's some online stuff in there, and there were some podcasts or TED Talks or however we decide to put it together, and you could weave your way through because you've got the curriculum, you've got the map, I would hope that your route to getting to wherever you thought you needed to be was completely unique. I think that's naturally the world we work in now.
Developing a curriculum of coach development	My point is let's say we've got working groups at Level 1 and 2 and B. If they get together and they review PowerPoint slides vertically about the course that they're having to be on a working group about, does not give us any really great value? No. If we start thinking horizontally and we get someone from the Level 1 group and the 2 group and the 3 group in a room to talk about reflection, does that give us some value? 100%.
Digital platforms for more accessible learning	It couldn't be more surface if you tried and I think that's what we see in the modern-day learner. People think they've got knowledge; they probably have knowledge, but what they don't have is understanding. So they can tell you stuff at the drop of a hat, "I know this, I know this, I know this," great, but do you actually recognise it and understand it and apply it? That's the bit that's sort of different.
Limitations of online learning	Limited. You and I both know that there is limited scope for e-learning or digital learning, absolutely, and I guess it's for us, as learning design experts, in terms of

	ensuring we use the right tool for the right job and the right times. By getting somebody to do 50 hours of e-learning, you're not suddenly going to make them a good coach. Obviously, they have to have time on the grass.
Removing levels, let's just make them good coaches	I think UK Coaching, they've got some interesting people working for them at the moment. They're doing some good stuff that is more around just helping coaches to get better in their own context. It seems to be, again, from within my FA bubble, there seems to be more governing bodies moving away from a level-based approach. They're actually taking ownership of their own coaching pathway and taking it off the framework
Support 'away' from course more impactful	If 4000 of those needed better support not to push them out of the system but just to engage with them better in the system, you'd need a different workforce to do that. So if there's 4000 in there at the moment and there's 250 tutors, it doesn't quite... The numbers will take time, but if you could engage with the wider workforce and say, "Let's engage the 300 mentors," if you said some of them are already tutors, so there's another 100 mentors we're engaging, but if off those 100 mentors, we then have somebody inside the club who we work with, you just seem to have more people to surround the learner with and you might accept somebody who works alongside you more than you accepted a mentor coming in once a whatever or a tutor coming in once a whatever.
The good intentions of FA coach education	I think, because they're affordable, it fits in with people's time schedules, it's delivered in an imaginative way really, and I think that's taking away that barrier or that challenge that we can't access the course or you can't because there's loads in your county. So I think the FA has done really well just trying to address those issues.
A new era of a learning based culture in grassroots coach education	It's probably cultural, cultural in terms of education and cultural in terms of how coach education has been delivered not just in football, but there's definitely a shift and we'll probably not see the impact of that shift for another 5, 10, 15 years. I think it's been well received.

Appendix 1.3 – Stage 3 - clustering codes and initial them generation (images taken during discussions and debates with Dr. Colum Cronin)

