

A theoretical exploration of contemporary
Conductive Education philosophy and
conductors' professional identity

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Abstract

Conductive Education (CE) is an applied system, teaching people with neurological movement disorders, yet existing studies position CE as a treatment option. There is limited pedagogical research on CE, with the available literature focusing on the mechanics of the system. The philosophy of CE is not explicitly formulated in the literature, there is a presence of its underlying principles. CE's lead professional is the conductor but it was suggested that they do not share a united voice, indicating a degree of fragmentation. A study found that conductors feel under-recognised. There is a lack of research surrounding conductors' professional identity or what CE is as a profession in the United Kingdom today.

This research suggests a re-configured understanding of CE, aiming to provoke professional perspectives on what CE is in the contemporary world. The primary intention is to impact theory-praxis by seeking out different ways of knowing CE, which is useful to students, conductors and other researchers. This study intends to open up possibilities to explore what produces *becoming*-conductor identity.

This inquiry aligns to the post-qualitative paradigm and takes a new materialist stance in order to re-orient thought. Twenty-one conductors took part in four focus groups where matter was directly introduced. Diffractive analysis was utilised to investigate data which is not passive, but has its own agency. Barad's concepts of entanglements and intra-action were plugged into alongside Bennett's thing-power.

Conductors' material and discursive accounts highlighted systematic issues and (un)spoken categorisations of conductor-ness, pointing to the absence of a shared sense of identity. Conductors' embodied encounters revealed passionate care at the core of their professionalism. Conductors value the meaningful relationships they have with their learners the most, suggesting entanglements. Viewing CE as an assemblage is useful to re-orient thought regarding its theoretical, professional and practical complexities.

Through the doing of this inquiry a diagram emerged, this shows the system of CE as a whole with its parts. The differences that *matter* in CE are its philosophy, paradigm, process, pedagogy and application. It was uncovered that *becoming*-identity is based on CE offering an alternative model, which is a potential-based conceptualisation of disability. This thesis offers a visual pathway into the profession, acknowledging CE's heterogenicity and strengthening professional identity by exploring what produces the conductor. Furthermore, a visual conceptual framework for CE is suggested, as an emergent and always *becoming* tool to aid the academisation of the profession.

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List of frequently used abbreviations

CE	Conductive Education
CNS	Central Nervous System
FG	Focus Group
MD	Multi-disciplinary
MKO	More Knowledgeable Other
PCA	Professional Conductors' Association
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
UK	United Kingdom
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development

Chapter ∞: Situatedness and Positionality

∞.1 Introduction

This “entry point” (Fairchild, 2023: 1) chapter starts with a grappling, the beginning of what is yet to come. This is followed by the intentions of the inquiry and the guiding questions are shared. I discuss my positionality and significant aspects which have influenced it; then an exploration of my professional self is offered. Finally, the structure of the thesis is provided, with a brief outline of each chapter.

The infinity symbol (∞) used in this thesis, is to signify a pushing against linearity, a move away from ordering events (Koro-Ljunberg & Hendricks, 2020). I want to experience Barad’s (2007: 181) claim: “rethinking linear time can be powerful”. Shaking up the concept of fixed time (Barad, 2017) throughout the process of this inquiry as I think, write and again when the completed piece is re/read. The reader is invited to become part of the process rather than just presented with the end product. Therefore, in parts of the thesis agential cuts are enacted, offering a hiatus by entering a different *spacetime mattering*. Barad’s (2010) *spacetime mattering* recognises the role of temporality and spatiality, viewing time and space as dis-jointed and as such offer possibilities for re-configuration.

Barad (2007) coined the term agential cut, which signals a cutting together-apart, indicating that the cut does not create a complete separation (Barad, 2010). Instead, it implies *things* joining and disjoining – “a single event that is not one” (Barad, 2010: 244). An agential cut signifies the blurring of lines of here and now, there and then (Barad, 2014). Therefore, an agential cut is an “analytical boundary” (Taylor & Fairchild, 2020: 514) giving a space to re-think. The hiatuses might appear disjointed from the flow but they actually facilitate its joining together – a single paper that is not one. According to Barad (2007) the one making the cut is response-able for enacting it; response-able as in – having the capacity to respond in an ethical way (Barad, 2007).

AGENTIAL CUT 1

(please go to page 172)

The impact of the content shared in this space does not only *affect* me/my body/professional-self in the here and now; *affect* meaning: "... the way in which the forces produced by objects, spaces, material and discursive entities and bodies leave an impression" on a body (Fairchild, 2023:6). The *affecting* has started in a different *spacetime mattering* (Barad, 2007), really *matter*ing to me. *Matter*ing, as in recognising the agency of matter and acknowledging its intra-actions with me (Barad, 2008). This *matter*ing will be embedded and embodied throughout the chapters and is likely to occupy a space long after the thinking and writing and reading and inquiring in the here and now (Osgood et al, 2020).

∞.2 The grappling

This thesis aims to be an embodied and emergent encounter for myself, the inquirer, and the reader. This is an invitation to "engage in an imaginative journey" to offer a dis/orientating experience (Barad, 2010: 244). My position is practitioner, researcher, academic and writer; I am deeply implicated in this inquiry and I will form part of the *product*. I am entangled in CE and this inquiry; as such, the pronoun *I* is used freely and references to the field of CE is made with the use of the possessive pronoun *my* or *our*. This does not mean that the *I* is in the ontological centre of the inquiry, however, it does acknowledge my agency in the process. Conversely, my agency is understood as stipulated by Barad (2003: 818) "... not an attribute but the ongoing reconfiguration of the world". Throughout, I disrupt normative ways of researching and offer a different means of thinking and writing and researching (Osgood et al, 2020). The space occupied, is in a *spacetime mattering* where human and non-human and other-than-human intra-act and *affect* without hierarchical tensions (Barad, 2007). I am leaving the logic of representation behind where thoughts are thought, senses and feelings are noticed, glimmers and glows are not ignored just because they were not expected (MacLure, 2010). I have been made, unmade and re-made in this process many times

over (Jackson & Mazzei, 2013). This chapter is not the beginning, neither it is the end point “... past/present/future are now, then, immanent, processual, always already in the making, and formed of intra-acting bodies” (Fairchild, 2023: 1). Instead, I offer a re-thinking of what comes before and after (Barad, 2017) ... and ~ and ~ and ~ (Taylor et al, 2019). The *and* ~ signals the absence of hierarchy and the favouring of the logic of connection (St Pierre, 2013).

∞.3 Intentions of the inquiry

Maguire and Sutton (2004:113) called for a “proper understanding of the essentially pedagogic nature” of Conductive Education (CE); I posit that two decades later this is still poorly understood (Chapter 1, sections 1.4, 1.8, 1.9). Traditional ways of researching CE (Chapter 1, section 1.10) have not showed its transformational process for (disabled) individuals; even though, CE directly challenges negative perceptions on what is possible for/by people with impairments (Berger-Jones, 2022; Brown, 2006a). In a sense, CE appraises the affirmation model – asserting positive identities and opposing the tragedy view of disability (Cameron & Lingwood, 2020; Swain & French, 2000). I need to become an inside change agent (Thomson & Gunter, 2011) and accentuate the value and position of CE in this 21st century Western world. Thus, I aspire to produce contemporary knowledge in CE but this knowledge needs to be produced differently (Lather, 2013; St Pierre, 1997). Taylor and Fairchild (2020) recognised the value in producing knowledge differently, consequently this inquiry wishes to attend to what might emerge from troubling how we currently know the philosophy of CE. Key to this inquiry that it strives to produce new knowledge that is useful for CE’s theory, practice, conductors, students and other researchers.

Blackburn and Ward (2020) found that CE is not visible in education research. Existing studies (Chapter 1, section 1.10.2) using conventional methodologies, positioned CE as a treatment option and thus did not advance its pedagogical value. Therefore, my primary intention is to open up possibilities for CE’s pedagogic qualities to show themselves and uncover valuable tools, which can facilitate this process with good e/affect. I aim to start this by troubling and illuminating the lack of explicit literature on the philosophy of CE – seeking out different ways of knowing it (Fairchild, 2023). Thinking of space and time as not fixed, exploring past and current debates and the

dominant discourse in the field of CE, could offer clarification on some legacy misconceptions, such as CE being a treatment option rather than a pedagogic approach. Through this conceptualisation, situating contemporary CE within education in a theoretical way could be made possible. This is with the acknowledgement that the developing theory is ongoing and always *becoming* (Barad, 2014). Thus, I offer a re-configured understanding of CE with the help of post-qualitative thinking and a new materialist stance. A re-configuration of a profession, cannot happen without its practitioners therefore, issues surrounding conductors' professional identity and confidence needs be addressed. To produce contemporary knowledge differently, I intend to re-imagine conductors' professional identity through a new materialist understanding enabling "new insights that are connected and relational" (Fairchild, 2023: 3). Recently, Brown (2024) appealed to conductors to use one united voice and a clear message consistently to clarify what constitutes of CE. Therefore, I suggest that my field and its practitioners need to find a more useful way of knowing and I conceive that a new materialist stance can facilitate the production of emergent and relational practical tools. To awaken curiosity, the philosophy of CE is re-conceptualised and the different parts of the system are re-configured in order to show conductors' entanglements in the assemblage of CE. I am mindful not to impose models on the profession.

AGENTIAL CUT 2

(please go to page 175)

∞.4 Guiding questions

Existing literature, conductors' material-discursive engagements and my own professional entanglements guide this inquiry. These aspects inform the theorisation of CE philosophy and open up possibilities for useful tools (for conductors, students and researchers) to emerge – *affecting* the assemblage of CE. To explore what impacts conductors' identity, focus groups are put to work directly introducing the material with the aid of two activities, one of them being Padlet an online sharing wall. My aspirations as a conductor/lecturer/researcher align with Conductors' Professional

Standard, which I adhere to: 1.4: “Be committed to explanation and clarification of their philosophy” (PCA, 2017: 4) and 2.7: “Articulate CE both orally and in writing” (PCA, 2017: 6).

Three questions guide this inquiry; these are connected, and are asked through each other with the understanding that conductors unite the practice and the philosophy of CE.

RQ1: What informs conductors’ professional identity and how does this *matter*?

RQ2: How can CE philosophy be conceptualised for contemporary times?

RQ3: How can a new materialist understanding facilitate the theorisation of CE?

∞.5 Positionality

I am human, a wife, conductor (practitioner of CE), academic, daughter, lecturer and doctoral candidate – there is no hierarchy to the order of these roles. Furthermore, there is a cross-sectionality to my identity, which is defined by a Hungarian heritage and living/working/studying in England. Therefore, I see myself as an assemblage. Deleuze and Guattari (2004) wrote about assemblages as machines linking *things* together to produce something. An assemblage can be thought of as a process where things are being made and unmade (Jackson & Mazzei, 2013). With that in mind, I am of various parts, but these are connected, not separable and un/make me – me. Bennett (2010a: 24) explained this: “the effects generated by an assemblage are, rather, emergent properties, emergent in their ability to make something happen”. As such an assemblage is not static but a collective in flux, without a hierarchical, governing structure to it (Bennett, 2010a). I am constantly being *affected* and *affecting* human, non-human and other-than-human bodies through encounters that *matter* (Osgood et al, 2020). An assemblage is where different bodies exist together (Deleuze & Guattari, 2004). It is about connectiveness (Mazzei, 2017) and thinking in connections (St Pierre, 2013), a state of not being separate entities but being as one in a “...multiplicity of encounters...” (Hultman & Lenz Taguchi, 2010: 532). Therefore, it is important to recognise that my roles are connected; significant experiences I share below impacted my *becoming*-professional identity.

Key to my identity is that I place high intrinsic value on education. Activities driven by intrinsic motivations give a sense of accomplishment and the process provides a source of enjoyment (Cook & Artino, 2016; Ryan & Deci, 2000). The political and economic context of my upbringing shaped the way that I see learning; I was raised and educated in a communist then post-communist country. Part of the communist ideology is to eliminate class structure and have identical economic capital (Miszlivetz & Jensen, 2010). Due to the dogma of equality, people cannot break free of restraints through monetary means, leading to a desire to increase cultural and social capital to evolve (Pellandini-Simányi, 2014). These contribute to academic success, social mobility and higher occupational attainment (Maggio, 2017). Furthermore, education is the single way to develop a critical voice (Freire, 2017) and defy oppression. These principles left me with a positive attitude towards what the education system as a whole can epitomise in its value. Additionally, this context served as the backdrop for the development of CE (Read, 1992); indicating an alignment between the ethos and value system of CE and my personal beliefs.

All of the above was challenged when I moved to England at the age of 18, to a country with the opposite political orientation to Hungary with a different cultural and social context. Neo-liberalism was imbedded in the United Kingdom (UK) by the turn of the 21st century, placing high value on competition, the freedom of choice and independent decision-making (Taylor 2020; Harvey, 2019). The context of the UK education system is characterised by several elements, which are contradictory to my experience through my compulsory education. According to Ball (2017) the neo-liberal model treats education like a product with a high value return, as such education is for the economic benefit of the state rather than the social good. I am intrinsically motivated to learn, while the neo-liberal system is extrinsically driven, focusing on outcomes, productivity and performance (Archer, 2008). I see education as an investment for bettering the self and creating opportunities, rather than ensuring economic productivity, and a means to higher salaries (Collini, 2012). Furthermore, much of the neo-liberal values within the contemporary education system in the UK, is antithetical to the belief system of CE and my new materialist ethics and working practices (Taylor, 2020). These opposing value systems can create tensions and frustrations, impacting my professional-self and personal integrity.

∞.6 Professional-self

Someone with strong professional identity finds satisfaction and meaning in their work, identifying with the principles of the profession (Tan et al, 2015). I have a sense of belonging to a group of conductors with whom I have shared values and knowledge of practice with. My profession impacts how I view myself and the choices I make and therefore my professional identity directly influences how I am viewed by society (Farnsworth et al, 2016). It is important to note that the way I conceptualise disability has been shaped by my positionality, as well as professional and personal relationships with children, young people and adults with mostly neurological movement disorders.

∞.6.1 Insider, outsider position

Thinking diffractively regarding my positionality made me realise that I am an inside insider. This embodied experience impacted my *becoming*-conductor/researcher identity.

AGENTIAL CUT 3

(please go to page 176)

CE originated from the country of my birth; being a native Hungarian speaker gives me access to publications written in Hungarian, but it is not only the written word that I understand. As explained in section ∞.5, I lived in the context where CE was developed and practiced, which gives me an insight, a genuine understanding of its heritage and value system. Being a qualified conductor makes me an insider of the profession and as I trained in the UK, I am an insider amongst British trained conductors. I know the system and context within which my research is situated, and I have an insight into the micro-politics of the profession both in English and Hungarian. Thomson and Gunter (2011) recognised that an insider is less likely to misinterpret practices due their knowledge but at the same time as a result of an insider's closeness to the studied phenomena, finding distance and perspective can be challenging. A benefit of an outsider's standpoint is the ability to question everyday routines from a

distance however without possessing privileged information or loyalty (Thomson & Gunter, 2011). I aim to take advantage of my position of an inside insider and mitigate its challenges with the use of a critical lens required by a doctoral candidate; I trust that my intention of producing knowledge differently can also facilitate this process. Being an inside insider highlights my entanglements with the field of CE, and conductor colleagues, CE's practice and philosophy. This aligns well with a post-qualitative inquiry, which recognises that research is both personal and academic (St Pierre, 2015).

∞.6.2 My professional journey to date

I qualified as a conductor in 2006 and have been working in the field since – making me a practitioner researcher and someone who is deeply entangled in CE. Since 2016, I have lectured on the BA (Hons) Conductive Education undergraduate programme and in 2023 I became the course leader, providing me with a strong theory-praxis stance. Part of my role involves observing and examining student-conductors in their placements, which gives me an insight into various settings and a direct link to other conductors. I also teach and supervise conductors completing their post-graduate studies to gain a Master's degree in CE, resulting in further investment on my part in the academisation and safe-keeping of CE. This aligns with Collini's (2012) argument that the education of the next generation is not solely about contribution to the economy.

My involvement with the undergraduate course highlighted the impact of CE not having an explicitly formulated philosophy, had on students, in trying to understand the essence of CE. The absence of a conceptualised philosophy has become a troubling for me. In an attempt to address this, as part of my EdD programme, I investigated the known about the underlying principles of CE and summarised what I coined *the four philosophical building blocks of CE* in an article (Berger-Jones, 2022). One of my main motivations for making the familiar strange (Thomson, 2013) is to help to transform theoretical knowledge, with a positive impact on the practice and academisation of CE.

According to Bright et al (2016) choices towards continual professional development are based on professional ethics. Aligning with the value I place on intrinsic motivation, throughout my CE career, I have consistently engaged in wider professional activities. I joined our professional body, the Professional Conductor's Association (PCA), when it was formed in 2008 (Brown, 2023) and have been a registered member ever since. As stipulated by Barad (2007) knowledge and knower cannot be separated, so I participate in the annual workshop for conductors and present at the national CE conference. For example, in 2024 my presentation was titled *Appraising the philosophy of CE for contemporary times* and in 2023 I talked about *Exploring professional identity*. Consequently, I am known in the profession and have good working relationships with other conductors. Being an inside insider has its advantages: I have familiarity with potential participants and they with me, I have professional knowledge of CE and its language (Tuli, 2010). There are also disadvantages: due to the level of my experience and role in training I could be seen as an expert by other conductors, which could impact power-dynamics between myself and willing participants (BERA, 2024). This was mitigated by a careful consideration of the ethical integrity of the study, I see this as a serious response-ability (Barad, 2007).

Over the years, I noticed conductors seeking development opportunities away from the profession; their narratives signalled to a low professional confidence and uncertainty. This observation and the lack of literature regarding conductors' professional identity, sparked a desire to explore identity and strengthen their/our confidence. This thesis has the power to highlight to conductors the urgent need to move research, practice and academia forward in order to firmly secure CE's position as a unique and distinct pedagogical approach in the UK in the 21st century.

∞.7 The structure of the thesis

Moving forward, the rest of the thesis is structured thus:

Chapter 1 analyses what is known about CE, offering contextualisation through synthesising Hungarian and English language publications. I provide a succinct historic overview of events with consideration of political and cultural contexts before

exploring the current context of CE in the UK with a special focus on conductors' professional identity.

Chapter 2 presents a thinking around my ethico-onto-epistem-ology. The study proposes to do research differently and aligns to the post-qualitative paradigm. New materialism as the theoretical framework for the study is discussed. The chosen data generation method is focus group and the analysis is diffraction. A detailed account of the ethical integrity of the study is offered.

Chapter 3 thinks with the data< and its *matter*ing. Two activities used with 21 conductors participating in four focus groups is discussed, exploring material-discursive encounters and my embodied experiences, which opened up the possibility to notice *what* produces conductors.

Chapter 4 discusses and answers the three guiding questions. There is a re-turning to significant data< segments to think about *becoming*-conductor and its *matter*ing. The philosophy of CE is conceptualised for contemporary times and CE is theorised through a new materialist lens.

Chapter 5 offers a summary of the findings of the study. The original contributions are recognised, I share my learning before concluding with suggestions for future research.

Hiatuses appear organically throughout the thesis, where agential cuts are enacted, inviting the reader to have a hiatus. These offer an opportunity for the reader to intra-act (Barad, 2007) with my thoughts as I think-write (St Pierre, 2018) them and become entangled in my *becoming*-(practitioner)researcher identity.

Chapter 1: The known about Conductive Education

1.1 Introduction

This chapter analyses what is known about Conductive Education (CE), offering contextualisation through synthesising Hungarian and English language publications from the past seven decades. To offer multiple perspectives, the literature reviewed is varied in terms of the positionality of the authors and their perceptions of the system. On the other hand, it must be acknowledged that my new materialist stance does not offer a clear distinction between the knower and the known (Barad, 2008); as a result of my positionality, I am entangled in the system of CE. I offer a succinct historic overview of events with consideration of political and cultural contexts. I trouble and clarify some of the historic inconsistencies and misunderstandings surrounding CE. Exploring the heritage of CE aids understanding its past and opens up possibilities to view it differently in the present. As pointed out by Dennis et al (2022: 4): “practice is legitimated by research” and therefore research can unframe practice. A post-qualitative lens opens up possibilities to intra-act with temporality and spatiality. Therefore, looking back must be the first step, in order to make looking ahead possible to develop a situated and emergent conceptual framework for CE in the present. Afterall, according to Barad (2010: 244) past/present/future are “... threaded through on another in a non-linear enfolding”.

Firstly, alignment is made to underpinning theorists/theories throughout the chapter to aid situating CE in the wider context. I offer an initial description of CE, understanding what CE is should extend upon reading this chapter. Next the origins and the emergence of CE are studied, resulting in the birth of a new professional – *the conductor*. An interrogation of the Hungarian context follows leading to international interest in CE. The British context is assessed; an overview of research studies is provided and the view of parents whose children attended CE is shared to show a different perspective. The methodology and philosophy of CE are discussed, positioned at the latter part of the chapter after the necessary background information has been provided to facilitate clarity. I then offer an insight into the current context of CE in the UK and its impact on professional identity. Even though this chapter is

presented in headings, the discourse shared is not linear and all aspects of CE are entangled, therefore the sections cannot be neatly separated.

1.2 Underpinning theories of CE

The Grundtvig project (2012), carried out by the European Conductors' Association, identified a number of core theorists/theories, which underpin CE, to aid the standardisation of international training strategies. For example: Bandura's (1977) social cognitive theory and self-efficacy. This work was significant for the profession; Gegenwarth et al (2012: 22) claimed that "... core theorists are essential to provide CE with a unique identity". They (ibid: 23) also recognised: "unfortunately, no theoretical foundation of Pető's knowledge base has been transmitted, thus, retrospectively, his work can only be analysed within a historical context". The Grundtvig project (2012) recognised that CE is constantly evolving therefore, its underpinning theories need to be updated to reflect on advances in knowledge. This aligns with Brown (2018) who asserted that Pető and Hári left a living practice as their legacy. The most significant theories, are included in the undergraduate conductor training in England (BCU, 2024). However, some taught in the curriculum were not incorporated in the Grundtvig project (2012), such as Dweck (2006) and her concept of mindsets or Bronfenbrenner (1986) and his ecological system theory. These theories aid understanding CE and are embedded in conductors' practice. Throughout this chapter the underpinning theories are referred to as they aid the meaning making of the system, however the aim of this thesis is not to explore these theories in-depth.

1.3 Initial description of CE

CE was developed in Hungary in the late 1940's by Dr András Pető (Russell, 1994a). Sutton (2006) claimed that CE is complex, almost too complex to summarise; this can present the issue of assumptions being made about the system (Hapnes, 2010). For example, in 1965 an American orthopaedic doctor wanted to make a half an hour documentary about CE, yet Pető refused his request as he felt that his system could not be showcased in that short length of time (Hári, 1997). Possibly as a result of this, according to Brown (2024) conductors do not have a united voice nor do they use one clear message consistently to clarify what constitutes of CE.

CE can be described as a “... special educational way of rehabilitation” (Gegenwarth et al, 2012: 18) it promotes the educational and the social inclusion of those living with a disability (Emerson & Holroyd, 2019). According to Blackburn and Ward (2020), conductors offer a family-centred approach. CE is a non-linear, layered, highly structured yet flexible system of teaching and learning, which is active in nature and as such empowers people with damage to their central nervous system (CNS) to achieve and succeed in life (PCA, 2009a; Lion, 1993). This is in opposition to people with disabilities being viewed as *passive* and *vulnerable* by society (Runswick-Cole & Goodley, 2013). In line with the work of Oliver (1990), in this thesis, disability is understood as a socially constructed concept to categorise people. A main facet of CE is that change is possible (Hári, 2008); learners are capable of reaching beyond existing low expectations set by society (Sutton, 2016). Pető instinctively believed, that the brain has a residual ability to regenerate itself. Therefore, people with damage to their CNS can be taught, which indicates that the effects of the damage are not final (Medveczky, 2006). Today, this concept is known as neuro-plasticity. Sutton (2002: 109) called CE a “practical pedagogy”, suggesting that the development of human beings is not fixed (Sutton, 2011). Pető saw individuals in a different light and knew he needed to work with them in an integrated way (Hári, 1997). CE is wholistic – paying attention to each person in their entirety individually (Schaffhauser, 2019) whilst still seeing the learner as part of a social context. This helps to understand Pető’s choice of word *conductive/conduction*, meaning to “intentionally bringing things together as a whole” (Sutton, 2011: 28).

1.4 The origins and emergence of CE

Pető (Hári, 1997) put his ideas into practice with fourteen children who were deemed incurable by traditional medicine; the bed-bound individuals, were transformed within months. Pető approached the children from a pedagogic perspective and proved that people who were deemed a *lost cause* or *uneducable* were capable of learning (Hári, 1997). This idea brought existing thought into question, it did not align with the deficit views on disability; Pető’s focus was not on the person’s impairment, his aim was not to cure but to teach. This is echoed by Sutton’s (1998a) notion that change is possible, which is resonant with Feuerstein’s (2012) belief in cognitive modifiability. Feuerstein (2008) advocated that all human beings have the capacity to learn; everyone has the

potential to improve, but key to this, is to teach individuals to learn how to learn (Feuerstein et al, 2014). Until the late 1940s there was no effective method available to support people with CNS damage anywhere in the world. Pető offered something new and as such something controversial, pushing against normative ideas around disability (Hári et al, 1991).

Pető (Kozma, 1995) felt that a person's attitude to life needed to be considered, not just their level of functioning – learners had to become active and part of a social group. Pető's view from the mid 20th century is echoed by de Leeuw et al (2020), recognising the importance of learners' role in the social constructivist process of knowledge production. This again was not a traditional way of viewing disability (Hári, 1997); as explained by Hamre et al (2006: 94) through the lens of the medical model, the goal of rehabilitation is to treat the disabled person's "defects". According to Kállay (2019a) CE as a system is based on activation; as highlighted by Kapronczay (1993) this activation does not refer to physical activity alone, but encompasses cognitive and emotional stimulation. Balogh and Balogh (1998) highlighted that *conduction* refers to the active nature of learning in CE as learners are guided towards a solution. These aspects are closely linked to Pestalozzi's pedagogy which also emphasised considering the interests of the child, the role of spontaneity, the importance of active engagement in the learning process and the autonomy of the learner (Pestalozzi Society, 2021; Hári, 2008). Pető's appreciation of Pestalozzi's beliefs was evident in the naming of his first setting after him (Hári, 2007).

Pető (Sutton, 2012) recognised that the CNS needs to be influenced by constant and consistent stimuli. As active movements impact the brain's functioning, which further stimulates activation (Balogh & Balogh, 1998) therefore it is paramount for learners to move with a purpose (Hári et al, 1991). From a post-humanist perspective, Page and Sidebottom (2022: 776) recognised the importance of movement for typically developing learners, they stipulated: "the locomotion of the body allows us to explore, to move to meet our needs; it provides a coherent system to bring together the structures and functions that allow us to sense". This further highlights the importance of movement for the disabled learner in CE. Medveczky (2006) explained, in order to learn, doing something passively is not enough, the action itself has to be a significant experience for the person. The CNS will only plan a movement if it has a purpose,

having an intention further aids activation (Ákos & Ákos, 1997); consequently, in CE creating goals holds high importance.

CE crosses traditional paradigms (pedagogy, neurology, physiology, psychology, sociology) presenting a new way of thinking about disability; Pető asked: “what could a patient do to help themselves?” (cited in Sutton, 1986: 155). Another shift in thinking shone through the ban on using negative language; words such as *bad side* had to be avoided (Hári, 1997). Instead, encouraging language and motivation were used, so people could experience happiness and success, which was theirs, something they worked for and earned (Balogh & Balogh, 1998). This idea is advocated in Bandura’s (1977) social cognitive theory, which highlights the role of and the importance of self-development through intrinsic reinforcement and motivation. Pető understood that a person’s willing participation is a prerequisite for their progress (Hári, 1997); he felt that the children needed a challenge rather than overprotection (György, 2012).

CE is not about improving function, it does not treat the disability (Hári & Sutton, 1987). CE’s ideologies are in firm opposition of the medical model’s view where the focus is curing or treating people’s problems and impairments (Bartlett & Burton, 2016). In CE the emphasis is not on carrying out certain movements or sequences, the key is to learn to apply skills (Hári, 1975), without intention movement cannot occur actively (O’Shea et al, 2020). In other words, the *how* and *why* matter more than the *what*; this is another alignment to Pestalozzi’s pedagogy – the importance of relating learning to life (Sellars & Imig, 2021). Consequently, learning has to be relevant to a person’s life (Kállay, 2019b); opportunities for learning must be created (Hári, 1997). Therefore, conductors must consider the learner as a whole and engage the whole person (Schaffhauser, 2019) in a group context. The importance of this can be seen in Bandura’s (1977) ideas; he emphasised the importance of the environment within which learning occurs (Fuente et al, 2023). His concept of self-efficacy stresses the powerful role of motivation and ability to change – showing human agency (Gaunthier & Latham, 2022). Bandura’s (1977) concept of self-efficacy shows how a belief in one’s own abilities can impact success and bring about positive changes. Hári (1992) viewed the complexity of CE as a means for conductors to see the bigger picture – the whole. This further promotes Pestalozzi’s belief in a person-centred approach to teaching, highlighting the need for a holistic view of the learner – educating head, heart

and hands (Pestalozzi Society, 2021; Hári, 2008). This was confirmed by Cotton (1984) who recognised that CE does not divide individuals into component parts in order to solve their problems. Maslow's (2013) theory of human motivation also aids understanding how to meet individual's needs leading to development and growth. Maslow (2013) organised human needs into five categories, which are related to each other; these are: *physiological, safety, love, esteem and self-actualisation*. According to this theory, human beings desire a sense of safety, respect and acceptance from others, a sense of pride and praise in order to achieve self-actualisation – fulfilling their potential.

Pető realised the importance of emotions and their impact on a person's levels of motivation – interest multiplies the efficiency of learning therefore emotions and attention are key to learning (Medveczky, 2006). This is in line with Pestalozzi's pedagogy, who encouraged educators to follow the interest of the learners (Sellars & Imig, 2021). Thus, any solution found, has to be right for the individual's context otherwise it holds no meaning or motivational value (Hári et al, 1991). The intention/effort and therefore the learning, has to come from the person for it to become intrinsic, so the success belongs to them – they own it (Read, 1998). In other words, the person needs to believe in their own abilities and potential – they need to have what Dweck (2006) calls a growth mindset. Dweck (2006) advocated the power of believing in self-improvement and the role mindsets play in this; she identified two types of mindsets: fixed and growth. According to Dweck (2014) a person's mindset determines their level of motivation and therefore attitude and approach to challenges, this in turn directly impacts the effort put into a task.

1.5 The conductor – a new profession

Pető (Hári, 1997) realised that in order to see the person through a different lens and for teaching to happen in an integrated way, he needed to train his own staff. A new professional – *the conductor* was created – a term coined by Pető. According to the PCA (2009a: 6) "... conductors are not an amalgamation of current professionals in education, therapy and rehabilitation. They are new, distinct professionals, whose training, experience and methods of working are unique to Conductive Education". Conductors are responsible for the planning and delivery of CE programmes utilising

motivation to stimulate learning in all individuals within their groups. This can be achieved through observing for potential and having high expectations. Conductors have an in-depth knowledge of each individual, understanding not only their condition but their specific contexts to ensure maximum and positive impact in all areas of development (PCA, 2009a). This shares parity with Bronfenbrenner's (1986) ecological systems theory, which recognises the influence of the wider environment in development and therefore views the individual holistically, considering physical, emotional, political and cultural factors.

Conductors provide guidance for the person to find their own solution, rather than trying to fix their (in)ability to function (Hári, 2008). This viewpoint highlights that in CE, the person with the disability is not framed within a deficit-based focus instead it accepts that disability is part of life. According to Connor and Gabel (2013) while disability is medically framed educators will not be able to understand the diversity of students. The conductors' role is resonant to the role of the instructor in the Feuerstein method, where teaching happens through a mediated learning experience, where an adult makes learning accessible for all (Feuerstein et al, 2014). An essential part of CE is that it is highly individualised, considering the diversity whilst working in a cohesive group, utilising the benefits of social constructivist learning (Biszterszky, 1993). Vygotsky (1978) also held a social constructivist view of learning – believing that learning and development are mediated, highlighting the role of the social environment, culture and social interaction in the process (Daniels, 2016). As an educational process, CE varies for individuals (Medveczky, 2006). Therefore, conductors have to be flexible (Hári, 1997) without offering pre-set solutions (Sutton, 1986). Offering an individualised approach to meet each learners' need is crucial, as emphasised by Oliver (2013), people with disabilities do not make up one big unitary group.

The formal training of conductors started in Hungary in 1963, students were taught in lectures and were immersed in practice throughout their four years of studies (Biró, 1993). Practical learning was a priority, trainee conductors spent 26 hours a week in placement and had 12 hours of theoretical learning with practical demonstrations (Titchener, 1986a). Student conductors first trained then worked at the Institute (Fellner et al, 2010). There were strict rules and a clear hierarchy of staff to ensure

knowledge and experience were passed down from generation to generation (Horváth, 2014). Culturally, seniority could never be questioned – as such the need to justify the practice or the theory behind actions never arose. Hungary still produces the most conductors, but since 1997 training is also available in England in the form of a three years BA (Hons) programme with a Qualified Conductor Status (PCA, 2022a). Students learn in lectures and work at a different placement each semester to gain experience (NICE, 2022). According to Sutton (2007) a major challenge in establishing conductor training in England was due to a lack of available literature, making it problematic to communicate clearly and effectively with professionals and academics alike. These issues are still present in the field today however, could be addressed through the theorisation of CE, offered by this thesis.

Morgan (2012) recognised that in social work training, students' assumptions and value systems are challenged as they are encouraged to adopt the social model of disability as their worldview. Advocates of the social model fought for a different image of disability held by society and importantly they changed the legal system by making discrimination illegal (Oliver, 2013). Rejecting previously held ideas on disability results in irreversible changes to thinking and, therefore, the way social workers are able to remove barriers and further promote inclusive environments (Morgan, 2012). Drawing on Morgan's (2012) work, it can be said that it is essential for trainee conductors to achieve a paradigm shift in their thinking and approach. Most conductors in the UK align their views on disability to the bio-psycho-social model (Berger-Jones, 2024a). The bio-psycho-social model of disability was coined by Engel in the 1970s, offering a more holistic view of a person by considering biological, psychological and social factors impacting an individual's well-being (Wade & Halligan, 2017). The bio-psycho-social model accepts the views of both the medical and social models of disability but also understands that these are connected, therefore it offers a more comprehensive view of the individual (Petasis, 2019).

Conductors can offer the opportunity for people to learn “to make their bodies work for them” (Read, 1998: 291). Therefore, conductors must ensure that experiences are gained through spontaneity and activation (Balogh & Balogh, 1998). In CE every opportunity is a learning opportunity – the framework of the *daily routine* (one of the methodological aspects of CE) ensures this (Székely, 1975). The right conditions have

to be provided by the conductor for learning to occur (Ákos & Ákos, 1997, Hári, 1992). Therefore, conductors use the social context to create learning opportunities, the *group*, another methodological aspect of CE, is a vehicle where individuals can learn together and from each other in a shared space (PCA, 2009a). This idea is supported by Vygotsky's (1978) socio-cultural theory, highlighting that social interactions and the environment play a significant role in development.

1.6 The Hungarian context

CE was established in a post second world war environment in a politically isolated country (Fellner et al, 2010). Pető's Institute belonged to a communist State and offered free services (Read, 1995). Up until the 1980s, CE was practiced just in Hungary at the Pető Institute, in conductor only teams (Sutton, 1997). Pető called CE a "special educational method" (Pető cited in Sutton, 2012: 137) and the system sat between the medical and educational professions (Fellner et al, 2010). The Institute was self-contained (Sutton, 1985), its work monitored and organised by a handful of senior leaders (Fellner et al, 2010), progress was recorded for the purposes of the Institute serving the needs of the State. Sárkány (1994) claimed that Pető purposefully kept CE at the margins of existing systems, to ensure full application of his philosophical beliefs, which would not have been possible within the then present political constraints. Pető was not willing to give up on anyone (Kapronczay, 1993), he wanted to discover what people with disabilities were able to learn in the right environment with guidance. This idea is wholly resonant with Vygotsky's (1978) key concept of the zone of proximal development (ZPD), the idea of the more knowledgeable other (MKO) and scaffolding. The ZPD is the area where learners are challenged and therefore require assistance from an MKO to solve a task successfully (Daniels, 2016). The assistance is called scaffolding, facilitating the learner to work at a higher level than they are capable of on their own (Wass & Golding, 2014). Working in individuals' ZPD, allows teaching to be more effective while learning remains active and dynamic (Sutton, 2000).

Instead of the word education or pedagogy, in Hungarian, CE is often referred to as *nevelés* – encompassing the concepts of upbringing, nurturing and tutoring (Sutton, 1985). Perceiving CE from this angle, further highlights its wholistic nature –

emphasising the importance of finding the right way for individuals to learn and live (Kállay, 2019a). CE is a way of thinking and a way of being (Lion, 1993) hence why Sutton (2010: xiii) articulated that: “CE is for life” and Kohn (2005: 93) coined it a “liberating pedagogy”. Ákos (1975) felt that the main aim of CE was concrete – to achieve full rehabilitation; this meant (in/at its specific context) being accepted to attend school or being employed.

1.7 International interest in CE

While Hungary was oppressed under Soviet occupation, freedom in general was restricted, however, when possible, the Institute welcomed visitors from all over the World and Hári gave talks on CE (Hári, 1997). There was international interest in the 1960s (Hári, 1997). Cotton, working as a physiotherapist for the then Spastic Society, made serious attempts to introduce CE to the UK as she felt that children and their families in England were entitled to CE (Tatlow, 1995), but was met with only small, localised interest (Read, 1992). Hári was invited to conferences abroad from the late 1960s (Hári, 1997) she made a good effort to articulate the practice of CE to other professionals outside of Hungary but Sutton (2007), with hindsight, claimed that Hári’s message about CE was not clearly understood due language and cultural barriers. Up until the 1970s only privately circulated written materials were available in Hungarian (Hári & Ákos 1988). The only exception was a translated book from 1975, edited by Hári and Ákos, titled *Scientific Studies in Conductive Pedagogy*. The book aimed to offer some clarification on the system. Nevertheless, due to language barriers and the lack of publications, interested professionals and keen parents had to construct their own version of CE. This was mainly based on their observations, conversations had with limited language skills and with their own lived experiences, therefore understanding CE through a very different cultural, political, socio-economical and linguistic context. As pointed out by Shields (1989) what CE is based on is not understood outside of the Pető Institute; the literature reviewed suggests that CE is still misunderstood in the UK.

1.8 Factors influencing understanding of CE in the UK

Most early publications were narrative accounts from visitors to the Pető Institute (Read, 1992). Cotton was one of the first professionals who started to write about CE

in English – the evidence from the literature indicates that others coming after her, were influenced by Cotton's use of terminology and perceptions. After their visit to the Pető Institute, Cotton and Parnwell (1967, 1968) described CE as a treatment option contrary to Pető's emphasis being on learning. Cotton and Parnwell (1967, 1968) listed some of the observable elements – mostly the methodological aspects of CE without mentioning its pedagogical essence. Later, Cotton identified these as the seven principles; these were: *transdisciplinary working, the group, basic motor pattern, rhythmical intention, task series, daily timetable* and *the room* (Cottam, 1994). Cotton's (1974) focus was on improving basic motor function as such, her version of CE focused predominately on movements, which is in opposition of Pető's intentions: "we consider the patient as a whole" (Pető cited in Sutton, 2012: 137). According to Rix (2020) educational and health practitioners speak a different language and there are significant conceptual differences in their thinking.

Cotton and Grillo (1978) positioned CE as an integration of various disciplines. As a solution to not being able to have Hungarian conductors easily in the UK (relocating from a communist country was not easy), other professionals were tasked to act as the conductor in the group without undertaking the required and essential (then) four-year training programme (Cottam, 1986). These professionals varied from teacher, nursery nurse, physiotherapist or speech and language therapist; each with their own specific training and values. Hári (2008) was clear – without a trained conductor there is no CE. Contradictory to this, rather than as a professional bringing a different perspective and requiring specific training, Cotton (1984) viewed the conductor as an amalgamation of experts. Conversely, Kozma (1995: 113) stressed that CE is "not some kind of sequential or side-by-side application of therapies".

Cotton valued the system of CE and felt that it could offer change to the provision available for children with cerebral palsy in England (Cottam, 1994). CE showed Cotton what children could achieve; she then interpreted the system through her physiotherapist's lens and created her own version (Cottam, 1994). According to Titchener (1986a), the only reports from Hungary came from Hári, leading to some misunderstandings regarding specific terms used in CE. Without easily available or accessible publications from the Pető Institute, the West's understanding of CE could only be based on publications, mostly written by Cotton representing her perspective.

As Cotton made her own version, her publications have been damaging to CE in the long term as they led to misinterpretations of the system, with a focus on motor function. This is evident in Tomlain's (1993) account of CE as a treatment option, focusing on the use of equipment and exercising; viewing the conductors' position as a combination of roles, disregarding their specialist training and expertise.

There is a different view offered on CE from Heal, an American academic who spent nine months in the Pető Institute in 1972. After which, he produced a comprehensive report of his observations; based on my reading, this report has not been cited widely in CE literature. Heal identified CE as an integrated approach with the benefits of having one specifically trained pedagogue, *the conductor*, bearing all responsibility (Ákos, 1975). When explaining the daily schedule and the structure of the programmes, Heal acknowledged the importance of the opportunities provided for application of skills. Therefore, explicitly highlighting that in CE, the focus is on the learning process, which takes place within a group context. Furthermore, Heal (cited in Ákos, 1975) distinguished CE's uniqueness in the high levels of motivation observed in everyone involved. Heal's perspective and evaluation as an academic (rather than a therapist) highlights the pedagogic value of CE.

1.9 The British context

CE had a two-phased entry into the UK; firstly, Cotton's localised attempts in the 1960s and the second in the 1980s, which was more explosive and impactful in comparison. This was partly due to the political and educational context during that time and in part to Sutton, who ignited the interest of parents with children with cerebral palsy (Berger-Jones, 2021a). Sutton (1985) recognised that the lack of publications meant that no one in the UK really knew what CE was. Hári and Tillemans (1984) tried to fill the gap in literature by providing an explanation of CE from a conductive perspective, but this was still written with the Hungarian context in mind. Therefore, Sutton (1988) attempted to provide an insight to help British readers makes sense of the context and understand why certain developmental milestones were emphasised at the Pető Institute. A pre-requisite for all children to be admitted to a Hungarian school were the ability: to walk to school, to hold a pencil and to be toilet trained (Read, 1992). Consequently, in Hungary, conductors had to focus on improving children's confidence

and develop their abilities regarding these three skills to be successfully accepted to any educational setting. Not understanding the Hungarian context and the intentions of the Pető Institute led to false impressions regarding the focus of CE in the UK. Based on evidence, it can be concluded that misconceptions regarding CE focusing on physical function was founded on this. For example, Robinson et al (1989) understood CE's main aim as the ability to function without aids, Oliver (1989) claimed that CE was about the *normalisation of the disabled* and some professionals focused on how CE can teach children to walk (Patrick, 1989). Against the efforts of Hári and Tillemans (1984) emphasising that CE is about learning to learn, Beach (1988) compared CE to traditional therapies dismissing its pedagogic nature. Sutton (1986) highlighted that CE is an educational approach, which uses a group for the benefits of social learning; and considers the learner as a whole. This aligned well with initial observations of the first group of British children immersed in CE. Lambert (1988) reported some physical improvements but his emphasis was on positive changes regarding the children's altered attitude to life, their increased levels of confidence and sudden found positive approach to learning. Some of the legacy assumptions are still present today. On a day-to-day basis, for conductors the unwelcome consequence, as identified by Blackburn and Ward (2020), are feeling under-valued and under-recognised by other professionals.

Nevertheless, CE with its bold aim to transform the lives of those living with a disability appealed to the pioneers, such as Sutton (2016), who wanted to change the system of special educational needs and disability. As CE proposed a different way of thinking and doing, those in favour of the existing system were not convinced. There was an air of scepticism around CE (Read, 1992; Beach, 1988). Criticism came in 1988 from the Chartered Society of Physiotherapists objecting CE, claiming it challenged their work and gave false hope to families (Lambert, 1994a). CE's origins seem an obvious contributing factor to the suspicion, Hungary – a small Eastern European communist country, with a different culture and perplexing language. It would have been almost impossible to believe that something innovative could have come out of there, without a Western, colonising far more advanced country getting there first (Lebeer, 2005). Considering the literature reviewed so far, it could be said that the Semmelweis reflex – describing a tendency in behaviour, choosing well-known beliefs instead of

welcoming new ideas (Gupta et al, 2020) – could have played a part in CE being rejected.

1.10 Measuring, recording and researching CE

1.10.1 Hungary

The Pető Institute kept statistical data on the number of individuals attending CE provisions. To demonstrate improvements, Hári and Ákos (1988) shared data collected over a fifteen-year period, showing that 86% of children and adults admitted to the Pető Institute were discharged and integrated into society. Hári (1997) stated that medical professionals were not interested in the non-physical, non-measurable attributes of CE; therefore, conductors felt that there was no need to offer a written explanation of the transformative nature of CE.

An inhibiting factor for research was that aspects of CE which were effective in practice, could not be explained scientifically at the time. Kozma (1993) acknowledged that research should have been prioritised more at the Institute. Conversely, Hári (2008) warned against CE becoming too focused on improvements alone, suggesting a degree of resistance against recording measurements – after all CE is an approach for teaching and learning. The importance of research is recognised in today's conductive world; but Túri (2020) emphasised that measuring improvements of a person based on an objective test system alone would dismiss any emotional and motivational factors. Brown (2018) believed that measuring ability in CE is meaningless as that is where a conductor's work begins – providing a baseline for learning. CE is concerned with potential rather than individual's current level of ability (their starting point), aligning with Vygotsky's (1978) concept of the ZPD. This highlights that research in CE needs to move beyond the measurable and different ways of knowing should be explored.

1.10.2 International

Especially since the 1980s, various professionals (for example: physiotherapists or doctors) were keen to investigate CE, however they did this from an outsider's standpoint without consulting practitioners on the inside. Often this led to publishing misguided information, which were then used as facts in subsequent studies (Lambert,

1994a). Most research carried out in CE used tools best suited for quantitative studies in the medical professions, rather than the education sector (Schenker & Sutton, 2014). For example, after visiting the Pető Institute, three British paediatricians concluded that CE challenged disabled children and saw their potential, but also stated the Pető Institute's results lacked a rigorous research methodology (Robinson et al, 1989). This would have reduced CE's validity in the scientific world.