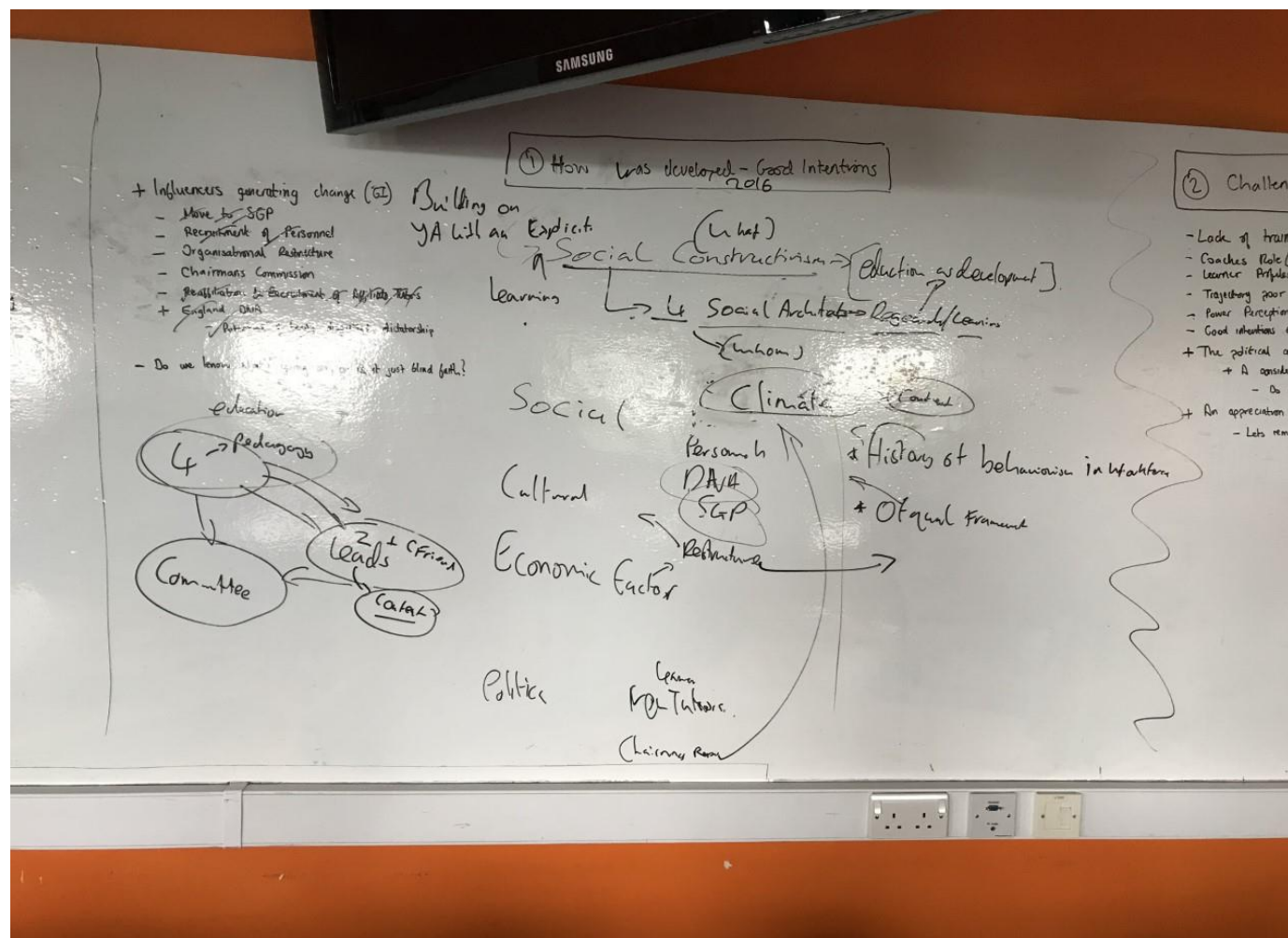


Figure 15. clustering of codes during critical discussion with Dr. Colum Cronin – considering cultural developments and the good intentions to move coach education policy forward.

Appendix 1.3.1 – Stage 3 - clustering codes and initial them generation (images taken during discussions and debates with Dr. Colum Cronin) (Part 2)

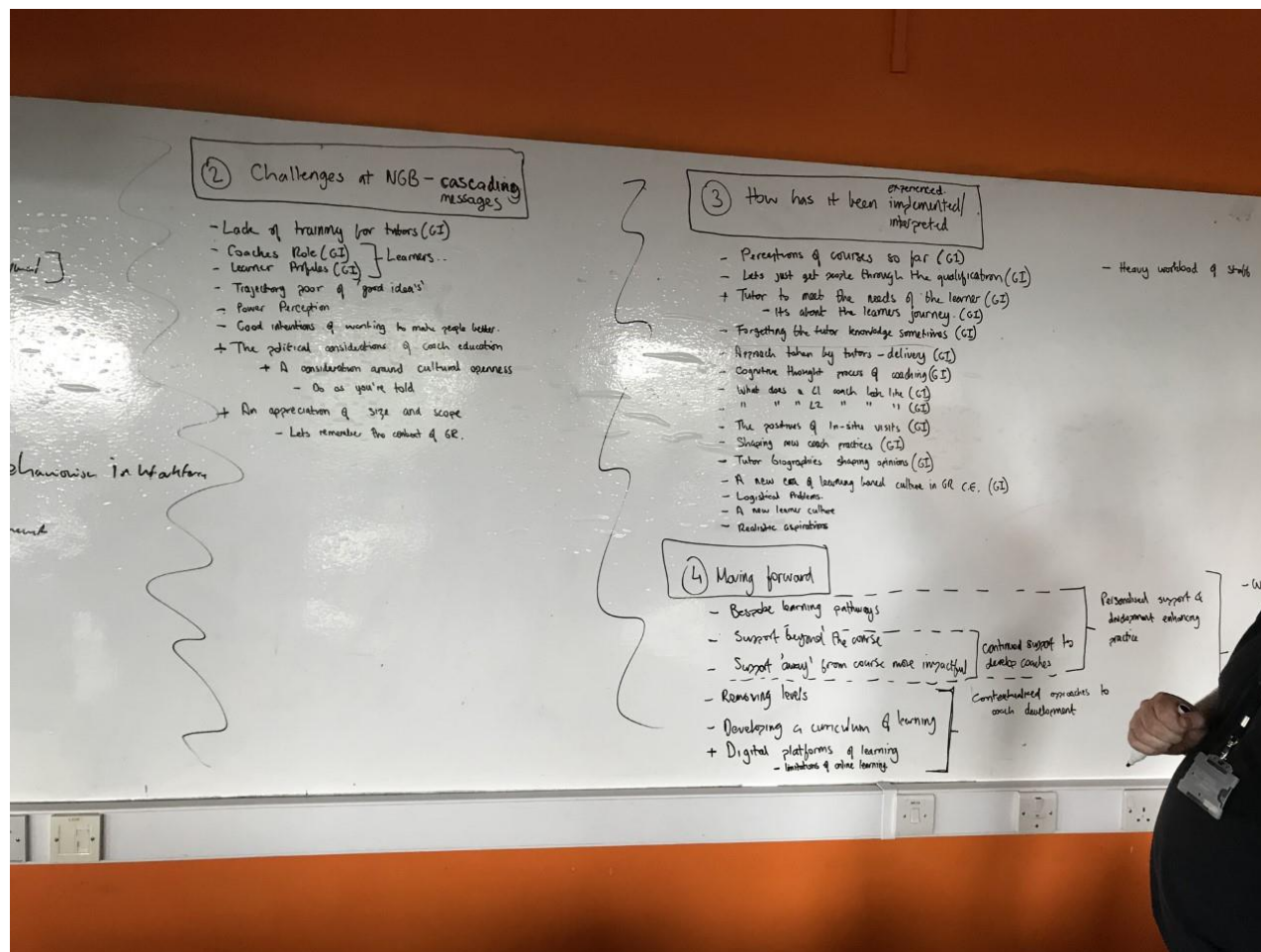
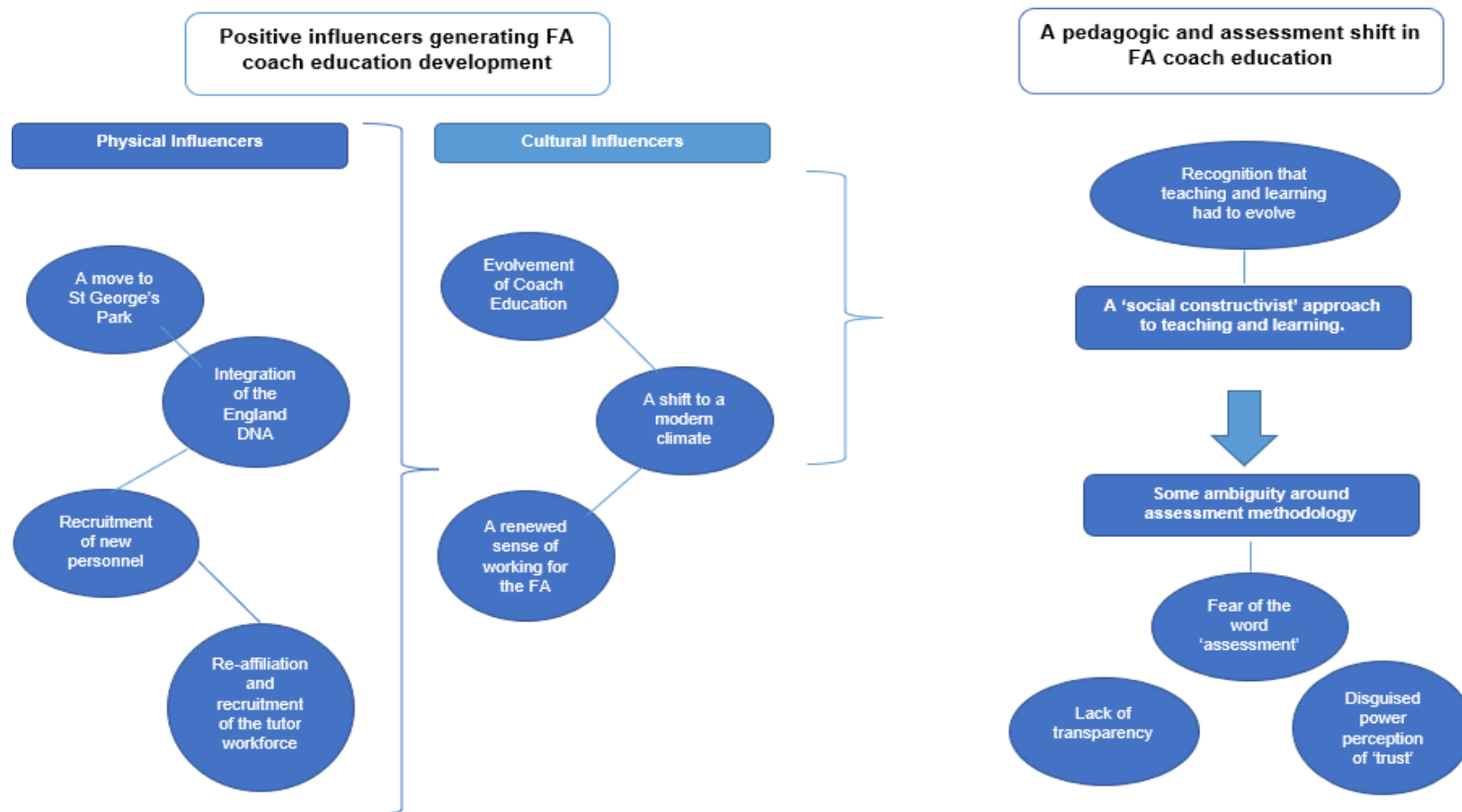