Most studies conducted in the UK and internationally, were comparative studies to measure the effectiveness of CE. For example, the UK government-funded Birmingham report carried out by Bairstow et al, (1993) was damaging to the reputation of CE as their findings concluded that attending a CE school is no more effective than a special school placement with additional therapeutic input. In addition to that, the research was not successful in identifying the nature of the perceived benefits from CE and as such Bairstow et al, (1993) did not see any reason to develop the system further. An objective of the Birmingham report was to explicitly identify the principles, which were essential for a successful implementation of CE. However, Bairstow et al, (1993) found it impossible to identify specific elements or isolate parts of the whole. Another example from the UK is Jung-Ae Hur's (1997) comparative study, which focused on skills for independence – signifying the misconception that CE is a therapy. Further evidence that Cotton's initial writing has influenced how CE was viewed can be found in Pedersen's (2000) study; he shared his critical views of CE with his understanding of the system being based on the Hungarian context from the 1970s. The results of nine studies, carried out at nine different settings were detailed; however, only half of the places employed qualified conductors. Pedersen's (2000) focus was on motor function and his conclusion was that CE is only effective due to its intensity. Moving away from the UK, Wright et al, (2005) used measurement tools in Canada to investigate the effectiveness of CE however, the lens they viewed CE through was based in the original Hungarian context. Ratcliffe and Sanekane (2009) found that based on the limited studies available and the lack of quality in the design of many of those, the evidence of the effectiveness of CE was inconclusive. Interestingly they listed various models of CE, one being an alternative model, where sessions were delivered without a qualified conductor (ibid). This further reinforces that Cotton's writings on CE have led to misconceptions, which renders the specifically trained professional, *the conductor*, unnecessary. Tuersley-Dixon and Fredrickson

(2010) provided a detailed analysis of past CE studies to investigate claims of the benefits of CE for children. Yet they failed to provide an up-to-date context outside of Hungary and primarily focused on physical ability.

A project ran by the European Conductive Association in 2013-2015, tried to find an objective, evidence-based way to report CE outcomes to a wider professional domain. The project recommended the use of standardised measurement tools in CE (ECA, 2015). However, currently in England there is no agreed way to measure or record progress across CE settings.

1.10.3 In defence of CE

Reviewing previous studies, it can be concluded that little effort was made to understand the pedagogic essence of CE by the majority of research. Instead, the focus has been on improving physical functioning and therefore situating CE as a treatment option. This is highly problematic as there are key ontological differences between CE and therapy provision as argued throughout this chapter. Assumptions made regarding CE were based on the publications produced in the 1960s and 1970s. Some of the studies highlighted above, were carried out without a qualified conductor involved, yet it was the system of CE, which was scrutinised. With this in mind, it can be established that measurement tools were used to quantify motoric improvements and physiological changes; there was little to no attention attributed to the pedagogical nature and the non-physical benefits of CE. Pintér (2020, 2019) reviewed all empirical research studies looking at measurements in CE, spanning from the first study in 1972 till 2019, she found 36. There are only a handful of research studies concerned with the *other* aspects of CE. These include; Lambert (1994b) who carried out the first investigation on children's views of CE, wanting to hear their voices. More recently, Blackburn and Ward (2020) looked at conductors' standpoints, this was a small-scale institutional ethnographical study.

Based on the literature presented, I posit that many misconceptions stem from the various interpretations of CE, where only superficial elements of the system were applied in different contexts without the underlying philosophical belief. For example, some special schools assumed that by sourcing *Pető furniture* they would follow

principles and *do CE* (Lambert, 1994b; Editors, 1988). It was not until 1989 that the Spastic Society admitted that they had not offered CE, even though in at least three of their schools they claimed to do so between the 1960s-1980s (Read, 1995). Furthermore, in the early 1990s in the UK, over 200 places announced that they were doing CE, with a side note of *inspired by* or *based on the principles of* the Hungarian approach (Read, 1995). Due to obstacles and complications in recruiting trained conductors, some provisions used *acting conductors* after undertaking a one week training course, later admitting: “we were only paying lip service to the practice” (Titchener, 1986b: 133). Tatlow (1995: 10) conceded that having conductors would have been better “but we do not live in Utopia”. Some benefits would have been had but without the true application of the system and without conductors, transformation in the learner would not have taken place the same way (Lambert, 1990). This indicates that what was deemed as CE was actually not – leading to misinformation on the system and a potential tarnishing of its name. Furthermore, Sutton (2011) highlighted that most studies had no formulated research question and emphasised that trying to research CE by evaluating predetermined outcomes, have largely contributed towards obscuring its true narrative. Gombinsky (2010), a conductor, stated that research carried out failed to find an effective way to show what she deems as the most important aspect of CE – the psycho-social benefits to participants.

1.11 Parental views on CE

In a quest to seek measurable gauges, researchers often overlook emotional factors (Goodley et al, 2018). Most studies in CE are not different, they have not addressed important human questions, considered parental views or listened to participants’ voices. Yet, as recognised by Sutton (2011) even though the majority of research failed to find benefits of CE over other interventions, families were still moved by what they saw and experienced. Morgan and Hogan (2005) identified a number of studies focusing on parental views; these tended to be positive, reporting increased satisfaction regarding progress. In their article, personal expectation and intrinsic motivation were recognised to be key factors in CE (ibid) appraising the affirmation model – asserting positive identities and opposing the tragedy view of disability (Cameron & Lingwood, 2020; Swain & French, 2000). Lambert (1994b) questioned the need to scientifically prove the effectiveness of CE, when people were drawn to it

regardless of hard evidence. He (ibid) felt that, it would be both ethically and politically incorrect to ignore the choices of those who had the most to lose.

Lebeer (2010) a father of a child with cerebral palsy and a general practitioner, saw CE as a system with a simple logic and constant activation; with group motivation, where children put intention into action, with focus on educating personality – actually addressing the whole person (Szörényi, 2012; Lebeer, 2005). Kelly (2010), also a father, valued how in CE, children are given time to work towards their aims. Unarguably, this notion is in direct conflict with the British society's neo-liberal values on productivity and performance (Ball, 2017). CE is dependent on human activity, skill, feelings of love, determination, concern and motivation (Sutton, 2011; Székely, 1975). CE is not a short-term intervention (Medveczky, 2006) – invalidating all neo-liberal values being time and labour intensive without a quick return, CE marginalising itself further from mainstream ideologies. A mother and a sport's coach, Herbst (2010) emphasised that in CE disabled children were trusted to have responsibility for their own learning. Hári (1993) stressed the importance of happiness, play, self-control, friendship, confidence and independence; key features, which need to be satisfied in line with Maslow's (2013) hierarchy of needs in order to achieve self-actualisation. This was highlighted further by Herbst (2010: 132) citing one of Pető's sayings: "when you do not educate the child to be independent, you educate the child to be dependent". Westcott (2010: 147) a mother expressed this by claiming: "CE is about getting an independence of spirit"; children (and adults) learn how to express their wishes clearly and with confidence. Furthermore, McGuigan (2005) felt that CE offered an entirely different approach for his son, which was optimistic as well as systematic; where conductors had an in-depth understanding of cerebral palsy and had a belief in children's potential. Ratliffe and Sanekane (2009) discovered that parents valued the wholistic nature of CE and the accounts above are a testament to this finding.

1.12 The methodology and philosophy of CE

The UK curriculum for CE undergraduate and post-graduate degree courses differentiates between the philosophy (theory) and methodology (practice) of CE (BCU, 2024). The philosophy of CE is realised through the implementation of its methodology (Brown, 2018). Hári (1992) stressed that CE is a system, individual parts

alone cannot make up the whole (PCA, 2014). Despite of Cotton's (1984) focus on the motoric aspects of CE, she recognised that CE does not divide an individual into parts. Therefore, to experience its value, CE has to be applied as a complete system (Schaffauser, 2019).

Sutton (1986) stressed that studying the methodological specifics of CE is where most of the attention has been directed towards. This has changed little over the decades, for example the European Conductive Association (2015: 3) stated that the focus of CE has "... been on practical work". The prioritisation of practice over theory is visible in the training of conductors. The first British trainees studied in Hungary, a summary by Beck (1990) highlighted that the focus of the course was on gaining practical skills. The syllabus only indicated some basic CE principles, for example the aim is for the learner to achieve maximum levels of activity with minimal amount of assistance (Beck, 1990). According to Sutton (1998b: 4-5) the training had been very practice orientated "... almost to the exclusion of an articulated, communicable knowledge base". Titchener (1986a) reviewed published reports over a twenty-year period regarding conductor training and shared some findings. For instance, in 1968, Knowles (cited in Titchener, 1986b) identified that conductors' main role is to form a relationship with a child. This highlights a significant aspect of CE, that it is based on connections. The report also included Hári's warning that the training of conductors must "... ensure a uniformity of outlook, philosophy and practical application" (Titchener, 1986b: 4). This showcases the significance of conductors sharing one vision; however, no further references were made to what the philosophy might be.

1.12.1 Methodology of CE

The methodology consists of eight elements: the conductor, the group, conductive observation, facilitation, the learning environment, rhythmical intention, the daily routine and the task series (PCA, 2009a). Most of these aspects have been documented by observers over the decades and resources regarding each element can be found easily. However, a crucial feature is that all eight methodological tools are essential to form the system of CE (Hári, 1992; Hári & Sutton, 1986). They are interlinked and importantly, informed and underpinned by the philosophy of CE – assuring a unified teaching-learning approach (Ákos & Ákos, 1997). "The methodology

is the tool which brings the philosophy alive” (PCA, 2014: 7); through the application of the methodological aspects the philosophy can be actualised.

1.12.2 Philosophy of CE

Reviewing the literature, it is apparent that even though references are made to the principles of CE, the system does not have an explicitly formulated philosophy. For example, Hári and Ákos (1988) focused on the practical application of CE, offering some theoretical background and some general principles of CE. However, no clear articulation can be found on the philosophy despite of the authors stating that a conductor “... does require a knowledge of its conceptual system” (Hári & Ákos, 1988: 139). A Hungarian edited book, based on the lectures and practical demonstrations of Pető, asserted that CE is a practice-based discipline and learning it theoretically is not enough (Balogh & Balogh, 1998). This indicates that the essence of CE, which is present in the professional practice of conductors, is not documented in writing as it cannot be learnt from books alone, it must be experienced and felt.

Evidence can be found of the lack of a formulated philosophy in more recent publications. The Professional Conductors’ Association’s (2009a) document, *What is conductive education*, lists ten principles within CE but does not offer a concrete written definition regarding the underlying philosophy of the system. Yet, in the Professional Standards for Conductors in the UK, the concept of a philosophy within CE is present and assumed to be known. Standard 1.4 states: “Be committed to explanation and clarification of their understanding of CE philosophy” (PCA, 2017: 4). Furthermore, Standard 3.5 stipulates: “Have a broad, comparative and critical understanding of the history and developing philosophy of Conductive Education” (PCA, 2017: 7). The European Conductor Association run Grundtvig Project has a heading: *IV Philosophy*, however in the section that follows only core theorists are listed; including: Feuerstein’s (2008) cognitive modifiability and Maslow’s (2013) motivation theory (Gegenwarth et al, 2012). According to Sutton (1986) theoretical statements about the system of CE have been limited, as Pető chose the role of a practitioner and wrote very little. I argue that that this led to the essence of CE being presented in an implicit and understated manner. It could be stipulated that as a result of the founder not formulating a philosophy, those coming after him did/do not feel that

they were/are in a position to do so. This is evident in Brown's (2018) claim that there is not a leader who is developing the essence of CE. Brown (2024) raised their concerns regarding conductors not sharing one clear message about CE impacting the profession negatively. In response, the PCA-run annual workshop for conductors in November 2024 focused on *collating the collective message of CE*.

The above-described prioritisation of practice over the philosophy, is present in the BA (Hons) undergraduate degree programme's focus at Birmingham City University (BCU, 2024). However, there is a clear change of direction regarding this focus over the past two decades. To demonstrate, I reviewed the course content at three specific points; 1) 1997: the first proposed degree in CE in conjunction with Wolverhampton University; 2) 2012: when the course transferred to Birmingham City University; 3) 2024: the current iteration of the course. The first course guide (Wolverhampton University, 1997) states that the training is highly practical, it offers six core modules on Conductive Pedagogy across six semesters. The indicative content does not specify teaching the philosophy of CE, however based on the information on the Hungarian training it can be assumed that the essence of CE was learnt through its practical components. Notes taken from a lecture given by Brown (2006b) is evidence that the elements of the philosophy were taught; "CE as a system has many parts but are all linked to the underlying philosophy". It is important to note that both the 2012 and 2024 iterations of the BA (Hons) courses' learning outcomes were mapped against the then/now most up-to-date versions of the Professional Standards for Conductors in the UK (PCA, 2017). In the 2012 course overview (BCU, 2012) there is evidence of module learning outcomes implicitly linking to principles of CE. For example, module 5CE002 "value and respect potential development, change and creation of choice, self-determination for people with motor disorders" recognising the transformative aspect of CE (BCU, 2012). Regarding the current course, in contrast to the previously validated 2012 course, there are explicit links between the module learning outcomes and the philosophy of CE. For example, EDU4164 "understand the history and philosophy of conductive education in a broader context" or EDU6275 "within the context of the philosophy underpinning CE, evaluate, articulate and synthesise different approaches to motor disorders". This suggests that the undergraduate degree programme puts emphasis on teaching the philosophy of CE

in an explicit way during lectures rather than expecting students to learn it implicitly only at their placements.

The four philosophical building blocks

Despite this inclusion in the BA course, there is an absence in the literature around CE philosophy. Brown (2018) argued that it is paramount that the profession clearly formulates the essence of CE so its identity does not get lost. Indeed, the challenges that the lack of clarity caused in particular to undergraduate students and to ensure that the information can be found in a single place, Berger-Jones (2022) synthesised the implicit literature and the principles of CE to articulate its philosophy. They identified four key aspects and coined the term *the four philosophical building blocks*, these were: *orthofunction*, *belief in potential*, *intelligent love* and *the human principle* (ibid). The article argues for the relevance of CE philosophy in today's context but claims that it needs to be unambiguously communicated (ibid). Pető and Hári left a legacy according to Brown (2018: 37) "... which we can attribute to a philosophy of human potential; a belief that change can and will happen as long as the teaching and the environment are appropriate". However, the literature needs to be critically reviewed; the next section is organised according to the four building blocks and gives an overview of each concept.

Orthofunction

Orthofunction is positioned as the main aim of CE (PCA, 2009a). As such, it is the most discussed aspect of CE yet widely misunderstood (Maguire & Sutton, 2004). Orthofunction embraces the idea of the individual feeling part of society and becoming empowered (Emerson & Holroyd, 2019). I offer three definitions of orthofunction from primary source literature, these share commonalities yet they do not offer clarity. Orthofunction is:

"... the successful performance of tasks relating to the biological and social demand-systems appropriate for a particular age-group." (Hári & Ákos, 1988: 145).

"... living with maximum independence and using full potential to achieve this." (Brown & Mikula-Tóth, 1997: 60).

“...helping people achieve their potential by nurturing and developing an attitude to learning which is based on simultaneous development of movement, function and personality.” (PCA, 2009a: 3).

Orthofunction as a concept tends to be discussed alongside dysfunction, presenting as two halves of a binary. Dysfunction as a term refers to ineffective functioning, which indicates that the *state of being* is not static, implying that change is possible (Hári, 2008). This idea aligns with Feuerstein’s (2008) concept of cognitive modifiability; it is possible to learn new strategies and develop an active way of life (Kozma, 1995). Therefore, orthofunction, by its essence is active and is concerned with learning (Maguire & Sutton, 2004). On the other hand, dysfunction, as in a *disorder of function* (Hári et al, 1991) can lead to feelings of failure due to not being able to satisfy “demands generally fulfilled at a given time of life” (Hári & Ákos, 1988: 140), leading to low levels of confidence and lack of motivation. This is the opposite of Dweck’s (2006) growth mindset, it indicates a person having a fixed mindset. On the other hand, orthofunction describes the ability to function effectively despite a dysfunction; referring to intended, purposeful and conscious activity (Hári et al, 1991). Orthofunction refers to the acquisition of the general ability to adapt and to problem-solve, as well as develop self-respect and confidence in one’s own abilities (Russell, 1994b); fully appraising Bandura’s (1977) idea of self-efficacy.

There are some common misconceptions about what orthofunction means, these include: the *normalisation of the disabled* (Oliver, 1989), living without aids or adaptations and physical independence (Berger-Jones, 2024a). McDonald (2019) a practicing conductor’s Master’s dissertation explored conductors’ perceptions on orthofunction; fifty-two conductors working worldwide, took part in her online survey. McDonald (2019) found that conductors’ perceptions of orthofunction and definitions present in the literature vary significantly; however, a common thread was the identification of psychological and physiological aspects growth. Berger-Jones (2022) suggested that the orthofunctional personality should be described as a process rather than a product highlighting the transformative nature of CE.

Belief in potential

Belief in potential is one of the most felt and observed aspects of CE practice, yet during a detailed review of publications there were only implicit references found. For example, the PCA (2009a: 5) state as the first principle of CE: “Everyone can learn and neurological conditions are not seen as limiting factors but provide a key to the direction of learning required”. The concept’s importance is evident in the Professional Standards for Conductors (PCA, 2017: 3) as it is mentioned in section 1.1: “Value and respect the potential for development and change throughout the lifespan in people with motor disorders, in response to conductive pedagogy”. As an active pedagogical approach to overcoming difficulties, CE makes learning accessible to all (Read, 1990) enabling people to achieve (PCA, 2009a). As suggested by Goodley et al, (2018) society tends not to recognise disabled people’s value. CE pushes against this normative notion as conductors foster a belief in individuals’ potential to learn regardless of their age, diagnosed condition or abilities (Medveczky, 2006). This suggests that conductors have high expectations of their learners and through scaffolding and differentiation, facilitate people to experience success (Brown, 2006a). Human beings thrive if someone shows conviction in their abilities – the Pygmalion or Teacher Expectancy Effect, confirm that teachers’ expectations directly and positively impact on their students’ level of performance (Szumski & Karwowski, 2019; Howard et al, 2015). Conductors look for the ability in their learners and work towards achievable yet challenging goals (PCA, 2009a), working in individuals’ ZPD. This process is facilitated by highlighting effort not just outcomes (Hári, 1997), as a result, confidence and self-respect increase, satisfying the fourth stage *self-esteem* in Maslow’s (2013) theory of motivation. There is a strong alignment to growth-mindset and Dweck (2014), who highlighted the importance of praising effort and not just results and introduced the concept of *not yet* in learning. Berger-Jones (2022) suggested that belief in potential and intelligent love are connected and are part of the human principle.

Intelligent love

Intelligent love is a concept used to explain the impact conductors have on their learners and the relationship between them (Berger-Jones, 2022). The idea of love in education is not new, Pestalozzi was committed to pedagogies based on love

(Pestalozzi Society, 2021). In the field of early years Page (2018) problematised the importance of *Professional Love* in enabling children to develop secure attachments to learn, grow, trust and have resilience; reiterating the underlying concept of intelligent love in CE. However, there is only one clear explanation in the CE literature about intelligent love: “sentimental love tends to prolong disability, whereas an intelligent love constantly opens up avenues to ability” (House, 1968: 111). During his visit to the Pető Institute, House noted that conductors really love the children, he highlighted how happy, alert and motivated all the children were whilst learning in an “enabling environment” (House, 1968: 112). This is echoed by Tatlow (2014), a physiotherapist visiting the Institute in the 1980s, she remarked how motivated, lively and active all the children were. This resonated with Hári’s (1988) account of conductors adding something of themselves to the process of CE and being fully dedicated to their participants’ learning. Importantly, Gombinsky (2010) highlighted that conductors empower their learners through teaching them how to live with their condition.

Berger-Jones (2022) outlined how intelligent love is deemed as part of CE philosophy and a part of the human principle. Intelligent love is implicitly present in the Professional Standards for Conductors in the UK, standard 2.1 states: “Project their personalities and create effective relationships with learners, their families and carers” (PCA, 2017: 5). This therefore acknowledges the theory in terms of the positive impact the conductor has on the learners. This also suggests that forming relationships must be a key part of a conductor’s professional practice, both with their learners and with the families.

The human principle (HP)

The concept of the HP was first explored by Hári (1988) who wrote a paper *The human principle in Conductive Education*. For three decades that remained the only publication which considered this concept (Berger-Jones, 2021b). Nevertheless, Hári did not define nor did she explicitly contextualise the HP. Throughout the paper, she referred to three elements: the conductor, the person (with the disability) and the environment. Key messages from Hári (1988) include her belief that CE is ahead of its time and that CE is true education. She described the conductor as no more than a catalyst in the learning process, someone who is “full of life... funny... imaginative”

(Hári, 1988: 3). According to Hári the person with the disability needs to be invested in the learning process, they require intention, a willingness to act. She suggested: "... it is the person himself that is won and given the means to use the power of his brain" (Hári, 1988: 5). In regards to the environment Hári (1988) highlighted that to facilitate learning in the person, experiences must be gained by the individual. Furthermore, to learn, concepts cannot be abstract; action is unique to humans and actions help to express thoughts and emotions. Therefore, Hári (1988: 4) posited that the environment and CE structure must create a "framework within which action makes sense" to the person so they can learn. The crucial role of the environment and social interaction in learning was recognised and prompted by both Pestalozzi's and Vygotsky's pedagogies (Sellars & Imig, 2021). Hári (1988) emphasised the importance of the connections of all parts and the focus on the "... human aspect because it is this thing which above all distinguishes conductive education from all mechanical exercise" (Hári, 1988: 5). This suggests that the HP is key in articulating the essence of CE and in holding all of its parts together, forming a living system.

Nothing further was found in the literature that explicitly investigated the concept of the HP until 2021. Berger-Jones (2021a) carried out an inquiry on what is (not) known about the HP in CE. In their study they uncovered that the concept is under-researched yet it is portrayed as a fundamental part of the philosophy without which, CE would not exist. This indicates that the HP is significant to articulate the essence of the professional practice of conductors. In another paper, Berger-Jones (2021b) posited that the HP is about nurturing potential in the person, normally overlooked by society viewed through the medical model of disability. The medical or deficit model, views disability as a tragedy and deems difference negatively (Cameron & Lingwood, 2020; Bartlett & Burton, 2016). On the other hand, the social model of disability rejects ideas of normality and demands society to remove barriers disabling those with impairments (Armstrong et al, 2010; Fredrickson & Cline, 2009). Alternatively, to these two models CE views the disability as a barrier to learning, which can be overcome by empowering and equipping the person to access their own environment in an active and confident way. This epitomises the shift in viewing human potential as offered by Pető (Hári, 1997).

1.13 Professional identity

1.13.1 The concept and construction of professional identity

Ibarra (1999: 764) defined professional identity as a: “constellation of attributes, beliefs, values, motivations, and experiences in terms of which people define themselves in a professional role”. While Wenger (1998: 151) emphasised that identity is socially constructed with others; “... the experience of identity in practice is a way of being in the world”. This sense of *being* is echoed by Trede et al, (2012) further adding that professional identity offers a lens through which practice can be evaluated and further developed. Importantly, professional identity development is an on-going process, which is non-linear (Hoffman-Kipp, 2008), it takes place in space and time: “... identification, which is relational process by which the world and the person can enter into and constitute each other” (Farnsworth et al, 2016: 147). Professional identity is complex (Trede et al, 2012) with a degree of duality running through it (Stryker & Burke, 2000) as it is both culturally situated and happens in a social context (Tan et al, 2015; Hoffman-Kipp, 2008). Therefore, identity is based on beliefs, principles, characteristics, motivations and experiences (Slay & Smith, 2011). As pointed out by Lightfoot and Frost (2015) contextual shifts, like policy changes, can impact professional identity construction at an emotional level.

Murray (2013) summarised that both external and internal factors influence and impact the construction of professional identity in the case of early years professionals. External factors could include: having a professional body, a code of conduct, professional standards, a body of knowledge supporting the skills required as well as having expert role models (Murray, 2013; Colbeck, 2008). Key internal components for the development of a professional-self include: reflection and agency (Trede et al, 2012). The perceptions an individual holds regarding the professional attributes required for their role influence identity construction (Murray, 2013), consequently being part of a professional community impacts personal identity (Trede et al, 2012; Slay & Smith, 2011). In fact, Lightfoot and Frost (2015) found that professional and personal identities are closely linked as professional identity is not about the role but the person who is in that role. Subsequently, changes in professional identity are connected to human agency (Lightfoot & Frost, 2015) and therefore, having social legitimacy and recognition are significant factors in identity construction (Murray,

2013). This aligns with Wenger's (1998) notion that professional identity is constructed by engaging with others from the community. This is then further shaped by each person trying to make sense of their professional selves, which can be influenced by emotions, agency and reflexivity (Derakhshan & Nazari, 2022). Factors identified by McGillivray (2008) as influential in creating professional identity include history and ideologies.

1.13.2 Conductor's professional identity

CE has a professional body, the Professional Conductors' Association (PCA), which has no regulatory power; registration is voluntary but it is fee paying (PCA, 2024a). In March 2024 the number of registered conductors were sixty-five the estimated number of conductors working in the UK is approximately 100 (PCA, 2024a). Registered conductors have a focused, one day workshop every year, required to take part in at least 25 annual hours of CPD (PCA, 2022b, 2013). The PCA is run by a committee of volunteers, who get elected by its members. Their responsibilities include producing publications, which guide and inform professional practice; for example: *Professional Standards for Conductors in the UK* (PCA, 2017).

A variety of job titles are used by CE providers; including: Conductor (NICE, 2024a), Conductor Teacher (Rainbow Centre, 2024), Conductive Education Specialist (MBH, 2024) and Qualified Conductive Education Practitioner (CE Bristol, 2024). Conductors are part of a heterogeneous profession, working with children and adults (Berger-Jones, 2024b) independently, in conductor only or multi-disciplinary (MD) teams (PCA, 2022c; PCA, 2014). Conductors work in the voluntary, business, education or the health sectors. Depending on the sector they work in, conductors work can be regulated by national government, the local authority and by professional guidelines (Blackburn & Ward, 2020). Traditionally conductors worked in group settings utilising the benefits of the role of interpersonal relationships and the principles of Vygotsky's (1978) socio-cultural theory (PCA, 2017, 2014). A conductor's personality will impact their delivery of CE, therefore CE will manifest in a unique way (PCA, 2014). There are no uniformed ways of documenting learners' progress or an agreed terminology used to refer to the children or adults. *The Code of Practice* (PCA, 2009b: 2), based on the philosophy

and ethos of CE, uses the phrase *service user*, which implicitly aligns CE to the health sector in spite of stating "...an understanding of CE as a pedagogy...".

Blackburn and Ward (2020) stated: "greater appreciation of Conductive Education and the role of Conductors in an integrated education, health and social care system from other professionals would help to ensure that Conductors feel valued and respected". Furthermore, they (ibid) found that issues around conductors' professional identity is created by contradictions. For example, published research on CE tends to compare its pedagogical approach to health-based interventions describing the person as a patient as opposed to a learner. It was found that conductors having to justify their existence in the field of SEND, makes them feel under-recognised. Based on Blackburn and Ward's (2020) study, conductors are showing signs of imposter syndrome. Imposter syndrome was first characterised as a psychological experience of lacking self-confidence and internal success, having an "... inability to meet self-imposed standards of achievement" (Clance & Imes, 1978: 242). The two interviewees from Blackburn and Ward's (2020) research, described their role differently. The pre-school services conductor focused on supporting parents and showing children's potential. Whilst the conductor working with primary school aged children emphasised active participation and the teaching of transferable skills (ibid).

The diversity within CE and lack of standardisation is likely to impact conductors' professional identity and confidence. Working in a MD team can result in conductors making compromises, feeling disregarded and vulnerable (PCA, 2014). The PCA (2022a) has suggested professional titles and roles, to offer guidance to conductors and employers. These include newly qualified conductor, junior conductor, conductor and senior conductor – referring to responsibilities and years of experiences. This guideline has the potential to positively impact conductors' confidence as they could track their own progress, especially if used alongside the *Professional Standards for Conductors*. The first section of this document refers to *Professional values and personal commitment*, expecting conductors to be invested in CE both professionally and personally (PCA, 2017). This is reiterated in the second section *Professional skills and values* where standard 2.1 requires conductors to: "project their personalities and create effective relationships with learners, their families and carers" (PCA, 2017: 5). This highlights the importance of relationships in CE, linking to the HP; but also

introduces some potential tension as conductors have different personalities signalling complexities around professional identity and confidence.

1.13.3 A need for research and unity

Blackburn and Ward (2020) highlighted that most literature/research on CE tended to be published in health journals. There is evidence to signal that CE training providers, both in the England and Hungary, have recognised the need to increase their academic presence and research impact. In 2012 the Conductive College was formed with the intention of delivering accredited training courses (PCA, 2022a). Since 2016 the MA in CE has enabled conductors to develop further within their field (Brown, 2022). Furthermore, the Pető Institute started a professional online journal in 2016 and the Conductive College in the UK have produced one since 2018. However, despite point 2.7 of the Professional Standards for Conductors (PCA, 2017: 6) suggesting that conductor should be able to “Articulate Conductive Education both orally and in writing”, there is a lack of literature in peer-reviewed journals written by CE’s professionals, with only eight articles written or co-written by conductors. Six of these were authored and co-authored by Brown (1996, 2006, 2006, 2008, 2014, 2016), one co-authored by Holroyd (2019) and one written by Berger-Jones (2024b).

According to Brown (2022) the practice of CE has developed over the decades; without that CE could not have moved with the times. For example, during lockdowns caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, CE services moved online to continue to support families. Brown (2024) called for conductors to use one clear message consistently in order to clarify what constitutes of CE. As a solution to not having a united voice, Brown (2024) presented the below diagram, a visual pathway into CE (Figure 3 below) and suggested the following definition for CE: “The system of conductive education encompasses a range of services incorporating a transformative approach to learning and a methodology based on principles of neuroplasticity, social learning and exploration of human potential for people with neurological movement disorders”.

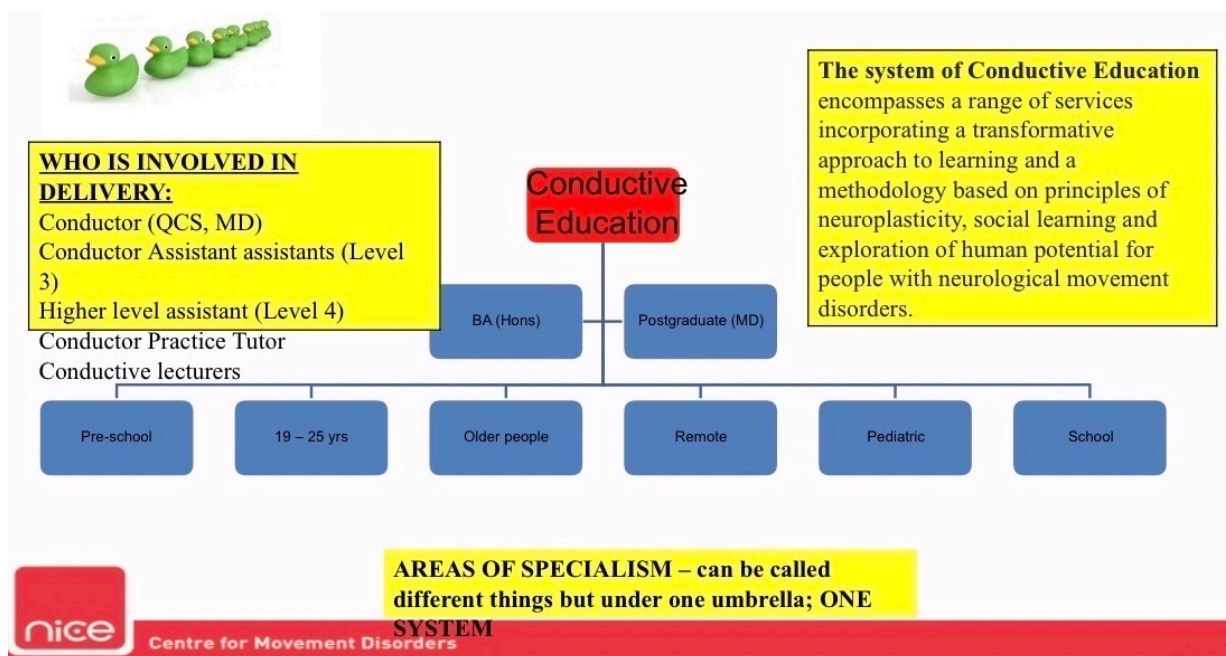


Figure 3: Brown's model

1.14 Conclusion

In this chapter, I offered an explanation of CE as a pedagogical approach, which focuses on human potential. *Conductors* do not view learners as fixed in their (dis)abilities, instead they actively guide each individual to find their own solution. I outlined the emergence and origins of CE in Hungary offering a unique insight utilising Hungarian and English language literature. By discussing international interest and factors influencing understanding of CE in the UK, I highlighted where common misconceptions originated from. I then offered an overview of the British context, further problematising interpretations of CE. I demonstrated through a summary of the limited research available and parental views, that the benefits of CE are not always measurable. Studies have viewed CE as a treatment option rather than a pedagogic approach. I differentiated between the methodology and philosophy of CE, concentrating on the latter, outlining what is currently known. It was demonstrated that the dominant discourse in CE is about the application of the system. There is a lack of theoretical problematisation of CE revealing a thinness to the literature. Reviewing the literature highlighted that the philosophy of CE has not been formulated beyond the *four building blocks* by Berger-Jones (2022). This indicates the necessity to articulate these concepts in contemporary terms to facilitate conductors to convey a compelling narrative with clarity and match the direction of focus now offered by the BA degree course. Therefore unsurprisingly, as the profession and the professional are inherently linked, there is an absence in understanding conductors' professional identity.

Chapter 2: ethico-onto-epistem-ology

2.1 Introduction

The aim of this inquiry is to re-direct thought regarding the philosophy of CE, to open up possibilities for the system to show itself differently and to investigate what informs conductors' professional identity. I want to add value to the profession by producing usefulness for the professional. The study aligns to the post-qualitative paradigm; each post-qualitative inquiry is unique (St Pierre, 2019), and as such it is resonant with CE, as the pedagogic benefits to its learners are as varied as the people CE engages (Brown, 2022). The knowledge-making is emergent through embodied theorisation of CE and a reduction of issues surrounding professional identity by considering both material and discursive encounters.

Chapter 2 identifies the guiding questions. A statement is offered regarding the research language used – navigating expectations whilst staying true to choices made. A justification is provided for this in the sharing of the paradigm selection and my ontological, epistemological stance. New materialism as the theoretical framework for the study is discussed; the chosen data generation method is focus group. This is followed by a detailed account of the ethical integrity of the study. The label of data is problematised before the attention turns to diffractive analysis. The chapter concludes by the sharing of detail regarding the actual sample (Table 1).

2.1.1 Guiding questions

The study aims to answer the following entangled research questions, which are asked through each other:

RQ1: What informs conductors' professional identity and how does this *matter*?

RQ2: How can CE philosophy be conceptualised for contemporary times?

RQ3: How can a new materialist understanding facilitate the theorisation of CE?

2.2 A statement

Existing studies in CE (Chapter 1, section 1.10.2), using conventional methodologies, have not managed to showcase the pedagogic nature of the system. In order to redirect thought and produce knowledge in CE differently (St Pierre, 1997) a different

way of knowing and researching needs to be explored that is not driven by method. However, leaving what St Pierre (2015) calls a methodological prison, has not been without its challenges. In the post-qualitative territory, much of the terminology (e.g. methodology) used in quantitative and qualitative research are debated, and their fitness for purpose is questioned. This is evidenced in the work of St Pierre (2017, 2016, 1997), Mazzei (2013, 2004), Jackson (2017, 2016) and MacLure (2013, 2011). In this inquiry, the word and the concept of *data* is problematised and explored in detail in section 2.7. Where this thesis uses familiar phrases from other paradigms their connotations will be through a new materialist understanding carrying altered significance (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012). It was not possible to fully avoid complying with the expected structure of a humanist qualitative research in order to satisfy expectations for a doctoral thesis. However, I have been comforted by other (post)doctoral candidates who navigated this challenge successfully. For example, Caton's (2019) post-qualitative experimental inquiry utilised arts-based approaches; or Lewis (2022) adopted a new materialist framework to explore creative encounters. Even though both studies included participatory approaches with children within a Post paradigm, they inquired, experimented, wrote and structured their theses in different ways. This aligns with St Pierre (2015) who recognised that a post-qualitative inquiry is personal. Therefore, I decided not to adopt or discard strategies used. Instead, as advised by St Pierre (2015), I chose to trust myself and allowed the theoretical framework to lead this inquiry.

2.3 Theoretical framework

Following on from Barad (2007: 185), this inquiry recognises that knowing, being and ethics cannot be separated – “*ethico-onto-epistem-ology*”; with an understanding that our *being* in the world and the way we see knowledge are questions of ethics (St Pierre et al, 2016). Therefore, this makes me, the inquirer, seek out different ways of thinking and noticing by not privileging one thing over another (human and non-human and other than human). Not privileging language in a written thesis, has not been without its challenges, consequently, I was open to each encounter with all things showing response-ability (Barad, 2007). Response-ability is a “matter of the ability to respond” (Barad, 2012a: 69). In this study, my agency and role in the production of the *something new* has to be acknowledged (Davies, 2014); this can happen, through

entanglements with myself / research-practices / matter / participants / data / theory (Davies, 2014; Barad, 2007). Consequently, the *I*, is no longer in the centre as the all-knowing subject, however this does not strip away my agency. “Knowing is a matter of part of the world making itself intelligible to another part of the world” (Barad, 2007: 185). This viewpoint requires a shift in thinking – I have been part of the assemblage not its creator. It has not been possible to separate knowing and being from one another; they are “mutually implicated and constitutive” (Mazzei, 2014: 745). I was not viewing the research process from a position of distance, I could not be detached from it as I was part of the production of knowledge – part of the knowing-in-being (Bozalek & Zembylas, 2017; Lenz Taguchi, 2012). Embedded and embodied “in a web of relations with human and non-human others” (Braidotti, 2019: 34). I took on Tuana’s (2008: 211) challenge to leave behind all ontological divides in order to “better understand our being in the world”. Therefore, I re-thought material agency throughout this thesis (Barad, 2007).

2.3.1 New materialism

Taking a new materialist position, using its ideologies, enabled my ethico-onto-epistem-ological stance to be genuine and my knowing-in-being to become one with this inquiry (St Pierre, 2015). Barad (2007) uses the term agential realism instead of new materialism.

New materialism offers a different plane of thought on what is meant by *being* and *knowledge*; ending the division between the two (St Pierre et al, 2016). Agential realism proposes a strategy to de-familiarise the known (Barad, 2007). The materiality of the world is in sharp focus, yet this includes the social and natural within it (Fox & Alldred, 2018). Nature, the non-human and the material are viewed as significant, to be respected rather than just ab/used (MacLure, 2013). As such this poses a challenge to think differently about the material and the distribution of agency (Barad, 2007). The Cartesian logic, the linguistic structure of the hu/man being the knowing subject, superior to all and everything else in the world being inferior, as his objects, are brought into question (St Pierre et al, 2016). It is important to escape unhelpful hierarchies, instead, the aim is to have continuums, non-linearity and entanglements (Hickey-Moody, 2015; Lather, 2013). Barad (2007) uses the term entanglements – a

non-hierarchical organisation of things/matter. A flattened ontology is offered, where the discursive and the material are mutually implicated, valued and respected (MacLure, 2013); this view shifts responsibility away from privileging the human (St Pierre, 2015). In agential realism, language is not favoured; it is where matter comes to *matter* (Barad, 2007). Another important aspect to this *matter*ing is the way relationships are viewed/understood/experienced within entanglements laced with ethical accountability (Hickey-Moody, 2015).

2.3.2 New materialist concepts

The significant concepts, which I think with throughout the thesis are explored where they appear in the writing. These ideas are then put to work with the intention to enable new, differentiated inquiring. Therefore, I do not offer a neatly separated chapter where I analyse each key term in isolation. However, for satisfying requirements, I added this subheading as the new materialist theoretical framework is central to this doctoral thesis.

As highlighted by Lenz Taguchi and St Pierre (2017: 643) the aim of philosophical concepts is to “...reorient thought” rather than to “...identify, organise, consolidate, and represent experience...”. After all, thought should enable “...rather than represent being” (St Pierre, 2013: 652); theory can awaken curiosity and open up new possibilities (Barad, 2012a). Significant concepts used to provoke my thinking are intra-actions, and another concept associated with Barad, is entanglements. Assemblage and *becoming* are concepts invented by Deleuze and Guattari to challenge to think differently rather than to label the already known (Colebrook, 2002). Deleuze and Guattari’s concepts are not simple or easily definable, as they did not explain their own terms (St Pierre, 2017). Alongside the forementioned concepts, it is likely that more are put to work in this thesis as Deleuzien, Deleuzien-Guttarian concepts have a tendency of working together, overlapping and being connected (St Pierre, 2017). I am mindful of St Pierre’s (2013) warnings of just picking out one concept for their immediate usefulness in isolation. I aimed not use the ideas as metaphors, instead, the intention is provocation, through the application of these concepts in order to think the unthought (Mazzei & McCoy, 2010).

2.4 The design of the inquiry

A post-qualitative inquiry has no pre-existing research design dictating what to do (St Pierre, 2020a), but is driven by theory and curiosity. St Pierre coined the phrase *post-qualitative inquiry* in 2010; a methodology that cannot be “tidily described” (Lather, 2013: 635), the one that “breaks methodological routine... in order to disrupt...” (Lather, 2013: 642). A post-qualitative inquiry welcomes my resistance against the rigid structure of researching; I do not wish to be restricted by pre-systematised worldviews, as they might act as a barrier in what could be thought/written/found (St Pierre, 2020a). My understanding is that St Pierre offers a new way of thinking and researching – inquiring. A post-qualitative inquiry is ideal to question and explore what CE is and what it has to offer, as it does not set out to represent existing ideas but instead, re-orient thought and creates new thought (St Pierre, 2020b).

As discussed in Chapter 1 section 1.10.2, studies carried out using quantitative approaches, sought measurable outcomes focusing on motoric improvements and the effectiveness of CE, rather than its pedagogical worth (for example: Bairstow et al, 1993). Qualitative designs relying on representationalism have not enabled the meaning-making of CE. Furthermore, CE is difficult to explain as it is intangible, crossing professional boundaries, which conventional academia is not flexible enough to accommodate (Forrai, 2020). Having recognised these challenges posed by traditional methodologies, I disrupt what has been the norm. As my intention does not pivot around proving or disproving the efficacy of CE, it can be confirmed that alignment to conventional ways of enquiring would not enable me to situate my research efforts. It would not aid my aim of producing useful knowledge differently (St Pierre, 1997).

Experimenting with post-qualitative thinking and new materialism facilitates a move into a flattened, less rigid space (St Pierre, 2020a) offering a productive way of seeing the complex and non-linear nature of CE. Staying in a familiar space, relying on my experiences only, it was likely that I could only reflect upon what is already known. However, by introducing agential realism, I could shake things up (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012) in a response-able way (Barad, 2007). I have been thinking at the limit of my ability to know by “putting philosophical concepts to work” (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012: 5).

2.5 Method

This section explores the chosen data generation method (focus group), which can enable a group of professionals to exchange stories, listen to each other's views, offering group-think and a multi-voiced discussion (Mittenfelner & Ravitch, 2021). Focus groups can facilitate an in-depth exploration (Bryman, 2016); this was a positive experience for conductors having a platform to interact (and intra-act) with each other. This process was beneficial for the study, as emphasised by Braidotti (2019: 33) "knowledge-production... is always multiple and collective".

2.5.1 Consideration of data generation methods

Questionnaires were ruled out despite them being a commonly used, flexible data collection method (Cohen et al, 2011). Even though they can be fully anonymous and low cost (Kara, 2022) questionnaires are impersonal, which were not deemed appropriate for unpacking professional identity or exploring CE philosophy. Interviews on the other hand can be useful in exploring feelings, perceptions and experiences (Aurini et al, 2022). One-to-one interviews can allow an in-depth investigation of a topic as understood by the participant (Cohen et al, 2011). Using a speaking subject aligns with humanist research traditions (St Pierre, 2015). Therefore, I had to disregard interviews as I am interested beyond just words, I do not wish to repeat the said and heard. Language alone is not able to represent thought accurately (MacLure, 2013); "thought enables rather than represents being" (St Pierre, 2013: 652). Consequently, in this study, discursive practices are not privileged, there is an agreement that "matter and meaning are mutually articulated" (Barad, 2007: 152).

Through observations, people's behaviours and interactions can be studied (Aurini et al, 2022), which could offer valuable insights into what informs conductors' professional identity. As non-verbal communication and actions can be recorded (Cohen et al, 2011), meaning making would not be based on the told narrative alone. However, as the observer, I would be the knowing subject, trying to construct understanding of an object, the conductor (St Pierre et al, 2016; Schwandt, 2000). This stance would go against my intentions of re-thinking agency therefore, this was discounted.

2.5.2 Focus groups

Focus groups (FG) are commonly associated with the qualitative, interpretivist paradigm and phenomenological studies, where the aim is to make sense of the world (Bryman, 2016; Denscombe, 2014). St Pierre (2018) evaluated that in a post-qualitative inquiry the emphasis is on the *things in the making* rather than the *things already made*. She claimed that this is partly what makes a post-qualitative inquiry experimental (ibid). St Pierre's (2015) invitation of re-imagining what the method might do, influenced the decision to employ FGs, however FGs were put to work purposefully through post-qualitative thinking – I continued to reject interpretation. As suggested by Jackson and Mazzei (2012) I aimed to work the limits as well as the limitations of FGs. Challenged by St Pierre et al (2016) I experimented, similarly to Peterson (2022) who used FGs to pay attention to human embodiment and relationality in their research.

In FGs, participants are able to co-create and work collectively (Aurini et al, 2022) making the experience enjoyable and stimulating (Madriz, 2000). However, the idea of a group could make some people feel nervous, I was mindful that conductors with less experience might feel they have less to contribute (Aurini et al, 2022). I reassured people that the space was non-threatening, non-judgemental and confidential (Gundumogula, 2020). The nature of my inquiry was not to test knowledge, as posited by Bozalek and Zembylas (2017), I was not after the 'right' answer, therefore, I did not ask specific questions. In the FGs, I had a mix of experienced and less experienced conductors to capture varying material and discursive engagements (Aurini et al, 2022).

2.5.3 Practicalities

I arranged no more than 7 people in one FG, which according to Mittenfelner and Ravitch (2021) is the ideal size to enable a good discussion without overcrowding. I offered the choice of face-to-face and online FGs. According to Kara (2022) managing groups can be a challenge, everyone being in the same space should make this task easier. Conductors are spread across the UK, therefore it was important to consider the pressures (logistics, travel, time) a face-to-face group might pose. Online FGs can mitigate the issue of travel (Bryman, 2016) making it more convenient and flexible (Kara, 2022). In face-to-face groups it would be easier to sense embodied encounters

and notice inter/intra-actions (Aurini et al, 2022). However, online groups could still offer dynamism (Nyumba et al, 2017) and the practical benefit of recording (Gundumogula, 2020). Reassuringly Vaughan et al (2021) found in their study, that practices traditionally carried out face-to-face can work just as successfully online.