Figure 16. further clustering of codes through discussion with Dr. Colum Cronin - cascading of policy and perceptions of policy on the ground

Appendix 1.4 – Stage 3 and stage 4 - initial theme generation and refinement of themes (post phase 1 interviews)



Appendix 1.5 – Stage 4 and stage 5 – refining and defining themes (amendments of theme names through critical discussions with supervisory team and external colleague (Dr. Ed Cope) and during publication process)

Phase 1 analysis		Critical discussions (changes/amendments of themes)	Continued theme discussions	Initial themes developed post Phase 2 (sent for publication)
Influencers generating change (physical, personnel)	FA coach education has been positively influenced by physical and cultural developments	Key Influences impacting change	A learning model developed	The Three Elements of Curriculum Production
Good intentions	FA coach education has a clear social constructivist pedagogy, but assessment is more ambiguous	Social architects impacting change		Perspectives of the Policy on the Ground
Assessment Approach		Assessment is ambiguous	Ambiguity around assessment	Complexity when Cascading Messages

Appendix 1.6 – Stage 5 and stage 6 – further refinement, naming and reporting themes (for thesis and publication in Sport, Education and Society).

Initial themes developed post Phase 2 (sent for publication)	Refinement of themes during resubmission of article for publication	Final themes (as included in thesis and publication)
The Three Elements of Curriculum Production	Three Elements of Curriculum/Course Design	Three Elements of Curriculum/Course Design
Perspectives of the Policy across the Organisation	Recontextualisation and confusion of policy	Recontextualisation and Confusion of Policy
Complexity when Cascading Messages	A restriction in disseminating policy	A Restricted Code when Disseminating Policy

Appendix 2 – Study Two – Thematic Analysis

2.1 – Stage 2 – Initial coding (deductive through ‘classification’ concept being considered throughout)