2.5.4 Pilot study

It is deemed advantageous to carry out a pilot to trial the effectiveness of the selected instruments (Bryman, 2016) as well as to gain some confidence with the process (Aurini et al, 2022). In order to test out my ideas, gauge timings and obtain peer feedback, I conducted a pilot study (Kara, 2022; Cohen et al, 2011). I recruited four conductors with whom I have close working relationships, or did not meet the inclusion criteria (section 2.6.3). A separate information sheet (Appendix A) and consent form (Appendix B) were produced for this purpose. The pilot ran via MS Teams in June 2022. I trialled two activities, there was no need to alter the first one as the feedback was positive and encouraging. For the second activity, I used Twine (2023) an online, open-source, story-telling, interactive tool. Using online technology can aid the research process positively and creativity in research can help participants to move away from binary thinking (Kara, 2015). This could encourage organic intra-actions between conductors, the discursive and the material. It is hoped that by co-creating a story, it will be possible to witness transformations emerging, in a new/different space where the right answer is not sought (Bozalek & Zembylas, 2017). A story board would provide a visual aid (Aurini et al, 2022) igniting ideas and imagination. However, the activity did not work well as my actions interrupted the flow of the conversation which was counterproductive (Aurini et al, 2022). The feedback on the concept itself was good but Twine did not serve the intended purpose. Populating the told story with a screen share was disruptive for participants as they could not see each other with their focus on what I was writing. The produced story was hectic (Appendix C) and typing stopped me from noticing changes in tone, body language and reactions. Importantly, the control of producing the story laid with me therefore reducing the participants' agency.

2.5.5 Focus Group Activities

St Pierre (2015) claimed that in conventional conversation, participants tend to repeat the dominant discourse. Traditionally, FGs pivot around language practices – placing the discursive above the material in an ontological hierarchy (MacLure, 2013). This would not aid my intentions of producing new knowledge or getting unstuck from traditional humanist practices. Therefore, instead of using a traditional discussion guide to direct conversation (Aurini et al, 2022) I got my participants to interact with the material – to disorientate them to prevent privileging the humanist Cartesian logic (Kendall et al, 2020). St Pierre et al (2016) asserted that thought can be liberated by trying something new. The activities encouraged material engagement, created some structure, acted as probes (Cohen et al, 2011) and provided a focus away from the discursive. Activities opened up a more creative way of inquiring (Kara, 2015) encouraging participants to engage and feel less overwhelmed (Aurini et al, 2022). Utilising specific activities to engage conductors' thinking regarding their identity avoiding directly asking questions helped to move the subject (the conductor), out of the centre of the inquiry, helping me move further away from representation (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012). According to Peterson (2022) material engagements in FGs can open up possibilities for different knowledge to emerge, inviting participants not just to think but also to feel and imagine.

Firstly, participants were invited to bring along a thing/anything/something, which aligns with their professional identity; directly introducing material/matter. Tuana (2008: 189) asserted that knowledge, which is missing can be found “at the intersection between things and people”. Secondly, Padlet an interactive online wall where content can be shared, reactions and comments can be made (Iona, 2018) was used. Padlet was easy to navigate where comments appeared in real time (Maxwell, 2019), as such Padlet created opportunities for immediate collaboration (Mehta et al, 2021). In terms of new materialist response-ability (Barad, 2007), the use of matter and creativity through Padlet, provided research participants greater control of producing data (Peterson, 2022).

In place of my original idea of creating a story board on Twine, on Padlet a wall of vignettes were made. Instead of me writing the story unfolding, participants could post simultaneously giving them more control (Kara, 2022). Utilising features of Padlet,

conductors were able to comment on each other's posts making the encounter playful and emergent (Osgood et al, 2020). This process enabled participants a *becoming*-with each other through entanglements (Hill, 2017) – encouraging the involvement of conductors' embodied experiences (Lenz Taguchi, 2013). On Padlet, participants were able to collaborate and co-compose knowledge, by organically intra-acting with each other by using multi-modes as they added GIFs and photos alongside/instead of comments (Taylor et al, 2023). Vignettes are visual and experimental (Bradley et al, 2018) and often used in creative methodologies to explore sensitive topics whilst tapping into playfulness, imagination and intuition (Kara, 2015) – aligning with my intentions of not privileging the discursive over the material. Furthermore, tapping into experimental modes and creativity, according to Deleuze and Guattari (2004) is actually a way of thinking; something to facilitate my intention of creating new knowledge and creating it in a different way (Lather, 2013; St Pierre, 1997). Therefore, the use of Padlet for non-personally identifiable data, opened up different ways of intra-acting, thinking, experiencing and doing (Taylor et al, 2019) both for/between the participants and myself.

There was nothing in the literature regarding using Padlet as a method; however, I found some information considering its collaborative potential. Mehta et al (2021) investigated students' perceptions of using Padlet as a collaborative learning tool; drawing on two previous studies carried out in 2018 and 2019, they found Padlet to be effective, useful and cost-efficient. Mehta et al (2021: 16) summarised that Padlet is a "promising tool for collaborative learning". Since I gathered my data in 2022, the Research Ethics Team at BCU have updated their guidelines on the use of Padlet as a research tool for personally identifiable data as it was no longer meeting GDPR requirements.

2.6 Ethical Integrity

This section considers how the inquiry addressed institutional ethical requirements. However, first it must be acknowledged that the ethico-onto-epistem-ological (Barad, 2007) stance ensures that my ethical response-ability stretches beyond the expected obligations. I have response-abilities towards the research participants and a duty and accountability to/for the assemblage of CE that is always *becoming* (St Pierre, 2015;

Bennett, 2010a). Furthermore, in this inquiry, ethics is understood as embodied, relational and material (Taylor, 2020).

The British Educational Research Association (BERA, 2024) determine that all research should be conducted with integrity, aiming to maximise benefit and minimise harm to all involved. BERA's (2024) guidelines must be followed by all responsible researchers and rules regarding the handling of personal data must be respected. Examples of adhering to these guidelines are included below. Braidotti (2019) stressed the importance of ethical accountability; the research integrity of my thesis was carefully considered, and demonstrated by securing ethical approval from Birmingham City University. Detailed attention was applied throughout, as described by Kara (2015: 48) a "bottom up" approach where I considered what I stated as I undertook the various stages of the inquiry.

2.6.1 Negotiating access

It was not deemed necessary to use gatekeepers as I approached professional colleagues. However, in order to ensure conductors did not feel under pressure to take part and to emphasise that non-participation was more than acceptable (BERA, 2024) I did not email them directly. Instead, conductors from the UK were openly invited to take part in the study through the Professional Conductor's Association (PCA) and social media (section 2.6.5).

2.6.2 Informed consent

Myself, the researcher was responsible for obtaining informed consent from all participants; understanding the research intentions and their involvement in the study was essential (BERA, 2024). I emailed interested conductors an information sheet (Appendix D) explaining the purpose of the study, giving them two weeks to consider and ask any questions (BERA, 2024). This avoided deception and aided transparency (Bryman, 2016); the information sheet included important details regarding the storage of data, anonymity, confidentiality and details around withdrawal from the study (BERA, 2024).

Conductors work in a professional capacity in the UK, therefore, it was assumed that they are able to read, write and communicate in English in a more than satisfactory level to be in a position to give a fully informed and voluntary consent in line with BERA (2024) guidelines. Permission was gained in writing from all willing participants through a signed and dated consent form (Appendix E). On this form, participants were asked to indicate their preference between face-to-face and online attendance for the FGs.

2.6.3 Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Included were qualified conductors who were at the time employed in the UK as a conductor even those on maternity or sick leave. Conductors working outside of the UK were not included due to each country having their own specific cultural, political and societal contexts, which could impact identity. I excluded conductors who were my direct colleagues but I did not exclude participants based on where they gained their qualified conductor status (QCS), their years of experience, their place of work, type of setting or whether they are registered with the PCA. Willing participants were selected without prejudice.

2.6.4 Sampling

Non-probability sampling was used; the sample group was representative of the profession but not the general population (Cohen et al, 2011). According to the PCA (2023) the profession is heterogenous by its nature; conductors work in different types of settings (e.g. schools, charities), offering different provision (e.g. part time, outreach), work with people with a variety of conditions (e.g. cerebral palsy, Parkinson's). Most conductors are white, European, in possession of a university degree and female, but their country of origin, sexual orientation, geographical positioning, marital status, religious beliefs and parental status varies. There was no prejudice or discrimination based on any of the above. As an estimate, there are around 100 conductors currently working in the UK (Brown, 2023). I aimed to recruit around 35 conductors as I believe this could have offered a wide representation of the available target population. If I would have gotten more interest, I would have employed purposive sampling to ensure diversity aiming for variety regarding the above detailed differences in my final selection (Bryman, 2016).

2.6.5 Recruitment

I recruited participants via two channels to increase my reach (Kara, 2022) using the same recruitment script (Appendix F). I approached the PCA requesting their support and involvement to email all registered conductors in the UK. This was to notify conductors that I was looking for 35 research participants (five FGs), providing them with my contact details. I posted on CE specific closed groups on Facebook to reach non-registered conductors. Kara (2022) discussed potential issues around collecting data directly from Facebook, however I only used the platform for recruitment purposes. Interested conductors, responding to either recruitment calls, could contact me directly to receive the participant information sheet and consent form. This reinforced the gaining of voluntary informed consent without pressure and addressed challenges around power dynamics considering my positionality in the profession (BERA, 2024). PCA were asked to send the email twice, two weeks apart and I posted the recruitment call on Facebook three times at five-day intervals adjusting the number of conductors required.

2.6.6 Confidentiality and anonymity

BERA (2024) guidelines, GDPR (ICO, 2018) and BCU's research integrity procedure were strictly followed. Signed consent forms have been kept separately from data collected to further ensure anonymity. Research participants' names were not used and they are not identifiable or traceable (Cohen et al, 2011). I refer to participants in my analysis by assigning numbers to them (Bryman, 2016). No unnecessary personal information was gathered or stored; the FGs were video recorded. Records will be kept in line with current GDPR (ICO, 2018) and University regulations, which are for the legitimate time of the project plus ten years to allow for publication of outputs from the work. Study data will be preserved and accessible for ten years on the University servers, this is in line with BCU Research Integrity guidelines as outlined in the ethical approval process. No data will be kept for longer than necessary in accordance with GDPR principles and best research practice; keeping data will ensure an audit trail is in place to uphold quality in post-qualitative research. Personal data was removed from research data at the earliest possible stage when it is no longer needed for the purpose and or the lawful basis of processing no longer applies. All personal data will be disposed of on project completion. Video recordings and consent forms will be kept

for 3 years after project completion. Final reports will be kept for 6 years upon project completion. All of these decisions are based upon the BCU Schedule Data Retention Guidance. In the meantime, they will be stored securely and safely on my university's OneDrive in line with BCU, BERA and GDPR procedures.

By the nature of FGs, it was important to recognise that each group member would need to respect confidentiality (Mittenfelner & Ravitch, 2021). I provided an outline of some necessary ground rules (Nyumba et al, 2017) and then invited participants to contribute to these if they wished to do so, as such including them in the decision-making process (Gundumogula, 2020). I wrote a script for myself to aid consistency and transparency across each FG of what, when and how I delivered (Appendix G).

2.6.7 Right to withdraw

Ensuring transparency throughout the research enhances its ethical integrity; being honest with research participants is key (BERA, 2024). Research participants were clearly notified of their right to withdraw for any, or indeed, no reason (BERA, 2024). If any of participants would have lost capacity they would have been withdrawn from the study. Participants could have withdrawn and stopped taking part during the FGs, at any point without judgement. Once the process of analysis has started it was not possible to separate the data as it was done in a fully anonymous manner, so participants could not be withdrawn past that point. This was clearly communicated in the consent forms.

2.6.8 Potential risks to participants

I considered the study to be low to no-risk physically to participants. I ensured that my intentions were honest and transparent throughout, communicating any potential harm (BERA, 2024). Considering my own well-being, it was unlikely that anything distressing would have come up during the FGs (Kara, 2022). But if anything was to occur, I would have discussed any direct implications with my supervisors. Furthermore, conductors could have worried about being judged or saying the wrong thing in front of their colleagues. Each FG was structured to find out what informs conductors' identity rather than test people on their professional knowledge, which should have helped to reduce anxiety (Bryman, 2016). I aimed to prevent the risk of negatively portraying or

betraying employers as there was no line of inquiry probing towards such issues. I trust this ensured participants that they were not being asked to disclose any potentially harmful, negative information. The activities encouraged an exploration of professional identity rather than asked conductors how they feel in their places of work. The FGs took no more than 60-90 minutes of participants' time, which was about the ideal length (Aurini et al, 2023).

2.6.9 Power dynamics

My position could have been seen as compromised due to being the researcher as well as a practicing conductor, introducing possible tensions to the FGs. However, being an inside insider researcher had its advantages, allowing the application of my specialist knowledge and unique position of being situated in my own context (Tuli, 2010) as well as having a shared language and understanding (Thomson & Gunter, 2011). This should have made conductors feel more at ease. As stressed by Barad (2007: 185) "we don't obtain knowledge by standing outside of the world; we know because we are of the world".

It is important to note, that as I deliver training and I am actively involved within the field of CE, I have a degree of familiarity and/or a professional relationship with all of the participants. Therefore, I was mindful of possible issues surrounding power dynamics; this was carefully considered both between myself and participants as well as between participants and participants. I believe the playful nature of the activities reduced any power relationship issues as there were no hierarchies. Furthermore, my role was to guide the sessions with very little input (Cohen et al, 2011) – to a degree being passive to reduce my level of authority. Having less control can be one of the limitations of FGs (Bryman, 2016) however, I feel, this empowered participants, giving them more agency (Aurini et al, 2022). For example, I used the mute function to signal that I was merely a facilitator.

2.7 Data

The label of data must be explored because in a post-qualitative inquiry *data* is problematic in its meaning, data is not viewed in a traditional sense. The data and the researcher are not seen as ontologically separate (Lenz Taguchi, 2012). Data is not

passive, waiting to be analysed and interpreted; “data interacts with readers, authors, participants and other data” (Koro-Ljunberg et al, 2018: 799). St Pierre (1997) started to trouble the meaning of data and her relationship with it by highlighting that *data* has its own agency. Inspired by St Pierre, Kendall et al’s (2020: 64) reminder comforted me; our anxieties regarding what data should look like and what data should do “...are purely epistemological in nature”. As explained by Jackson and Mazzei (2012) data are not merely what can be found in transcripts, they are more than that. Therefore, I did not transcribe the recordings of the FGs, instead I re-turn (Barad, 2014) to them several times at various stages of the analysis. MacLure (2013: 660) explored how data has its own autonomy making “themselves intelligible to us”. It is important to note that data can only ever be incomplete and partial (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012) – after all, data is a lively matter (Bennett, 2010a). I avoided trying to control or contain it therefore, I did not treat it as evidence (Taylor, 2013). Instead, I enabled the data to intra-act with me; let the data glow (MacLure, 2010), have an encounter with it, allow it to do something to me (Kendall et al, 2020). This glow emerged from multiple viewings of the recordings in different ways; for example, I watched without any sound or listened only – I did this over a period of time (St Pierre, 2019; MacLure, 2010). Working with data rather than working the data, gave me space to use my curiosity and instinct – allowing not just to think but to *feel* following a specific line of inquiry, which showed itself in the process. A new materialist understanding opened up a different encounter with the data (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012); the researcher works with the data but the data also works with the researcher (Lenz Taguchi, 2012). Therefore, in my inquiry I did not apply data in a traditional sense; my data was understood *more than* it is conventionally – to signal this, it will be typed as *data<*. According to Taylor et al (2019) data is not just what is collected. Consequently, in this inquiry, *data<* are: the *thing* (matter) specifically selected by each conductor in the first activity of the FGs, the Padlet co-created during the second activity, the recordings, my embodied experiences, literature, provocations from reading theory and my entanglements as conductor / lecturer / inquirer / writer. To acknowledge the presence of the challenges that I faced by avoiding linear thinking and hierarchies, as suggested by Dennis et al (2022), I used theory to stay de-centred and constantly in flux – a new materialist sensitivity facilitated this process.

2.8 Data< analysis

Barad (2007: 25) described diffraction as an act of reading “...insights... through one another”. Since then, Mazzei and Jackson (2012) developed this concept and coined it *thinking with theory* while Lenz Taguchi (2012) called her application of it *diffractive analysis*. I used diffractive analysis to help me ask questions differently and to ask different questions (Jackson & Mazzei, 2018). Lather (2016, 2012) described her encounter with diffractive analysis as an uncomfortable one as she found it challenging not to interpret her data. Lenz Taguchi (2012: 268) claimed that diffraction offers another view point: “diffraction entails the processing of on-going differences”. The focus is not on the something different, which is produced but rather on the possibility and *how* that something different came to *matter* through intra-actions and encounters (Davies, 2014). Importantly, diffraction – cutting together-apart – brings together the subject and the object, the focus is upon the entanglements (Barad, 2012b). In my application, diffraction or interference was used as a helpful obstacle, rather than a stumbling block. Something that made me stop, re-turn, re-think (Barad, 2014); the hiatuses offered in this thesis aimed to do that in a different *spacetime mattering*.

Diffractive analysis is “a difference-driven analytic” according to Lather (2016). In diffractive analysis the relationship between the researcher and the data needs to be understood “as a co-constitute force” (Lenz Taguchi, 2012: 272). In a sense, the data and the researcher become entangled – their intra-actions must be recognised. A process where meaning and matter are co-constituted (Bozalek & Zembylas, 2017). Therefore, the concept of intra-actions was utilised when re-turning to the recordings. Double arrows are used to signal intra-actions rather than interactions, being materially and discursively produced in the process (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012). I observed and felt for intra-actions of conductor \rightleftharpoons conductor, conductor \rightleftharpoons their selected *thing*, conductor \rightleftharpoons other conductors’ selected *thing*, conductor \rightleftharpoons second activity. Afterall, my intention is to notice becoming/s: *becoming* professional identity, *becoming* conductor-self rather than to seek the ultimate truth (Kendall et al, 2020). There were subjective influences *from me* and *upon me*. I was in the process of knowing-in-being during the analysis (Barad, 2007); or the process is about: “a becoming-with the data as a researcher” (Lenz Taguchi, 2012: 265). Thinking with theory enables the inquirer to avoid interpreting the data (Mazzei, 2014). Diffractive analysis allows the researcher to move away from habitual ways of treating the data

(Mazzei, 2014), for example coding and categorising it. Just as in nature through diffraction waves are disrupted, in research terms, the production of sameness is prevented making way for something new (Barad, 2007). Therefore, analysing data< is not about searching for the truth, but discovering an already existing reality, which has not showed itself yet (Mazzei, 2014; Lenz Taguchi, 2012) by focusing on the intra-actions and entanglements of matter and meaning (Bozalek & Zembylas, 2017). Diffracting data< can encourage the newness to reveal itself to the researcher (Lenz Taguchi, 2012). This process is not linear but dynamic, giving the researcher a different attitude to ask previously unasked questions to think the un-thought. Diffractive analysis was used to re-orient thought to prevent me from being complacent in the way that I think and treat research; "...an onto-epistemological creation of the new from *within*" (Jackson & Mazzei, 2018: 1238, italics original), is not about trying to answer questions that might close down thought, instead, the focus is on posing problems to provoke thought (Jackson & Mazzei, 2018). It is about searching for the *how*, how differences are made (Lenz Taguchi, 2012). Inspired by the ideas of Barad (2007), I used diffraction to open up possibilities and pay attention to differences that *matter*. Further encouraged by Jackson and Mazzei (2018) my thinking with theory was treated as a process methodology, something without a formula that is not prescriptive.

2.8.1 Interrogating the data<

I did not aim to code or seek validity from the data< (St Pierre, 2015). Therefore, the truthfulness of the told narrative held less significance for this study. I did not listen to the words in order to find generalisable themes to be categorised (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012). Participants were listened to but their intra-actions were also felt, sensed and noticed – seeking to find the "bodily entanglements of language" (MacLure, 2011: 999). I prioritised the process of listening over the product of listening (Mazzei, 2004); embodied and emergent encounters were "... felt and registered bodily..." (Taylor & Fairchild, 2020: 514). In order to achieve this, for example, I paused when moved by an encounter and read, and read, and read (St Pierre, 2015) in order to plug my thoughts into theory (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012) to enable the concepts to work (St Pierre, 2015). I utilised the idea of spatiality (Barad, 2008) and thought away from my

desk while I walking, commuting or baking. This is what St Pierre (1997: 184) coined the “physicality of theorising”.

Diffraction as a tool focuses on recognising entanglements – connections and differences (Barad, 2017). I explored, broke open and unfolded the two activities carried out in the FGs. Regarding the first activity, the attention was not on what each *thing* selected by the conductors might mean. But more importantly, what it is that the *thing* does to/with the conductor; what emerges from their intra-action with matter – their ontological impact (Jackson, 2013). Reading data< through/with a new materialist lens opened up new and diverse ways of seeing and thinking (Mazzei, 2013); allowing for a different encounter with the participants (human and non-human and other than human). Recognising that the researcher and data< is constituted by both discursive and material forces and neither needs to be privileged over the other (Mazzei, 2013; Barad, 2007). As highlighted by Lenz Taguchi (2012: 278) what was seen as passive or irrelevant can be seen as “...forceful in its intra-activities with other bodies” in a material-discursive reality. This opened up a space of alertness and awareness of what Barad (2007) calls *possibilities of becoming*.

2.9 The actual sample

Demographic data was collected for context via Microsoft Forms (Appendix H) prior to the FGs (Aurini et al, 2022). Thirty-two conductors showed an interest and twenty-eight returned signed consent forms. Participants indicated a preference for online FGs. Dates were offered during August and September 2022 as well as various times of the day were suggested in order to suit people’s schedules (Appendix I). Whilst twenty-six participants accepted Teams’ invites of these twenty-one conductors participated in four FGs.

Table 1 shows the gender of participants, aligning with conductors’ characteristics shared in section 2.6.4 with most being female. All conductors who took part in the study work in the UK but some gained their qualifications in Hungary. There is a fairly even split across years of experience as a conductor, no participants graduated 5-10 years ago. Conductors’ current geographic location proves the need for online groups. Just over a quarter of participants are not PCA registered conductors, which justifies the decision for them to be included in the study.

Table 1 – Participant demographic data table

GENDER OF PARTICIPANTS	
Male	1
Female	20
PLACE OF GRADUATION	
UK	12
Hungary	9
YEARS OF EXPERIENCE AS A CONDUCTOR	
30+	3
20-30	5
15-20	3
10-15	5
5-10	0
Under 5	5
CURRENT GEOGRAPHIC WORK LOCATION	
Greater London	2
North East	1
North West	1
Yorkshire & Cumbria	1
East Midlands	2
West Midlands	10
South East	2
East of England	1
South West	1
Wales	0
Scotland	0
PCA REGISTRATION STATUS	
Registered	15
Not registered	6

Chapter 3: Thinking with data<

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines what was produced by bodies/spaces/*things* working together (Taylor, 2013) in order to interrogate the three guiding questions. Firstly, an overview is given of the focus groups and conductors. The attention turns to the first activity where I think with the material-discursive (Lenz Taguchi, 2012) avoiding interpreting what the conductors might have meant (Bozalek & Zembylas, 2017). Each *thing* brought along by the conductors is explored in order to produce new insights (Taylor & Fairchild, 2020) to notice aspects of conductors' professional identity, which might otherwise have been overlooked (Taylor, 2013). An exploration of conductors' conversations and each Padlet (Appendices J, K, L, M) follows. The sections for this are presented as problematised by conductors; including: personal and professional identities and communicating the message of CE. Acknowledged throughout are *matterings*, which facilitate the conceptualisation of the philosophy and the theorisation of CE. Data< in this study is more than, consequently it includes the *thing* brought along by conductors, the conversations had by each focus group (FG), my embodied experiences, each Padlet, literature and new materialist theory.