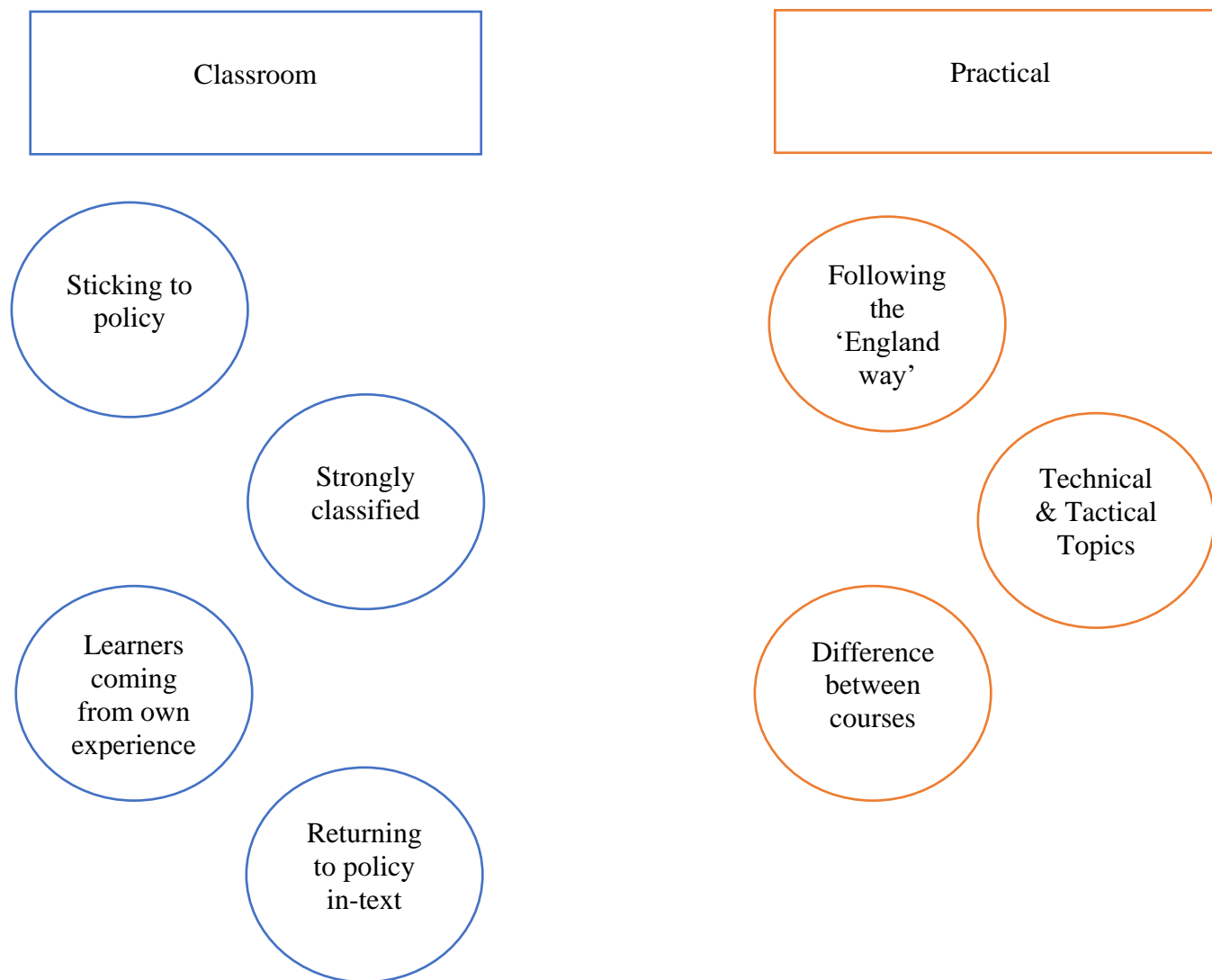
A pedagogical moment	An enjoyable experience	difference between courses
A tutors' process	clarity from Central FA	Implicit delivery of tech and tact
assessment ambiguity	Learners coming with their own experiences	4 course learning outcomes
differences	making it my own course - tutor	feeling part of the learners journey
Affecting course structure	Realistic expectation of Level	considerations for future developments
collective approach to workshops	sharing is caring	interpreting tutor recontextualising policy
cramming in content at times	tutor feeling trusted to teach	L2 detail rather than L1
Creating a L2 environment	Wanting new ways of teaching and learning	time for planning
tailoring the L2 journey	what is learning in coaching context	returning to the policy in-text
fluffy	what's best for the group	Tutor training
missing the planning and reflective process	igniting a passion for coaching	Tutors better at teaching and learning
Following the 'England way'	additional 'time' taken to help support learners	unsure about the 'education'
Offering an unwelcomed opinion	constant scaffolding	What - content
How - Classification	getting to know the learners	A lot of content
Strongly classified	Own reflective thoughts on-course	Explicit FA language
on the pitch - focus	Practical - Tech and Tact Topics	It's trying to make it as open as possible
Is the L2 a better course	A compromise	Usefulness in text
Opportunity of Weak Classification	Linked to FA or DNA	Compulsory Components
encouraged NOT to deviate	New Code	structure to teaching
opposite of valuing learners journeys	In Policy text	Contradicting sentence - SoW
prescriptive approach in Qualification handbook	Reference to 'research'	In leaner journal
Stakeholders	purpose from 1st4Sport perspective	Philosophy - playing rather than personal
restricted language towards knowledge or learning		

Appendix 2.2 – Stage 2 – initial coding (10 extract examples)

Initial Codes	Transcript example
A tutor's process	There's no point me fluffing anything up because, then, who is going to get better? I'll be honest with you, but within that, I won't be honest and brutal; I'll be honest and constructive. I'm not going to hammer at you for something that you've done because you're probably doing it because you experienced it or it's all you know. I'm going to try help you understand what you're doing could be made better potentially." I smile more, that's another approach.
Cramming in content at times	I think the bit that I find hard at times is that whereas before we have a disconnect between the Youth Awards and the Core qualifications, I think we've gone the other way and tried to cram too much content into a course that... And sometimes, it depends on the deliver as to what the message is and what they feel is important to put into the delivery and what messages the learner gets out.
Following the 'England Way'	I agree with what's going on. I think people are seeing that now. I think, with the summer of success we had, especially with Gareth and the way he did everything, I think people are getting it now, that it's more than just what happens on the pitch and they're starting to see that. In the past, we probably polarised it a little bit and it's all about what happens on the pitch, but yeah.
Affecting course structure	I said the new courses, what they give you the ability to do is to be really flexible and really tailor courses. A lot of the stuff I've been thinking about recently is why are we doing that there and that there? Why don't we swap it?
Creating a L2 environment	My approach is probably a supportive approach. It's probably trying to help these people make better sense of what we do, why we do it, and where they're currently at. I suppose with that, and something I try to allude to people on courses, yeah, we all have expectations, you're going to help me develop the culture for the course.
Fluffy	She commented that it is going to take somebody who's really brave to stick their hand up or smash their fist on the desk and say, "How do we deal with these things?" because she commented that it's become very educationalist, it's become, she commented on, there used to be so much tell, tell, tell, and now, it's swung