3.2 An overview of the focus groups

There were four groups with 21 conductors participating. Table 2 details how long each FG meeting lasted (in hours, minutes and seconds) and the number of participants. Conductors' year and place of graduation was collected as part of the anonymous demographic data at a FG level rather than individually to further aid anonymity.

Table 2 – Focus group data table

Focus Group	Length	Number of participants	Year of graduation	Place of graduation
1	1h 5m 21s	5	1997, 2001, 2003, 2019, 2020	2x Hungary 3x UK
2	1 h 7m 9s	5	1984, 1991, 1992, 2001(2)	5x Hungary
3	1h 12m 54s	5	1995, 2008, 2010, 2020(2)	1x Hungary 4x UK
4	1h 15m 21s	6	2002, 2004, 2008, 2012(2), 2018	1x Hungary 5x UK

3.3 The first activity

Participants were invited to bring along a *thing/anything/something* aligning with their professional identity (Appendix H). The word ‘object’ was consciously avoided to reinforce the notion that matter is not passive or fixed (Barad, 2003). Looking at the first activity with a new materialist awareness, I explored how conductors’ professional identity is informed by the material and the discursive without privileging them over each other (Mazzei, 2013). Furthermore, I interrogated how the *matter*ing is entangled in/with the philosophy of CE *affecting* the assemblage. In a sense, illustrating *matter*’s thing-power (Bennet, 2010a) by asking the question inspired by Taylor (2013): What does the thing do to the conductor? Thus, the *thing* itself holds the same level of importance as the narrative shared, acknowledging that matter and meaning constitute each other (Jackson, 2013). Therefore, in this section the headings are the *things* brought along to signify their importance and to put them to work in order to “create orientations for thinking” (Colebrook, 2017: 654). Table 3 shows which FG conductors took part in; they each have a number assigned to them for a consistent identification.

Table 3 – FG first activity data table

FG	Conductor	A thing/anything/something
One	C1	Conductor qualification
	C2	Mirror (full length)
	C3	Achievements' folder
	C4	Self / My personality
	C5	Previous workplace
Two	C6	Beanbags and Uniform
	C7	A quote
	C8	Observation and Google
	C9	Place of work
	C10	Demonstration doll
Three	C11	Baton
	C12	Baton
	C13	Uniform
	C14	Notepad
	C15	Teddy bear
Four	C16	Necklace (a colourful easy-release teething one)
	C17	Self
	C18	Toys
	C19	Uniform
	C20	Bouncy ball
	C21	Trainers (old and new pair)

To commence analysis, upon looking at Table 3, I found myself habitually categorising the items according the following four themes: progress/in-flux indicators, identifiers, everyday objects and difference indicators. These themes label the *things* according to how they represent the conductors, treating them as objects, interpreting them based on humanistic ideas (Hultman & Lenz Taguchi, 2010). According to Barad (2003), representation is so embedded in Western thinking it seems the natural way to view things through. Representational logic assumes that there is a main reality out there, which can be found and can be truly represented by language alone (St Pierre, 2013). However, my purpose is not to interpret or code the *things* conductors brought along, but to break apart the complexities of what informs conductors' professional

identity and how this *matters* to them. My intention is not to reject language practices but to break away from the language-material binary (St Pierre, 2013) and use diffraction as an interference to capture what is normally overlooked (Taylor, 2013). I set out to disentangle myself from the “humanistic idea of Man as the measure of all things” (Braidotti, 2020: 2) – the Cartesian logic of viewing matter as passive, without agency and the hu-man cogito being superior (Coole & Frost, 2010). In order to achieve this, I had to remove myself as the knowing subject (Bozalek & Zembylas, 2017). By de-centring myself, I could shift my focus and started to notice the agency of *things* (Fairchild, 2021). I started again; I followed Barad’s (2014) suggestion and re-turned to the data<.

3.4 Interrogating the data<

To look for diffractive patterns and the *matterings* of matter (Barad, 2007), in this section, each *thing* selected by the conductors is offered in order of my interrogation of them; it is recognised that data< has its own agency and it intra-acts with the researcher (Koro-Ljunberg et al, 2018). It is my response-ability (Barad, 2007) to share them in that order recognising my entanglements with this inquiry. Through my engagements with the material conductors brought along, connections started to emerge; inquiring this way requires emotional work (Peterson, 2022). Consequently, the order could hold significance as it demonstrates how data< had an encounter with me – revealing its autonomy (MacLure, 2013). Some conductors added an image of their *thing* onto Padlet or made an entry related to their selection, and in some cases triggering an emotional reaction from others in their FG. Therefore, due to their relevance and impact on the conductors, specific extracts from Padlet are presented in this section. The data< segment that started to glow (MacLure, 2010) and drew me in first, were mirror/notepad.

3.4.1 Mirror/Notepad

Mirror and notepad were chosen by two conductors, as the *things* which inform their professional identity. This seemed to be related to them both working in multi-disciplinary (MD) teams, alongside therapeutic professionals such as physiotherapist and occupational therapists. Both conductors’ discursive and material encounters explored how they use their *things* within their professional practice indicating that the type of team a conductor works in, impact their identity. C2 explained that the full-

length mirror is to signify how a conductor considers and works with the whole person. C2 brought a small mirror with them and whilst talking they held it recognising the mirror's agency in producing them as conductor in an MD team. C2: "... *as a conductor my identity is that I look at the whole person in everything I do, which I think makes us [conductors] slightly different to other professionals*". Similarly, C14 showed their notepad to the group and suggested: "*it is interesting to see how differently we [conductors] approach our sessions for the same child*". C2 and C14 highlighted conceptual differences in various professionals' views regarding the same person with a disability.

Through their discourse C2 and C14 transformed matter – a mirror to showcase the wholistic stance of CE and a notepad to indicate the thorough planning carried out by the conductor in order to engage each child in their learning (Figure 4).

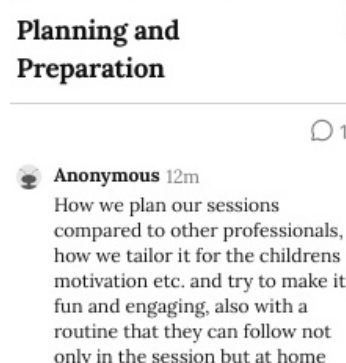


Figure 4: Padlet extract 1

Both the discursive and the material signal that conductors on differences from other professionals. Rather than emphasising what they do, how and why they do it, conductors highlight *how* what they do is different from therapeutic colleagues. This indicates that being different from other professionals *matters* to conductors, it helps them know who they are – impacting their professional identity. Therefore, this *mattering* is significant in re-orienting thought regarding the theorisation of CE.

3.4.2 The quote

C7 shared a quote by an author and inspirational speaker, Simon Sinek (2009): "*People don't buy what you do; they buy why you do it. And what you do simply proves what you believe*". The quote was uploaded onto Padlet with a comment (Figure 5).

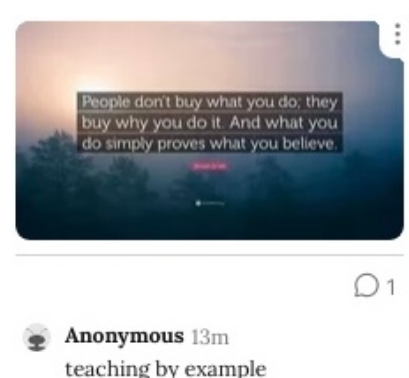


Figure 5: Padlet extract 2

I kept re-turning to this data< segment, turning it over and over again, to aerate it like soil to give it new life (Barad, 2008). This was drawing me in, it physically gave me goosebumps. C7's choice felt like a disruption, an act of violence to make an impact, to rouse attention – it certainly captured mine. This highlights that some bodies and things *matter* more than others (Taylor, 2013).

C7 revealed: “*I feel the quote epitomises: the relationships between conductor and learner and the conductor's belief in the person and what is possible*”. In a sense highlighting what is most important in CE, which opens up possibilities to re-orient thought regarding the philosophy of CE. I sensed, in my body/mind/heart that the selected *thing* was not actually the quote brought along but the essence of CE, the *matter*ing of CE itself. C7's narrative was not about the ‘I’ but about the ‘us’, instead of their professional identity they talked about CE and specifically the *why* of CE. Cutting data< together-apart (Barad, 2007), meaning making becomes possible. One body (C7) and another (CE), as well as matter and meaning, have become fully entangled in the process of ongoing intra-actions (Barad, 2007). This leaves no distinct boundaries between conductor \rightleftharpoons practicing CE / advocating for CE / teaching CE / defending CE / believing in CE. As such producing each other “in a mutual process of becoming” (Jackson, 2013: 769) professional and profession – CE makes C7 *matter* and C7 makes CE *matter*. This signals a merging of personal and professional identities, where the profession means more than a job to the conductor – showcasing entanglements of different bodies human and non-human and other-than-human (Barad, 2012a).

3.4.3 Uniform

Three conductors, from different FGs, selected their uniform, an embroidered polo-shirt with their settings' logo, as their *thing*. This mattering was personal, as a practicing conductor, I felt it resonating in my mind and body. The data< was intra-acting with me, giving me significant sensations pulling me further into the assemblage.

C6 explained how the T-shirt is a symbol to families in need of the services offered by their centre. C6 also picked beanbags and spent most of their explanation on that

rather than the uniform indicating that beanbags have a greater impact on informing their identity.

On the other hand, for C13 their uniform was significant. C13 showed their T-shirt then put it on and continued wearing it for the rest of the FG. Through this physical act, meaning and matter met – C13 said: “... *by putting on my uniform I feel like I belong to a profession, an organisation and a group of people I can identify with*”. C13’s professional identity is not only informed but is also strengthened by a sense of belonging, which is materialised in the wearing of their uniform. The uniform produces C13 as a conductor, it *affects* an emotional force and leaves an impression on/in their body and mind (Fairchild, 2021). The *thing* and



This t-shirt identifies me as a conductor . It makes me feel like I belong .

Figure 6: Padlet extract 3

the conductor are entangled in *becoming* professional identity. A photo of a uniform was added onto Padlet with a comment (Figure 6).

C19 wore their uniform. This conductor explicitly talked about their personal and professional identity being one, showcasing entanglements just as C7 did. C19: “*I’m proud that I don’t have edges, which is just work and just my personal life. ... When I go to work it’s not just ... 9-5, it’s who I am.*”

I needed to disrupt the data in order to prevent constructing meaning, for this I used Barad’s agential cut (2007) – or as explained by Carey et al (2022: 515) a “material-discursive intervention”, a meaning making practice (Taylor, 2013). Cutting together-apart allowed me to take a closer look; I separated out the uniform and what it might do to its wearer. Prompted by provocations by Jackson and Mazzei (2012) and Mazzei (2013) I posit that a uniform suggests that its wearer identifies as a practitioner. The uniform expects its wearer to act and think in a certain way, to show solidarity towards their profession. But at the same time, the uniform signals a sense of belonging (to a sector, profession, organisation, team) which is normally something that is felt rather than concisely thought. Therefore, attention must be paid to the placement of the embroidered logo, which tends to occupy the space on the left-hand side of a uniform, above the heart, in a sense claiming its emotions. The uniform implies that its wearer

is not an imposter but someone who belongs. This demonstrates how the intra-actions of the conductor \rightleftharpoons the uniform mutually produces and increases agency (Mazzei, 2013). The uniform becomes an actant, and it gains more power (Bennett, 2004) as it becomes significant for its wearer. It could be said that the uniform/*thing* is in possession of what Taylor (2013: 689) in her work called a “surprising material force”. This indicates that the uniform and what/who it produces, strengthens conductors’ identity.

3.4.4 Beanbag/Baton

C6 chose beanbags and C11, C12 selected a baton as their *things*. A baton, is a long stick, mostly wooden and plain; however, plastic and colourful versions are available with glitter and light up ends. C11 brought along a wooden baton while C12 a sparkling one. Beanbag/Baton spoke to me with their silence, their robust simplicity goes against a materialistic way of life (Bennett, 2004).

C12: “... a baton is a piece of equipment people might think of when they think of CE... But it is more than just a wooden or a sparkly baton, it is something we can do so much with for that individual. That is what makes us [conductors] different”. This is further indication that conductors look for differences in their practice in order to identify themselves. It also acknowledges the agency of the material in the *affect* it produces on the learner and the conductor.

C11 said: “... it’s not until people see you meet someone’s need until they really see what you do as a job”. This signals that a negative impact on professional identity is conductors’ belief that CE is not known or understood widely.

The matter (beanbag/baton) comes to *matter* through intra-acting with conductors and learners. Beanbag/Baton are *becoming* to offer functionality, a tool for learning or motivation – as such strengthening conductors’ feelings of conductor-ness (Bennett, 2004). It could be said that beanbag/baton have the power to support the conductor in various ways – producing the conductor. Through intra-actions with the knowing professional, these seemingly simple and lifeless items become alive and useful. As the items are used with intent and purpose by the conductors to teach and engage their learners, beanbag/baton’s agency/power grow as they intra-act with both

conductor and learner. The *affect* can be seen here in the connection and relationship between the conductor \rightleftharpoons beanbag/baton and learner \rightleftharpoons beanbag/baton. These entangled encounters open up possibilities to know CE philosophy differently facilitating its theorisation with new materialist understanding.

FG2, on their Padlet, added *simple resources* as a heading (Figure 7). This received four comments suggesting that other conductors also attach some significance to the way equipment *is* in CE practice. From the *things* and narratives, conductors seem to pride themselves in being resourceful in utilising versatile and simplistic items which can be used easily in the home environment as they are multi-functional and multi-purpose. This shows that conductors' identity is impacted by what they can do for the families they work with. Data< segments further show that conductors identify themselves in how they are different from other professionals. These *matterings* are significant in the emergent knowledge-making for CE.

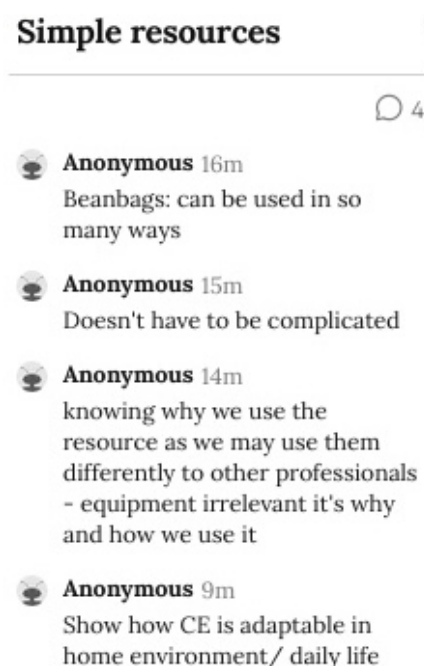


Figure 7: Padlet extract 4

3.4.5 Teddy bear/Toys

C15 brought a teddy bear and C18 a selection of toys. The discursive and material encounters of these two conductors moved me, I heard and felt their dedication and love for the pre-school aged children they work with. Data< was indicating that it is the children who *matter* to these conductors the most, it is the children who produce their identity. This data< segment captured that impact of CE at a personal level (about the conductors, what *matters* to them, how they are produced and what they produce). The relationship between the researched (conductors) and the researcher (myself) were entangled. I experienced an embodied moment with C15, C18 and their learners, my conductive practice, the way I teach CE. I had to take a break and go for a walk to utilise what St Pierre (1997: 184) calls the "physicality of theorising".

C15 and C18's selections were tools for teaching – used to motivate and engage children to become active in the learning process in a fun way. C18 said: *“my role is to motivate the children to move, I'm trying to be as fun as I can be with the little ones, to help them enjoy it [the sessions]”*. The importance of fun must have resonated with other conductors in the FG as a number of entries were made on FG3's Padlet in relation to the role fun plays in learning (Figure 8). These aspects point towards the importance of relationality in CE, which opens up further possibilities to rethink the theorisation of CE.

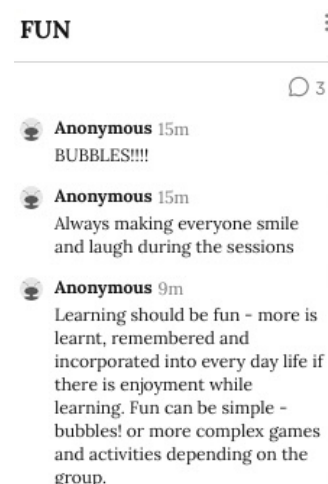


Figure 8: Padlet extract 5

Figure 9 is from FG4's Padlet. This entry showcases the importance conductors place on motivation and its significance in learning. Therefore, it highlights that truly engaging learners, forms part of conductors' pedagogy.

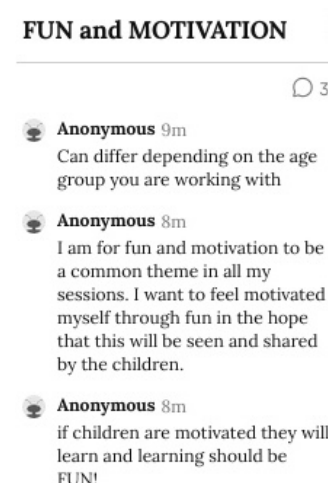


Figure 9: Padlet extract 6

C15 indicated that the teddy is for: *“engaging little children... motivating them”*. Consequently, it could be said that the specific age group conductors work with impact their professional identity in terms of how they see their role and express what they do. This highlights differences that *matter* within the profession in terms of its heterogenicity and the need to differentiate teaching approaches based on the needs of the learners.

3.4.6 Bouncy ball

Being a newly qualified conductor during the Covid-19 pandemic, C20 stated about their choice: “... *you throw it and bounces back, I feel like it represents me, there’s been lots of challenges on the way, and I had to bounce back*”. Furthermore, C20 said: “*I like that it flashed, you want to capture people’s attention...*”. The bouncy ball was selected due to its representational value as demonstrated in C20’s narrative (Figure 10).



Able to bounce back, often captures peoples attention and can be motivating!

Figure 10: Padlet extract 7

In this study, matter was introduced to shape the encounters in the research process, to create a safe space where the selected thing’s *thingness* could reveal how *it* intra-acts with the conductor. The intention of bringing a *thing*, was not only in aid of acknowledging that meaning and matter constitute each other (Jackson, 2013) but also to avoid enacting a place where the right answers are sought (Bozalek & Zemblyas, 2017) removing any competition of who might have the best choice. However, my senses told me that C20 wanted to be the one offering the most suitable response, they were seeking validation from their peers. This was based on their body language, pauses and facial expressions when presenting their *thing*. I felt a violation. The bouncy ball did not have a life of its own, it was an object serving the purpose of the human subject; as such demonstrating a structural distinction, a hierarchical superiority of the human (Braidotti, 2020). Therefore, the ontological distinction was clear between representer (C20) and representation (bouncy ball); they presented as independent entities – meaning and matter did not constitute of each other’s becoming. This did not enable matter and discourse to be mutually implicated and therefore there was no unfolding of new knowledge (MacLure, 2013).

3.4.7 Trainers/Necklace

Representational thinking in conductors regarding their professional identity was evident in the *things* brought along by C16 (colourful teething necklace) and C21 (two pairs of trainers, one old and one new). The use of representationalism by conductors is hardly surprising, according to Barad (2008) it is the natural thing to do in Western cultures as part of the Cartesian logic.

C16 said: “... it aligns with me personally and professionally ... in recent years [since setting up own services], I feel like they are less separate than they were”. C16 continued: “... it is me as in it is brightly coloured, and I would like to think that I bring some of that into my work”. This signals that the type of provision a conductor works in, impacts their professional identity. Additionally, C16 is another example where professional and personal identities have blurred edges, pointing to entanglements. Referring to the bright colours of the necklace emphasises the conductor’s role in motivating their learners.

C21 drew parallels between the old and new pairs of trainers and their journey (Figure 11). The old pair being their first season as a conductor. The new pair representing the new phase in their career: “I’m still a conductor through and through; running the race again”. C21’s *thing* signals that the years of experience as a conductor affect professional identity in how a conductor views their role and impact. C21: “... at a practical level I always wear trainers, even on my office days, just in case I’m needed in the group”. This indicates that a conductor identifies as a practitioner – informing/strengthening their professional identity.

running trainers old and new...representing the different seasons of being a conductor...the many roads walked down, the falls and knock backs and the stories to tell...and the freshness and confidence that comes with a new season. Old and new but the same brand...the things that make me a conductor are the common threads.



Figure 11: Padlet extract 8

I kept to re-turning to C16 and C21’s *things* in order to “respond to differences and how they matter” (Barad, 2007: 71) and to highlight intra-actions between conductor \rightleftharpoons *thing*. I needed to cut this data< segment together-apart to open up new possibilities of meaning making (Barad, 2012a). Both conductors used language to represent their reality yet their narrative did not result in neglecting the significance of the entanglements of human (themselves) and non-human (trainer/necklace) bodies. The trainers embodied the distance travelled in C21’s professional journey, acknowledging the role the *thing* has played, while the necklace signalled autonomy. Trainers/necklace have been intra-acting with the conductors – the boundaries between their bodies have diminished, they were no longer separate entities. They have become ontologically entangled (Taylor, 2013); having no distinction between the subject (themselves) and object (trainers/necklace). Thinking with Barad (2007) it

could be conceived that trainers/necklace and C21/C16 are constantly asking each other questions to make themselves intelligible to each other whilst being/becoming part of the assemblage. The *thing* with its own agency increases the conductors' agency/power in feeling more like a conductor. The *thingness* of trainers/necklace increases the conductors' *conductor-ness* (Bennett, 2004) positively impacting professional identity in producing the conductor.

3.4.8 Workplace

Two experienced conductors, from different FGs, selected a space/place. The way these two participants shared their stories empowered them and as a result their *thing* gained agency. C5's and C9's memories took hold of them, they shared an embodied experience and as a result, I was transported to a different place and time. C5's and C9's *thing* was intra-acting with them and with me. I felt an electric charge, both temporality and spatiality were in play in this encounter. Past, present and even future were laced through/together "in a nonlinear enfolding of spacetime-mattering" (Barad, 2010: 244).

For C5 a previous workplace: "... where I found ... my root ... working with people with stroke ... that's ... what I like, working with adults". They added: "... until then, I was looking for which way to go". This offers new insights to differences that *matter* in the practice of CE; a further indication that the age group and even learners' diagnosed condition a conductor works with, impact their professional identity.

C9 stated: "*I didn't bring anything specific, but a memory, a place*". They have only ever worked at their current setting, and they felt that the time, place and people made them the conductor they are. Both conductors expressed a sense of belonging and the importance of the specific time and space in finding their professional selves. C5 said "... it [previous workplace] gave me who I am, thinking back to it and how much I learnt...". C9 expressed: "*I became a conductor working at [name of setting]*". C9 added: "*my identity comes from being a traditional conductor, but it changed so much, not CE but how we provide services. It can be hard to match with my identity; it changed a lot – I feel conflict in what it should be*". These feelings and thoughts from C9 indicate that the passing of time and experience does not necessarily have a positive impact on identity; the changes C9 witnessed resulted in conflict in terms of

what is expected of them. C9 did not expand what was meant by the term “*traditional conductor*” – this reference is a significant data< segment, introducing the idea that there are different types of conductors. This is an indication to an (un)spoken categorisation of being a conductor, and a hierarchy of conductor-ness, which is likely to create tensions in terms of professional identity. This data< segment through a diffractive lens highlighted something essential to the theorisation of CE, after all “patterns of differences are originally at the core of what matters” (Barad, 2017: 66).