	completely the other way, that it's got very fluffy and their quite big things to comment on.
A compromise	We're looking at its two learners delivering, but from the feedback that was given via a rapid review, the tutor sent out three questions, the learners then fed it back, and what learners wanted is more tutor delivery. Tutors have compromised on it and said, "We still want to see a little bit of learner delivery, but what we'll do is we'll sit on your shoulder and we will help and we'll point out, maybe, where you can tweak things." So it's almost like a collaboration session where the learner plans it, starts delivering, and the tutor, as long as the learner's comfortable, will maybe affect little bits and pieces
Implicit delivery of tech and tact	said he feels really rushed on block three, that the technical detail is coming out within there because, he said, "The first two blocks, you're really scraping to get the football stuff in. He then questioned why self-esteem, motivation needs to be two separate workshops. Can't they be done in one? You can save some time. Do they need to know managing behaviour, managing difference? Can that not just be in one and save us another 3 1/2 hours? That's seven hours' worth of time there where, potentially, we've got time to influence more football."
Tutor training	We had the generic tutor training when everyone came in, which do I feel that was beneficial? I don't think I learned anything off of that. Working out of an educational establishment, I learned very little on that course. I got some free pens, which was handy.
Offering an unwelcomed opinion	"I actually offered my opinion once and said I don't think we do enough of it. I'm not sure we spend enough time considering and planning how we include technical and tactical detail in the courses, and," she said, "it was literally just shut down." I said, "Is that by more personnel that you consider to be educationalists?" I didn't mention any names; I didn't want her to mention any names. She went, "Yes, absolutely." She then brought up Caley Parnell, her by name specifically, which I found quite interesting. She said, "I brought it up and all hell broke loose. It was literally like I had dropped a bomb in a room and everyone just went off on one, so I don't bother now. I'd prefer if they just didn't invite me to the meetings because we're clearly not being listened to and they have their own agenda."

Appendix 2.3 – Stage 3 - clustering codes and initial them generation with ‘classification’ in mind between classroom and practical (discussions with Dr. Colum Cronin)



Appendix 2.4 – Stage 3 and stage 4 (initial theme generation and refinement of themes for publication), stage 5 and stage 6 (refine and reporting of themes)

Initial theme creation	Submission (for SES publication)	Resubmission (1) (for SES publication)	Themes refined (for thesis and SES Resubmission (2)/Accepted)
Explicit knowledge and theories within the FA level 2 curriculum	Explicit Research Informed Biopsychosocial Knowledge within the Curriculum	Curriculum Somewhat Informed by Research	A Curriculum Partially Informed by Research
A strong classification of biopsychosocial knowledge	A Strong Classification of Biopsychosocial Knowledge	A Strongly Classified Curriculum	A Strongly Classified Curriculum
Technical and tactical (T&T) knowledge that is implicit within the curriculum and delivered in a varied manner	Technical and Tactical Knowledge Implicit within the Curriculum and Delivered in a Varied Manner	The FA level 2 Curriculum also Includes ‘Professional Knowledge’	The FA level 2 Curriculum also Includes ‘Professional Knowledge’

Note: table above illustrates theme development and refined after the decision to put submission forward for Sport, Education and Society (SES). Continued refinement occurred through the review process until accepted publication including themes on right side of table.