3.4.9 Conductor qualification

Two conductors selected their qualification as the *thing* which had the most significant impact on their identity. Firstly, signalling their achievement and secondly, serving as proof that they are a conductor. Figure 12 was added onto FG1’s Padlet as a memento of this, a material engagement.



Figure 12: Padlet extract 9

I was cutting this together-apart to uncover “patterns of difference that make a difference” (Barad, 2012a: 49). Thinking further with Barad (2007) the differences that *matter*, is the number of years working as a conductor; one of them newly qualified and the other experienced. The selected *thing*, impacting professional identity, was the same, however, the reasoning for their choice differed.

For C1 this was a personal accomplishment: “*I was the first in my family to go to university*”. They became emotional and through their feelings shared an embodied experience with the group. C1 used the word privilege a number of times to indicate the opportunities studying opened up. The idea of privilege materialised on FG1’s Padlet (Appendix J). While C3, a newly qualified conductor, brought along their “*documentation/achievements’ folder*”, where they keep their certificates from their GCSEs onwards. C3 said: “*I will get the folder out to get into the headspace ... it proves that I can*”, signalling a need for reassurance regarding professional capability, pointing to a degree of imposter syndrome as well as a positive way of addressing that.

“Diffraction enables showing differences *differing*” (Tuin, 2014: 236); viewing the specific intra-actions between conductor \rightleftharpoons certificate, conductor \rightleftharpoons achievements’ folder with this understanding, it can be said that what the *thing* produced was notably different for the two conductors even though their selection was the same. For C3 the folder gains power with every new addition, with the growth of the assemblage the matter’s agency increases and so does C3’s confidence in their own abilities. Through this specific intra-action, the *affect* the *thing* produces on the conductor results in a positive transformation – a strengthened autonomy. What develops from the quality of their engagement, conductor \rightleftharpoons achievements’ folder, is that they both gain agency; therefore, the certificates make the conductor *matter*. This *mattering* is significant in informing C3’s professional identity, believing that they are not an imposter.

In C1’s case there is an altered significance to the gaining of the certificate. As they shared their narrative, the group was transported to a different time and to a different place. Both of which were/are familiar to me. C1 is originally from Hungary, a country, where the only way to be liberated from oppression was through education (Freire, 2017). For C1 going to university offered opportunities which would not have been possible without studying. This partly explains why this person emphasised becoming a conductor a privilege, to serve others and to have been granted freedom. C1 by choosing to train as a conductor, carried out what Grosz (2010) described as a *free act*. An act, which comes from the person alone, as such *free acts* are “... integral to who or what the subject is” (Grosz, 2010: 144). The qualification is a confirmation of C1’s freedom and therefore agency to make choices – the *affect* of the piece of paper is significant. Consequently, the *thing* does not only inform C1’s professional identity, but it was monumental in shaping their self-worth – highlighting a merging of professional and personal selves, and of being entangled.

3.4.10 Google/Demonstration doll

Two experienced conductors’ selected *things*, which highlight differences in the way they work now, in comparison to when they first started as conductors. C8’s and C10’s narratives shared commonalities in terms of looking back over their journeys spanning three decades. Both placed emphasis on how CE is still relevant in today’s fast paced life, stressing the need for flexibility and adaptability – signalling that professional identity is always in flux. This was present in their discursive and material choices –

the encounters the participants had with their *things* provoked me to consider in detail what Taylor and Fairchild (2020) refer to as matter's agentic capabilities.

C8 selected Google search engine as their *thing*, this materialised on FG2's Padlet (Appendix K). C8 stated: "... *when I got my qualification, we worked with children with cerebral palsy and I was very confident in working with them*". Reflecting on a lack of familiarity with conditions they are now faced with: "...*we have families coming to us with children with all sorts of diagnosis... I have to use Google to search for information*". I felt sad that an experienced conductor, who I professionally and personally have respect for, would doubt their knowledge. This signals that change can force conductors out of their comfort zones impacting their confidence and therefore their professional identity.

C10's item was a demonstration doll, something introduced during the Covid-19 pandemic by C10's workplace, when services had to move online. The doll was used to show parents over a screen, how to best facilitate their children to move in a specific way. C10 never thought that CE could or should work in a digital space as it would not allow connections between the conductors, learners and the families. They reflected on their feelings regarding digital delivery of CE: "*I had to change my ways ... it taught me to be more careful about how I view myself as a conductor ... it worked!*". The specific event of a global pandemic, moved this conductor into a space they never even dared to imagine, let alone exist within successfully. As such, they experienced a different encounter with their world; the occurrence of online delivery working, pushed C10 beyond merely reflecting on their practice – they were forced to think otherwise. This experience was significant for them in re-informing their professional identity and the way they think of CE and its perceived limitations/boundaries. This encounter put the spotlight on the human principle in CE as it highlights the importance of intra-actions in CE between conductor \rightleftharpoons the learner \rightleftharpoons the environment. Therefore, this will need to be considered in the conceptualisation of the philosophy of CE.

3.4.11 Self

Two conductors (C4, C17), from different FGs, presented themselves as their *thing*. In terms of differences that *matter*, choosing the self as a *thing* is significantly different from the majority of conductors who selected objects. Both conductors' animated and

passionate narratives made my body and mind tingle. Data< was intra-acting with me, showing that the professional embodies the profession; conductors are entangled in CE and are part of the assemblage. This is an important encounter, which needs to be re-animated when conceptualising the philosophy of CE and in its theorisation.

C4 said: *“I was thinking about what do I use?”* – suggesting that the *things* used in daily practice informs professional identity. C4 continued: *“I kept coming back to myself and my personality and what I bring to the group that’s different from the other conductors”*. This was not about wanting to stand out, C4’s focus was on the children they work with: *“... The feedback I get from the kids gives me that I’m a conductor. It’s the kids and my personality.”*

C4 highlighted the importance of relationships between learners and conductors and there was a strong emphasis on the role of the conductors’ personality. This materialised on FG1’s Padlet (Figure 13). Thinking with Barad (2007), conductors are entangled with their learners, their intra-actions *matter* as they produce *becoming-conductor*.

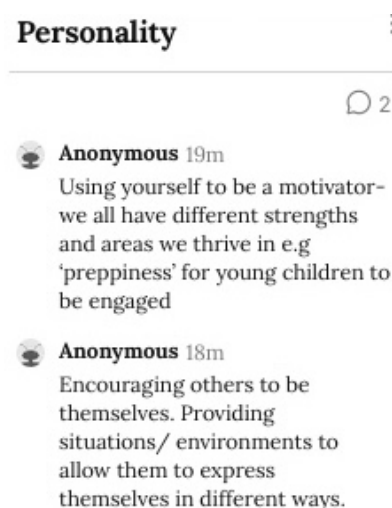


Figure 13: Padlet extract 10

C17 talked about difficulties in their journey, needing to fulfil different roles at their current setting and having to train as a teacher despite not being classroom based. There was an expression of conflict in working with other professionals who have different priorities: *“... some days it’s really hard ... it leads to disagreements”*. This signals that the team a conductor works in impacts their identity. Nevertheless, C17 demonstrated conviction in their professional identity: *“being a conductor influences how I approach everything I do”*. Their narrative also indicates a merging of professional and personal personas: *“I am a conductor, that’s who I am!”*. This data< segment highlights that a conductor is embedded and embodied in the system of CE.

3.4.12 Observation

As well as Google (section 3.4.10), C8 also selected observation (Figure 14); a methodological aspect of CE. C8 stated: “... *what would describe my identity is the way we work with the parents and their children ... observation is a very important element of our work and it makes it different from other special needs settings*”.

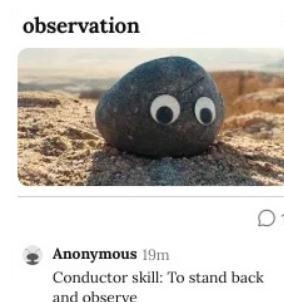


Figure 14: Padlet extract 11

This entangled moment (Taylor & Fairchild, 2020) between conductor, their practice and beliefs highlight that conductors look for differences in order to explain what they do. C8 expressed proudly that the children are able to progress as conductors adapt their practice to meet the needs of the learners based on their observations: “... *that’s why we can achieve those aims we set up for the kids fairly quickly. And the families don’t have to wait weeks and weeks to see a professional*”. This data< segment shows that conductors’ identity is influenced by their positive impact on the families they work with. This is significant in thinking about the philosophy and the theorisation of CE.

AGENTIAL CUT 4
(please go to page 178)

3.5 Summary of data< *matterings* from the first activity

A number of *matterings* emerged from breaking data< together-apart; conductors are assigned to each of these aspects where it applied to them.

The heterogenous nature of the profession informs and impacts conductors’ professional identity:

- the type of team and setting/provision they work in (C2, C14, C16, C17),
- the age group and in some cases the specific condition they work with (C5, C8, C15, C18),
- years of experience as a conductor (C1, C5, C6, C8, C9, C10, C21).

Conductors are entangled in CE:

- being a conductor and working in the field of CE, offers a sense of belonging (C6, C7, C13, C19),
- conductors' own personality inform their pedagogy (C4, C15, C16, C17, C18),
- there is a merging of personal and professional identities (C1, C7, C16, C17, C19),
- a conductor identifies as a practitioner (C6, C7, C13, C19, C21),
- the way matter (the equipment) is utilised in CE practice strengthens conductors' feelings of conductor-ness (C6, C11, C12, C15, C18),
- conductors gauge their worth based on what CE means to families and the relationship conductors have with their learners (C4, C6, C7, C8, C10, C12, C13, C19).

Data< re-directed thought towards some troubling:

- conductors hold onto a belief that CE is not known or understood outside of the profession (C11, C17),
- conductors identify themselves based on their differences from other professionals (C2, C8, C11, C12, C14, C17),
- there is an unspoken categorisation of conductor-ness within the profession (C9),
- there is a degree of imposter syndrome in the context of other professionals (C3, C11).

3.6 Conversation and Padlet

The second activity for each FG, started with an unstructured conversation led by the conductors; being mindful of potential issues around power dynamics, I used the mute function to signal that my presence is insignificant. Eliminating all power relations may not be possible however, every step was taken to reduce any negative impact of my positionality. The conversation was followed by co-creating a wall of vignettes using Padlet, all images and comments were added anonymously.

Table 4 shows the length of time in minutes each FG had their discussions for and highlights the main topics of conversations. The conversations were not prompted or guided by me, they organically emerged through the conductors inter/intra-actions.

Table 4 – Focus group conversation data table

Focus group	Length of conversation	Main topics
1	27 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • working in different types of teams • educating others about CE • post-qualification learning
2	22 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the original language and culture of CE • the social context • explaining CE
3	33 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • motivation • supporting families • the role of relationships and care • other professionals • professional confidence
4	34 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CE as a belief system • CE changing the conductor at a personal level • working with other professionals • conflict • communicating the message of CE

In this following section I highlight the *matterings* across the four FGs' conversations and each Padlet, according to what was made significant by the conductors' discursive and material intra-actions. Relevant vignettes will be explored alongside the conductors' conversations. In an attempt to avoid coding, categorising and interpreting data<, I am presenting them using words (where possible) chosen/used by the conductors. The order of the headings' appearance signifies how they awakened my curiosity, consequently, it must be recognised that my positionality influenced the interrogation of data<. I am entangled in the research, in CE, with the research participants, my own practice and my role as course lead.

3.6.1 Personal and professional identities

Belief and Potential

On FG4's Padlet (Appendix M) both the idea of belief and potential are materialised (Figures 15, 16). Conductors in FG4 seemed to apply the concept of potential to themselves as well as those they work with. Conversely in FG2, C7 stated: *"We don't live our philosophy. We want the person to believe in themselves but do conductors believe in themselves? No"*. This is a contradiction amongst the views/feelings of conductors.



Figure 15: Padlet extract 12



Figure 16: Padlet extract 13

The implication of a belief system can be all consuming, merging personal and professional identities. This came through in C18 emotional comment: *"... when I see a child in a wheelchair, I just want to go over and help. It is part of us and who we are it is not just at work"*. C17 replied with visible relief laughing: *"I'm so glad someone else does that, I thought it was just me"*. C16 commented with conviction: *"...That's the point... the fact that we talk about a belief system"*. This narrative account was enlaced with raw emotions, it was almost physically tangible that conductors embody this belief. The encounter had opened up a way to re-view the parts of the whole CE system and its theorisation.

The concept of belief and its importance is also on Padlet: FG1's (Figure 18) and FG2's (Figure 17). It further shows that for conductors, personal and professional identities are not always separate.

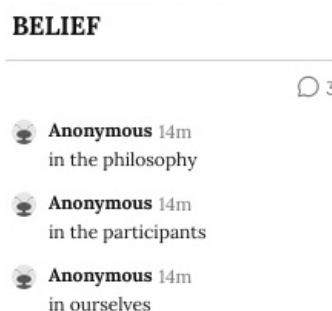


Figure 17: Padlet extract 14

Justification / Belief

- Anonymous 19m
Believing in potential.
- Anonymous 15m
Confidence in own identity (professional and personal) is strongly linked with own beliefs and this is constantly shaped by new experiences.
- Anonymous 14m
The first word that came to my head was, orthofunctional personality

Figure 18: Padlet extract 15

A conductive lens

The verbal and non-verbal (Figure 19 from FG4's Padlet) narratives of conductors, signal that they see the world through a "*conductive lens*". This impacts their professional and personal identities; highlighting that in *becoming*-conductor, assumptions and value systems are challenged and conductors are encouraged to adopt Pető's worldview on disability. I registered this bodily, I had to catch my breath, this is significant in theorising CE.

Seeing the World through a conductive lens

- Anonymous 16m
How do we encourage other professionals to see through this lens too?
- Anonymous 13m
I like to think that for both our participants and other professionals it is about 'loosening the soil'... i.e. to just loosen their ideas a tiny bit to begin to allow new shoots to grow.

Figure 19: Padlet extract 16

C21 stated that CE can be all consuming: "*I knew when I graduated, I was ruined for anything else. I don't think I will ever stop seeing the world through a conductor's eyes*". This data segment signals that conductors are part of the CE assemblage; CE becomes not just what they do but how they think. In a sense, conductors are entangled in their theory-praxis; further testament to this is the passion, conductors embody for their field and learners.

Passion

C17 said: “... at school, people will say, you’re so passionate about it [CE]. They’re surprised ... I don’t know if there’s a lot of other professions that have our level of passion and dedication”. This is an indication of conductors comparing themselves to other professionals or focusing on differences. However, it also signals the strong emotional connections conductors have for their work. This resonated strongly with me as a practitioner and lecturer, this passion is something I strive to ignite in the conductor students.

No one else talked about their own passion for CE on Padlet. The focus was around connection: with other conductors, the professional body or connecting families (Figure 20). This is more data< highlighting the importance of relationality in CE. However, conductors’ physical expressions spoke loudly with animation. These encounters signified an embedded and embodied love and passion for CE. I felt proud to share this experience with my colleagues/research participants.

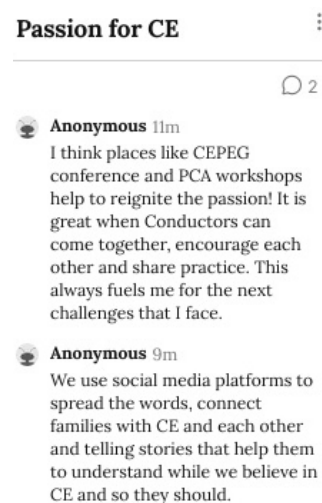


Figure 20: Padlet extract 17

3.6.2 Key factors in CE as identified by conductors

Organically, each FG’s conversation included what they deemed as key aspects of CE, elements of the profession conductors felt strongly about. For example, C13 summarised: “... at the beginning of each academic year, as a team, we think about what a good CE session looks like ... flexibility, being spontaneous, to be fun, to be relevant, to be motivational and professional but equally supportive and caring with parents”. This signals that the discussed characteristics of CE are significant *matterings* for conductors. These included: relationships and trust, closely linked are time and care, motivation and fun, the learning environment and flexibility/adaptability. In addition to this, two FGs talked about “*the magic of CE*”. Some of these aspects already featured during the first activity; consequently, it is not possible to fully separate them for the analysis below.

Relationships and trust

The importance of building trusting relationships and having connections with not just the learners but also the families featured in FG2s' discursive and material engagement. The significance of these factors is materialised on Padlet (Figures 21, 22, 23).

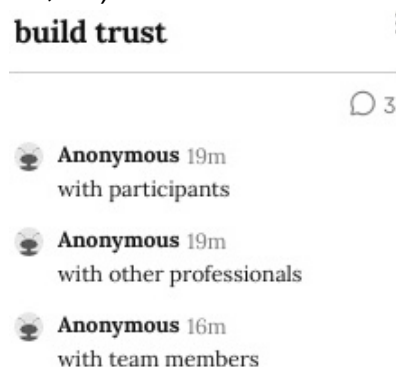


Figure 21: Padlet extract 18

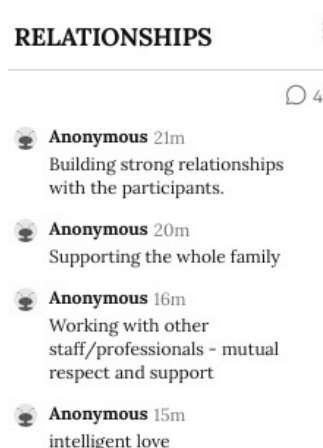


Figure 22: Padlet extract 19

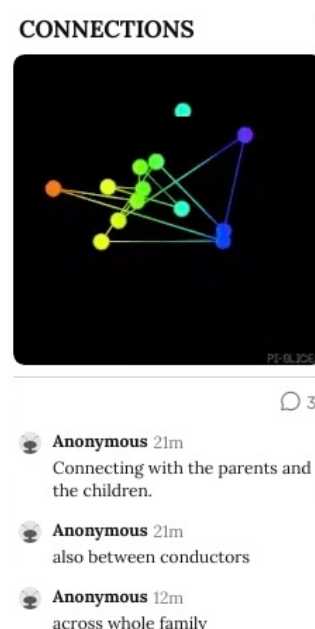


Figure 23: Padlet extract 20

The relationships conductors built with families and what they offer to them are highlighted as significant in *becoming*-conductor. Padlet extracts show this (Figure 25, FG3; Figure 24, FG4). When watching these conversations without the sound on, I could feel the weight of love conductors carry. I entered a different space, thinking and sensing my own learners and our intra-actions. Thinking with Barad (2008), there was a lack of distinction between the knower (myself) and the known (what *matters* to conductors) further highlighting my entanglements with CE/conductors/inquiry.

We give hope to parents, families



Figure 24: Padlet extract 21

supporting the family

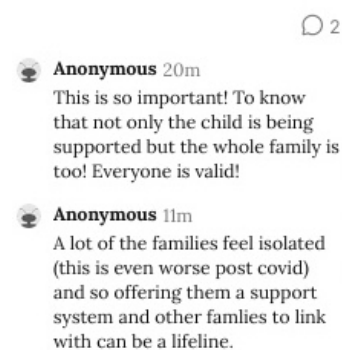


Figure 25: Padlet extract 22

C6 highlighted the importance of building relationships from the first meeting: “... *the initial connection is so important and nothing can be done without that being in the forefront.*” This sentiment is materialised on FG2 Padlet (Figure 26).

Listening Skills

 **Anonymous** 18m
Understanding the impact of living with a disability on the person and their family - being non-judgemental

Figure 26: Padlet extract 23

Data< points to entangled identities, blurred boundaries – an assemblage of conductor-CE-person-professional-families-matter-others, where actants have agency and are constantly in flux intra-acting with other things (Bennett, 2010a). According to Barad (2007) only in entanglements with other things do we come to *matter*.


Data< segments from FG3 and FG4 detail the type of relationships conductors have with families and how this *matters* to them. Figure 27 is from FG3’s Padlet further informing this *matte*ring.

C13 stated proudly: “... *I don’t think a conductor could do a good job if they don’t have the ability to create relationships, which are bettering the other one*”. This pride was felt by my conductor self!

When discussing families, they work with, C19 explained: “... *we feel their problems and we want to help them, to enable them to conquer their problems. That is part of our professional identity.*”

relationships

 **Anonymous** 19m
Intelligent love is a the best way for me to describe how as conductors we form relationships with our participants, to other professionals

 **Anonymous** 12m
Relationships are important at all levels when as a conductor you work with other people , such parents, colleagues and other professionals.


 **Anonymous** 12m
The postive fun caring yet professional relationship you build with the child as a conductor. The relationship with the parents and siblings also is unique. We ask parents (usually during CEawareness week) what they find is different about CE from other professionals working with their child and what they feel works for their child in CE. The fact that we get to know their child so well as an individual,we care, and the family dynamic.

Figure 27: Padlet extract 24

These encounters signify that a conductor is produced through the intra-actions with their learners therefore, their entanglements (relations) inform the pedagogy of CE.

This resonated strongly with me as a practitioner and as a lecturer as my working ethics are guided by these principles.

Time and care

Having time for and truly caring about the learners, their families and progress seem to be important aspects to being a conductor. There is data<, which signifies that conductors value being outside of the system and position CE in opposition of other professionals. Conductors are produced in the process of conduction with their learners without the restraints of time. Below are some discursive and material (Figures 28, 29 below) encounters from different FGs to showcase these *matterings*.

C12 “... it’s very different how much you see the child compared to how much they might see a physio.”

C19 referring to other professionals: “... they don’t have time to care, they have time to complete their job duties...”.

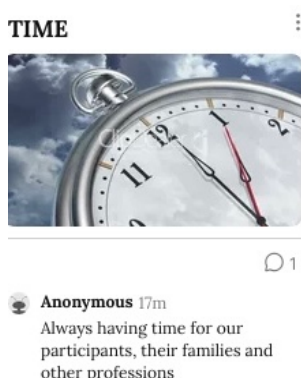


Figure 28: Padlet extract 25

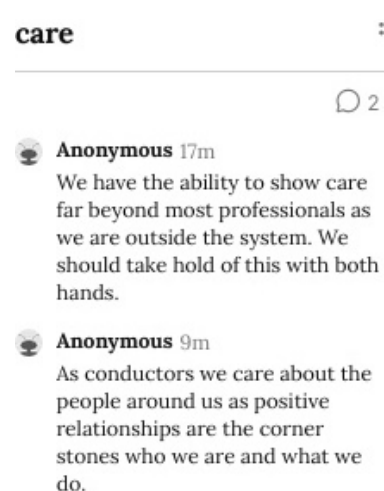


Figure 29: Padlet extract 26

Data< segments strongly indicate a pedagogy based on love as these principles influence conductors’ feelings and actions, consequently they will need to be considered in the conceptualisation of CE philosophy for contemporary times.

Motivation and fun

Motivation, fun and enjoying sessions were discussed alongside each other, which signal that conductors place high importance on learners having a positive experience

of CE. This indicates a passionate involvement, the learners' emotions and contentment impact conductors' professional identity. In addition, conductors identifying differences between CE and physiotherapy sessions continue to be a focus. Differences seem to produce the conductor, for example, C11 explained:

"Parents will come into me after physio and they will be like, they literally did nothing, but as soon as they come into the conductive session, it's that motivation, engagement, it's that relationship. They want to ... Because you spent time with them, you get to know the families, you know exactly what it is that motivates them."