Appendix 3 – Study Three – Thematic Analysis

3.1 – Stage 2 – Initial coding

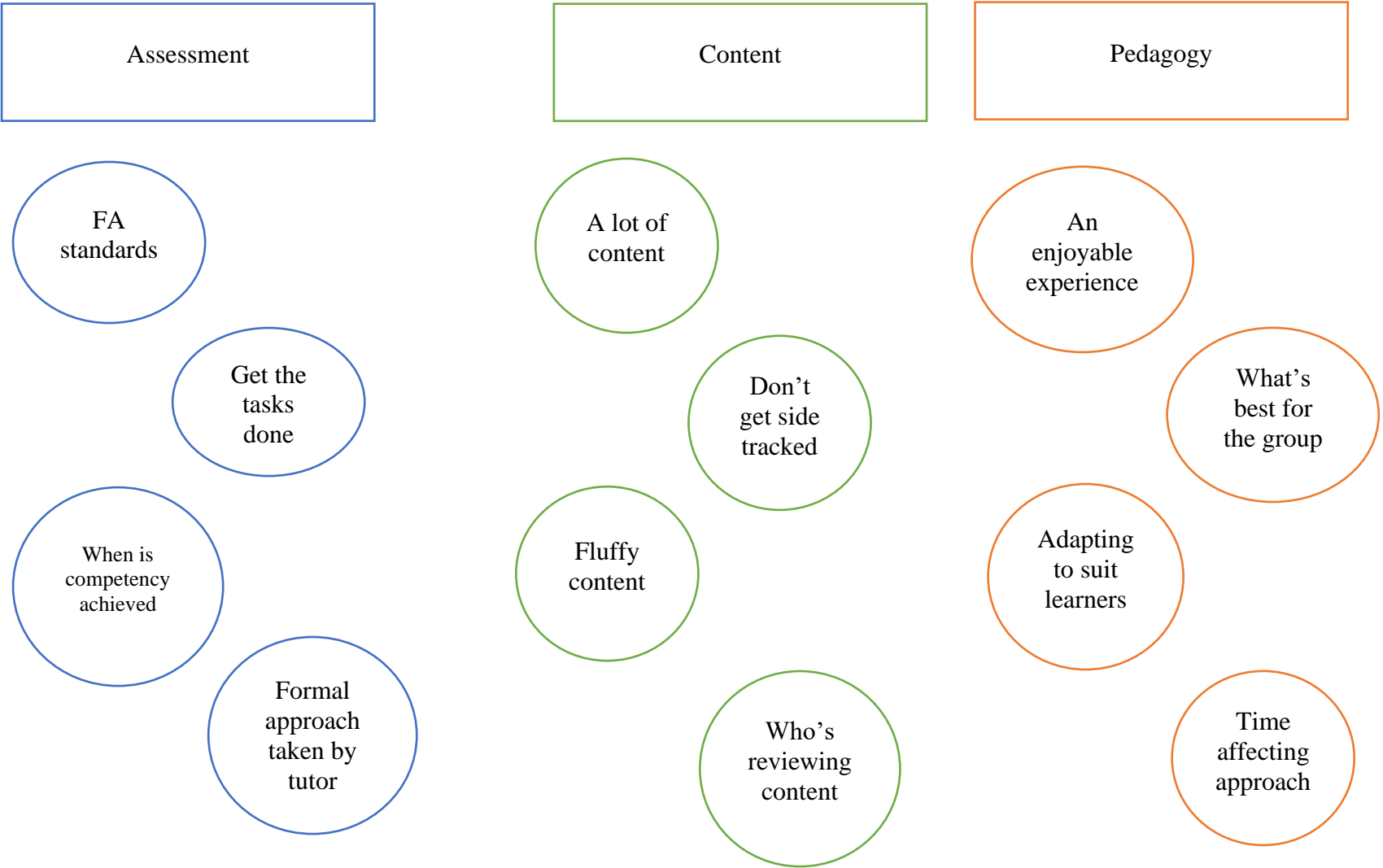
Accessible resources to offer	learners providing feedback	Time affecting approach to T&L
filtering content information	tutor giving learners ideas for own players	additional 'time' taken to support learners
fluffy content	creating an environment for T&L	'traditional' practical approach
Key messages	developing coaching manner	tutor manner
local level support	integrating planning for next workshops	learner ownership
No real training	pre-plan and using technology (Hive)	proactive learners
no training - where do we feedback	igniting a passion	tutor interpreting what they think learners need
making the most of time	Positive perception of course format	detail of 'the current game'
On learner delivery	who's reviewing content	discussions outside of policy approach
adding to their armoury	pitching the course	key messages of player development
purpose of the practical	coaching interventions	lack of a planning process
sensory experience	Interventions	technical detail
Assessment approach	just looking for processes	integrated planning and group work
FA 'standards' when needed	more L2 process at times	learning involves chaos
format allowing for learning and not assessment	Adding technical detail	stretching and challenging
Get the tasks done	knowing a bit about the game	don't copy me (tutor)
Local level influence	Purpose of Arrival Activity	but it's OK if they copy me (tutor)
perception of no assessment at L1	showing variation	learners being brave
Tutor own standards	'traditional approach' to practical	ownership of learning
When is competency achieved	provide them with resources	making it realistic for the learners
channels of communication for assessment tasks	Sticking to policy	clarity of message for players
making up task 3 - learner journals	going beyond policy of practical	developing skills in coaches
A relaxed assessment approach	A lot of content - don't get side tracked	difference noticed between theory and practical
explaining 'assessment' for L1	A lot of prep work to do	group work engagement
formal approach taken by tutor	delivering a session	embracing ideas from learners
I want to see some 'coaching'	Practical sessions (on course)	adapting to suit learners

Appendix 3.2 – Stage 2 – initial coding (10 extract examples)

Initial Codes	Transcript example
Don't copy me (tutor)	"These practices that I'm showing you, one thing that we're really trying to get away from in the FA is getting you to copy what it is I'm doing. We don't want you to copy what it is I'm doing and you can't because you're not me. All I'm showing you is some templates. These are could-haves, these are templates. Take this six gate game, you might do the rules differently, you might set up the time constraints differently, you might have different challenges. All this is a template for you to go away, have a little think about it, and use to meet the needs of your players,"
Additional time to support learners	taking it upon himself to go, "I'm going to allocate people specific topics that they're going to work with on their own and they're going to work in conjunction with an arrival activity with somebody else and they're going to follow it on," I think adds so much weight not just to those people who are delivering, who are meant to be setting up, delivering a little bit, and then reviewing, but also to the observers who may be on the side because they're seeing variation, the players are getting used to different types of things so they recognise how it feels, which may be able to give them a little bit more insight into how their players react to certain things and how their players feel about different types of practices.
Adding technical detail	What's interesting is he's actually started delivering some detail and I guess, by detail, what I mean is he's talked about the body shape of the defender and he's got the learners to think about side on, not diving in, bending the knees, keep your eye on the ball. He's just giving the little bit of technical detail on the ball, really, that may come, really, after you've shown the game and what it looks like, which this is the first that he's really done. It's interesting that he's quite comfortable with the detail, but the practice design that he's shown so far, in the majority, has been very structured and very rigid.
Feeling part of the learners journey	It's been a pleasure and a privilege to sit and watch and observe. Pete has been great, every now and then asking for my opinion or, "Noel, what's your thoughts on that?" and I might, "Yeah," when I'm chatting to Pete informally, "that reminded me of this," and he'd reiterate to the group like, "Noel, can you tell them that story?" It's all been to enhance that learner's experience and I've made sure I'm aware that the stories are very much in line; they're not my values. I'd say, "This is my experience, but similar to your experience or your experience as a learner or your experience, Pete, as a tutor," so I've tried not to have an influence where

	it's going against the grain. I've tried to allow the flow to be maintained within the cohort and, obviously, with Pete leading it, which is great. It's been really, really interesting.
No real training	Of course, there wasn't really any training given of how to use the slides. Sometimes the slides don't match with the task in the book. I understand it can be process-focused or outcome-focused, but it would be nice if the two matched together a little bit more.
Sticking to Policy	I commented yesterday that I was thinking around that this course feels a lot more outcome-driven than journey-driven because of the nature of what Ross has been like in the sense of being very structured, very organised, getting them to fill out the tasks in the pack and stuff like that, which links to the qualification because, actually, do they need to complete tasks?
An enjoyable experience	that's always been my mantra, has been you provide a nice, relaxed environment where people are happy, you'll get learning. That's just the way I am. If people get worried, you won't get learning. If people are anxious, you won't get learning. And if people, children and adults, if there's not an opportunity to give your opinion, you won't get learning. So if the learners who come on the course can enjoy their experience more, the players will enjoy and then everyone wins from that point of view.
Difference noticed between theory and practical	I think there may be the perception that he's an adult learner, but it's poor practice from the coaches, but also, it's not very well structured from the tutor's perspective, which is quite strange because, in the classroom, he's very structured and he manages it very well.
Time affecting approach to T&L	throughout the day, has been very conscious about almost stopping conversations at times because he doesn't want to fuel it with too much and he wants to, as he says, move on. "We'll come back to that," or, "Actually, we're visiting that in workshop three." He's done that quite a lot today, so he's not recontextualising policy. He's almost staying on policy just because he feels that there is a lot to get through and he doesn't want to, as he called it, short-change the learners in anything. He doesn't want them to miss out on stuff
Igniting a passion for coaching	I thought it was really powerful and, actually, me and Steve shared a glance as he was talking. We shared a glance of, "You nailed this one, Steve. Well done, well played to you." Because that's what it was and you could see the learner's emotion when he was talking about it. He was genuinely like, "I really had to think about it. I had to think about how I'm going to get it out using 8 or 10 players because it was built for, initially, 12. So I had to change it slightly, I had to change dimensions slightly, I had to change the end zone slightly."

Appendix 3.3 – Stage 3 and stage 4 – clustering of codes and shaping around broader curriculum based themes (i.e., pedagogy, content and assessment).



Appendix 3.4 – Stage 4, stage 5, and stage 6 – refining and defining themes (amendments of theme names through critical discussions with supervisory team and external colleague (Dr. Ed Cope) and during publication process)

Initial theme generation and refinement	Bringing ‘Framing’ concepts into consideration	Critical discussions (supervisory team and Dr. Ed Cope)	Themes refined (for thesis and publication in SCR)
A lot of assessment	Strongly framed assessment on L1	Policy designed to be strongly framed for assessment.	A course guided by a high volume of strongly framed assessment
Lots of content being given to learners	Strongly framed content delivered on L1	Policy offered strongly framed content	A wide range of strongly framed content on-course
Tutors trying their best to get to know learner’s needs	Strongly framed delivery on L1	Tutor making efforts to get to know learners and weakly frame	Attempts to weakly frame pedagogic practice

Note: during publication process, reviewers were happy with theme names and approach taken early on. These theme names reflected the story I wanted to tell, by bringing documentation and observations to life through a narrative using creative non-fiction.

Appendix 4 – Observation framework (study 2, chapter 6, section 6.4.3)

Course:	Number on Course:	Tutor/Coach Developer:	Location:
<u>Breakdown of day:</u>			
Time:			
Descriptive			
Interpretation			
Insights on Pedagogy	Insights on recontextualising from policy	Insights on language used	Insights on content (level 2 only)
Sensory Notes:			
Reflections			