C12 said enthusiastically: *"... the motivation ... that's the role of the conductor. Their [physio's] expectations that the child would just perform because they were asked to, we would provide the motivation and engage every single child to want to take part. A big difference across professions."*

C16 expressed with animation: *"... the first aim I give anyone is to enjoy their sessions. That's what makes you a conductor, it's the motivation, the enjoyment and the pleasure of doing."*

MOTIVATION
5

Anonymous 10m

always finding a way to motivate the child weather it be through a toy or game etc.

Anonymous 9m

This comes out of relationship and being willing to adapt your way INTO their way. Not only does it tap into their motivation but it taps into their need of being HEARD and them knowing their wants are valid too.

Anonymous 8m

An individual's motivation will change from one moment to the next, being flexible with this and having multiple options helps me when delivering sessions

Anonymous 6m

To be motivated to learn and to motivated to teach.

Anonymous 6m

The APPLE 🍏

Figure 30: Padlet extract 27

Figure 30 above is an extract from FG3's Padlet signifies the *mattering* of motivation in the system of CE. The embodied encounters showcase that motivation is important to the professional practice of conductors, therefore, it will need to be considered when conceptualising the philosophy of CE.

Learning environment

The importance of a conductive learning environment was implicitly present in the conversation when discussing the role of relationships and creating motivation for the learners. Conductors pride themselves on their ability to create the right environment

for learning to happen. For example, Figure 31 from FG1's Padlet highlights entanglements between the conductor, the learning environment and the learners' potential.



Figure 31: Padlet extract 28

C13 highlighted differences in comparing conductors to other professionals: *"I think what sets us aside from every other profession is the ability to create an environment where we can build a relatable relationship with families and they've got trust in us."*

Figure 32 from FG3's Padlet, shows not only the importance of the environment but the role of the conductor within it. This data segment pulls together various parts of CE: the conductor, their personality, the environment, the learner and the magic. This *matter*ing of the parts signifies the whole, the assemblage of CE.

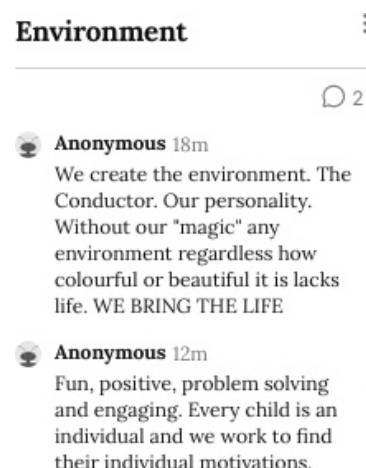


Figure 32: Padlet extract 29

Flexibility/Adaptability

The idea of flexibility applies both to CE and conductors' daily practice. The discursive and material engagements signal that conductors value the flexibility being outside of the statutory system offers, which enables them to individualise their approach to meet their learners' needs based on their observations. For example, C13 commented: *"I can tailor the session. ... It's very much about supporting not just the child but the whole family."*

Furthermore, C11 explained with passion: “...as a conductor you have the opportunity, which is really precious, to take kids out of this system, it’s like a power-tool we have that other professionals don’t have”.

Similarly, C7 said: “... it is the joy of CE, it is a flexible approach that you can mould and develop to the social context”.

Figure 33 from FG1’s Padlet highlights that conductors need to manage multiple things together, which could impact identity in terms of how they view their role. Figure 34 from FG3 shows possibilities conductors value and take advantage of.



Figure 33: Padlet extract 30

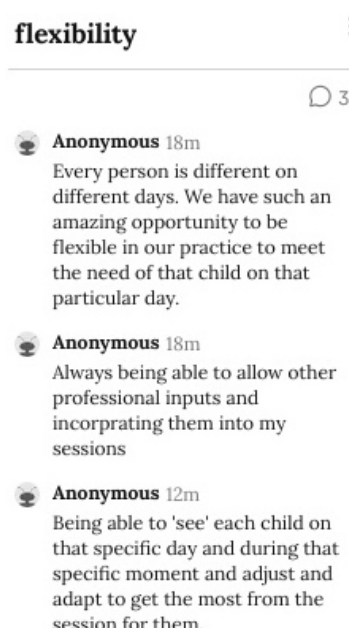


Figure 34: Padlet extract 31

The magic of CE

FG3 and FG4 explored what they described as “the magic” of CE showcasing conductors’ love for the profession as well as something unique about the system of CE, which they could not articulate in any other way.

For example, C11 said enthusiastically: “So when they [families] come to us... you would have heard this before: it’s the magic. The magic is the relationship and that mutual respect that we have with them.”

Or C19 claimed with pride: “... we want to invite people to put our lenses on for just a short while, while they have that sense of magic to see people being happy just because they are progressing.”

In these encounters conductors tried to pinpoint what makes CE distinct, this continued on Padlet (Figures 35, 36), indicating that conductors feel that there is something about the system of CE, which makes it unique but they were not able to articulate it.

Is there magic? What is it? Is it one thing?




-  **Anonymous** 15m
Being inspired and use the source of our inspiration to inspire others.
-  **Anonymous** 12m
The giving of 'hope'
-  **Anonymous** 9m
I think the magic is the gift of seeing the world through our CE 'lens'... seeing things differently

Figure 35: Padlet extract 32

What is the magic?




-  **Anonymous** 20m
Seeing the participants achieve no matter how small and being able to celebrate those moments with the families
-  **Anonymous** 16m
Being available in the moment of need. Showing our families that regardless of the narrative they have heard before THERE IS HOPE and there is always room for progress
-  **Anonymous** 7m
Magic is the love and care we provide to build positive relationships, which enables us as a professional to create an environment for learning.

Figure 36: Padlet extract 33

Moving away from privileging language alone, I opened up possibilities for data to intra-act with me in other ways. I watched and felt these encounters without the sound, and noticed conductors' embodied experiences. Conductors came alive, the movement on the screen increased from those who spoke and listened. They held themselves upright with a sparkle in their eyes while the conversation was on “the magic” of CE indicating that this was special for them.

Conductors place high importance on and celebrate the achievements of their learners, this was made significant on Padlet (below: Figure 37, FG1; Figure 38, FG3). This is a *matter*, which positively impact professional identity and produce the conductor.

Highlighting the achievements



Figure 37: Padlet extract 34



Figure 38: Padlet extract 35

On Padlet, aspects of CE were highlighted by conductors, which implicitly position the system as transformative. These included: fostering growth, a positive mindset (Figure 39, FG3; Figure 40, FG4) and believing that development is not fixed (Figure 41, FG2). These aspects of the system of CE organically emerged through conductors' creative encounters on Padlet and intra-actions with each other. Therefore, their importance needs to be considered when re-thinking parts of the whole in the theorisation of CE.

Power of the human brain

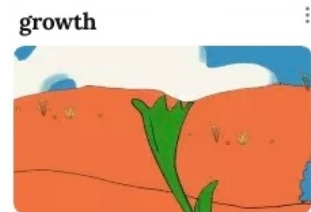
Understanding and believing how the brain can change

Figure 39: Padlet extract 36

positive framing

Anonymous 8m
always shining a postive light on situations and during sessions framing them so they are always positive

Figure 40: Padlet extract 37



2

Anonymous 17m
recognising a growth mindset in ourselves, nurturing growth in our participants and recognising not everyone we come across will have growth mindset (or be in a position of readiness for it).

Anonymous 8m
Growing even in 'advrse' conditions - perhaps when practice has changed or been challenged

Figure 41: Padlet extract 38

3.6.3 Communicating the message of CE

FGs highlighted challenges around articulating the essence of CE fit for different audiences; yet conductors recognised the importance of communicating the message

of CE. However, data< suggests that conductors are not always good or confident at doing this, aligning with discoveries from the literature as discussed in Chapter 1.

C7 voiced how most people “get CE” upon seeing it. C11 made a similar comment: “... people don’t get it [CE] until they see it in action.” In other words, conductors’ beliefs materialise in their work but their articulation of the system is not effective. It could be argued that not being able to define what CE is or what makes the profession distinct and unique would inevitably impact identity causing a reduction in professional confidence. C19 focused on “the magic of CE” and its importance to convey the system: “... If you can spread that magic in the way how we communicate, then people will listen.” C7 offered a solution: “... professional confidence is something that is so important for us, but to do that, we got to truly be able to frame what we do within a language, within an understanding that hits professional as well as the public’s view”. This made me pause, C7’s words and conviction reached something deep within in, my drive to use this inquiry to offer something useful for the profession to aid this framing have strengthened furthermore.

Conductors problematised sharing the message of CE; there was a sense of duty and a degree of frustration. For example, C1 stated: “... our duty to educate anybody about CE, whether it is parents or professionals, so they know what it is that we are doing”. A conductor from FG1 (Figure 42) focused on the importance of educating their own team about key aspects of CE. FG4’s Padlet extract (Figure 43) offered a different angle regarding who conductors feel they should communicate CE to.

Duty to educate about CE

Anonymous 13m
Ensuring your team are aware of the key aspects! E.g importance of rhythmical intention

Figure 42: Padlet extract 39

Communication

Anonymous 13m
using a wide variety of communication strands

Anonymous 13m
With the participants

Anonymous 12m
and other professionals

Anonymous 11m
wider community (CE awareness)

Figure 43: Padlet extract 40

FG2's Padlet entry (Figure 44) highlighted the importance of communicating CE to various audiences.

C2 said somewhat flustered: "... staff who do not work in groups, there is still a lack of knowledge and an exact appreciation of what we [conductors] do". This indicates that people who work alongside conductors, can still lack an understanding about the approach. Based on C2's strong physical reaction, conductors find this frustrating.

When sharing their thought with the group, C6's body language and energy changed, they grew smaller and quieter. C6: "...sometimes conductors may not be able to say they do CE. We [in own setting] say we use the principles of CE to try to explain it to the parents, that's an easier way to make them understand what we do". This encounter spoke volumes of stigma and forced silence.

How do we, how should we, how can we communicate CE to others?

3

- Anonymous 14m
Consistently and persistently
- Anonymous 14m
Can this be done through having a presence in places? For example, review meetings. Sending a report may not portray the essence of CE, so how can we show up and make time to be in conversation about CE
- Anonymous 10m
I do feel social media is a really strong avenue for this. I have noticed the way in which CE is being written and talked about online and in media is now much more heavily led by conductors' voices themselves. This means we are actually saying what we are saying about our own world. Since i think this is very likely the first point for many people to 'see' CE i think this is a very positive thing..... however - we need WIKIPEDIA to be a better reflection of CE as currently this isn't the best and would also be a first point of learning for those new to the approach.

Figure 44: Padlet extract 41

3.6.4 Professional identity

Each FG problematised professional identity in an explicit way. For example, an extract from FG2's Padlet (Figure 45) showcases the importance and value of a strong identity. The physicality of the word "boundaries"

awakened my curiosity, especially as the heading chosen

by the conductor was "being strong". This encounter signalled clarity in terms of what is crucial for developing positive professional identity.

Being strong

Knowing where our professional boundaries are
Being clear on our own professional identity and staying true to that

Figure 45: Padlet extract 42

Provoked by the discussions in two FGs, I posed a question on Padlet. If conductors chose to respond that would indicate that the encounters also made them feel and think. FG3, I asked, "What is it to be a professional?" (Figure 46 below), the comments provided are very diverse, highlighting different interpretations of professionalism. FG4, I asked, "What impacts your identity?" to which conductors answered with a wide variety of factors impacting their professional identity (Figure 47 below). Furthermore,

there is an indication that early experiences, years and types of experience as a conductor, continual professional development and dealing with confrontation all impact conductors' identity. This showcases that the heterogenous nature of the profession is a significant factor for the professional and therefore the profession.

What is it to be a professional?

-  **Anonymous** 19m
To be excellent in what you do.
-  **Anonymous** 15m
Being open minded to new ideas and the ideas/views of others in all aspects, whilst utilising the skills learned within your own profession.
-  **Anonymous** 6m
THIS!

Figure 46: Padlet extract 43

What impacts your identity?

-  **Anonymous** 12m
team around you, children/adults you work with, experiences you have, conflicts you encounter
-  **Anonymous** 12m
The environment is key.
-  **Anonymous** 10m
Experiences!
-  **Anonymous** 6m
The belief I have in myself- who I am not just what I do.

Figure 47: Padlet extract 44

Comments made on FG4's Padlet (Figure 48) indicate that conductors see their profession as a vocation rather than just a job. CE *matters* to conductors. This was evident when C8 got very emotional whilst recalling one of her teacher's, Dr Hári's words: "*it is not enough to do something as a conductor, you always have to do your best*", signalling an instilled professional pride. C8's memory had agency, it took them to a different *spacetimemattering*, along with FG2. Everyone (including myself) became silent, emotional and temporarily lost in their own thoughts and feelings. This embodied encounter *mattered*, still producing C8 as a conductor.

DUTY?!...

-  **Anonymous** 11m
I would disagree for me personally, it doesn't feel like a duty more like a calling maybe
-  **Anonymous** 10m
Rather passion and profession.
-  **Anonymous** 8m
I think we have a strong sense of doing the 'right thing' for people but I am not sure we frame that as a 'duty'. More a purpose...

Figure 48: Padlet extract 45

C1 shared a different type of memory with their FG, focusing on a module they took at the Pető Institute.

“... it was putting CE in contrast to other approaches to learning ... I don’t know whether it was meant to be so that you find your identity, how to place you yourself within this network of other things available to people who may come to you.”

C1’s recollection indicates that during their training CE was aligned to pedagogy rather than therapeutic approaches and emphasis was placed on helping trainee conductors see their role and place in the wider context. This raises the questions of why conductors later on in their careers feel the need to compare their worth to therapeutic professionals and why do they find it challenging to explain what makes their role distinct and unique? Taylor (2013) states that questions prompt a reconceptualisation of things.

Early experiences

C3 talked of an internal conflict when working as a conductor-teacher, which signals that job roles can impact identity. Having another qualification presented a challenge for C3 in their focus despite of CE’s wholistic nature of. In support of C3, C1 reassuringly remembered: *“I can relate to what it’s like being a newly qualified conductor working on your own without any other conductors, that’s how I spent the first five years and it wasn’t great”*. C5 also shared their early experiences: *“When I started, I worked on my own. I did lots of mistakes, but it was nice to learn”*. These encounters indicate that early experiences impact conductors’ confidence, which showcases the significance of these formative years.

Professional growth and development

There was a recognition by conductors that identity is not static; the importance of self-directed learning and continued development in shaping identity were emphasised. For example, C3 recognised: *“...it is working off your own back, doing your own research and reading, you have to be prepared to do that independently. Otherwise, you’re at a stand-still”*.

C16 referred back to activity one of the FG and said: *“... a professional maturity, a bit like your second running shoes. A stage in your career where you can put energy into*

your development as a person. Whereas previously the energy was required to do the sessions.”

The second comment on the extract from FG4’s Padlet (Figure 49) echoes the merging of personal and professional identities; a reoccurring *matter*ing for conductors. This showcases further that the conductor is entangled in their professional role and their profession.

CPD - taking responsibility for own learning

- Anonymous 19m
When working with other professionals there is often opportunity for CPD on a daily/weekly basis from these professionals, but we must remember to carry out CPD specifically for CE
- Anonymous 14m
Our own identity is subject to change and stopping to reflect on how it is changing and what influences and experiences are changing it is very important in our CPD.

Figure 49: Padlet extract 46

Confrontation

Dealing with confrontation and conflict were discussed in three FGs. Conductors voiced they try to avoid challenging other professionals even if this means not speaking up about what they believe in, signalling a lack of professional confidence. This sensitive topic arose organically, which signifies conductors wanted/needed to problematise it amongst themselves. In terms of researcher response-ability, I felt content that the participants felt safe to do so. The discursive encounter certainly *affected* conductors, they behaved as if someone had physically punched or offended them. Conductors withdrew slightly and appeared embarrassed; the forces produced left an impression on their bodies (Fairchild, 2021).

A Padlet entry from FG4 (Figure 50) demonstrates a contemplation of what conflict might do, indicating low confidence through comparing knowledge and expertise with therapeutic professionals. This indicates that conductors do not feel that they officially belong; they occupy a space but do not have the confidence to claim it (Osgood et al, 2020). I felt frustrated by this and determent to change this negative construct.

stronger identity through conflict

- Anonymous 16m
this is not a constant process but one that ebbs and flows. Some experience strengthen our identity, some weaken it, some take it in a different direction even. At times I feel my identity has been diluted and sometimes made stronger.
- Anonymous 12m
asking yourself questions about what you believe and why helps you to prepare for situations where your perspective might be challenged.

Figure 50: Padlet extract 47

Below are discursive examples, which formed part of conversations in two FGs; they highlight signs of imposter syndrome.

C3 said: *“I really like working with physios but sometimes they put me on the spot ... I do know the answer, but I don’t want to tread on their toes, when I’m new”*. This clearly resonated with C4, they commented: *“... that was my experience when I first qualified, being too shy to say my opinion or stand up for what I was doing”*. I felt sad that newly qualified/junior conductors have this experience; it made think about the UG course and how knowing this should impact conductor training in the future.

C13 remarked on other professionals: *“... when it comes to what they’re saying ... I don’t think they’re right. I need to challenge that. I’m not good at that still”*. C12 added: *“I would agree. Directly challenging is hard. I wouldn’t seek an argument”*.

Figure 51 from FG3’s Padlet shows a more confident approach to confrontation. However, the power dynamics in terms of the size between the two characters tells a different story of how a conductor might view themselves in comparison to another professional. It must be acknowledged that the picture might have been chosen deliberately to demonstrate that very point, although it cannot be certain.



Figure 51: Padlet extract 48

C16 contribution shows that feelings around confrontation can change:

“As a younger conductor I was keener to be agreeable with other professional ... I will now be a bit more confrontational; I’ll nudge and prod and poke a bit of someone’s view of the individual to try to get them to see my way a little bit.”

3.6.5 Imposter syndrome

Professional confidence as a concept has been interwoven in conductors’ material and discursive encounters. This section specifically highlights feelings of imposter

syndrome amongst conductors and the way they are trying to grapple with it. Data< shows loudly that conductors feel they need to prove their worth mostly to other professionals through their material and discursive encounters in this study.

Lack of professional confidence started at a different *spacetime* mattering as told by C7: “... *when I started, conductors were not confident. They were waiting for someone to come and tell them they weren’t doing it right. People were almost apologising for their profession... it means they have no professional confidence*”.

C13 said with desperation: “*You want to be accepted as an equal professional so you work probably 2000 times more on that than any other professional would do because you know what they know and more*”. C14 comment highlights a different approach: “... *training in other therapies has actually boosted my confidence as a conductor and how I feel*”.

Data< signals that confidence is impacted by the historic perception and misunderstandings that CE is not understood. C7 said frustrated: “... *we’ve got this hangover of everybody doesn’t understand us, nobody likes us.*” Yet, the second comment on FG1’s Padlet entry (Figure 52) demonstrates that conductors are not always able to articulate with conviction what they do. I shared C7’s frustration and to a degree I felt overwhelmed;

if conductors themselves cannot articulate what CE is

and what they do, no one else can be expected to understand the profession. This would make the historic perceptions and the “*hangover*” very current and relevant, negatively impacting professional identity and confidence. A consideration for the theorisation of CE will need to link to clarity.

Cutting data< together-apart a significant *mattering* emerged – conductors feel most like an imposter when directly needing to express their opinion, which does not align to a therapeutic professional’s view. Again, a sense that conductors are unsure on where their place is, therefore, they are unable/unwilling to occupy it. An example of this is C13, who admitted: “*as a conductor I feel very confident. I’ve got a strong*

What do conductors do??




Figure 52: Padlet extract 49


identity. But even after all these years, where my confidence rocks, is challenging other professionals.”

Recognising the confidence and development of our participants and the confidence within our professional selves when we just take a step back.

C15 shared how they manage meetings with professionals:

“When I first started, I would sort of keep my mouth quiet. The more I've done it, I will put my hand up and say, actually in my opinion I've not seen this. Then no one could ever say you're wrong”. C15 spoke humbly yet with conviction, they found a way to occupy a space amongst/with other professionals whilst owning their conductor identity. A Padlet entry from FG3 (Figure 53) demonstrates temporality and the emergent nature of professional confidence.

 1

 **Anonymous** 6m

I am more confident now than as a newly graduated conductor - to explain CE to families and other professionals and show a parent what and how they can facilitate their child. Partly due to time and gaining experience with more children but also we are lucky to have had great support from a private physio and SaLT who has greatly increased my confidence giving my opinion in front of other professionals - by asking my opinion and using examples of our good practice to put their points across also.

Figure 53: Padlet extract 50

3.6.6 Working in different teams

There was a strong problematisation of how conductors work; this included: working alone, with other conductors or with other professionals. As explored earlier, data< suggests that conductors' place of work and who they work with (or who they do not work with) impact their professional identity and it really *matters* to them. Furthermore, data< indicates that conductors' early experiences within a team impact their professional confidence. Conductors have been impacted by their encounters, which produced them in different ways. For example, C1 explained about working with other professionals: *“... It can be appreciation or rejection of what you are subjected to, I think I had a bit of both.”*

C2's comment focused on working with other professionals: *“... it's our duty to know what is our identity, I don't want to say justify, but if you are being questioned, it is important to have that knowledge and belief in your qualifications and training”.* The word “*justify*” made me feel uncomfortable, it felt like a violation. This data< segment indicated the necessity to defend CE and conductors' professional existence.

FG4 explored working in conductor-only versus MD teams, showcasing curiosity but also a *matter*ing. C18 asked: *“Do you have less identity if you're in a conductor only team because everyone understands each other and you don't have to fight for*

anything?”. C16 replied: “... *there’re times when it’s so nice to be in a conductor only team because everything is a given. There’s still conflict sometimes, but conductor on conductor conflict is more manageable. ... In a MD team you have to work harder and decipher what you think and ... want*”. C17, who works in an MD school shared: “... *You have days when you would give anything to have a room of conductors just knowing what I’m thinking and working towards... There are times when I’ve been watered down ...*”. The idea of different degrees of conductor-ness is present in this data segment with the phrase “*watered down*”.

Conductive group

As a heterogenous profession, the conductive group can vary according to each setting. There were specific comments in FG1 and FG3 regarding conductor-only teams, benefits and challenges were discussed and emotions were shared. For example, C1 said: “... *the development of my professional identity as a conductor was influenced by how I started to work in a MD situation straight after qualifying and working exclusively with conductors. Quite a switch; it was an intense period*”.

C11 admitted with sadness: “*I completely miss being in the group. That whole environment happens. I have to do all those things myself, trying to create that as a one person is quite difficult, you have to be creative*”. As a practitioner, who has been working without other conductors for over a decade, I completely understood C11’s feelings and perspective. These embodied experiences highlight that the context a conductor works in produce their professional identity.

Different professional – Different perspective

Through conductors’ intra-actions, various encounters surfaced regarding (other) professionals; for example, some conductors spoke of acceptance when working with professionals. C1 offered a positive framing: “... *I just kind of accepted that we are all coming from a sort of different perspective*”.

However most discursive and material exchanges were laced with frustration regarding other professionals’ views on CE and the learner. For example, C16 shared how a physiotherapist called a young person, they both work with, a patient: “...*she sees that person medically... It’s as simple as those points in language, it’s a young person, it’s*

a child, it's an individual but not a number and most definitely never a patient, I don't like that word at all". Conductors look for potential rather than limitations, therefore the choice of word used by other professionals to describe a person creating a strong emotional reaction in a conductor is unsurprising. Conversely, I did not share this frustration, I accept that professionals use terminology, which fits with their working ethics and beliefs. In my conductive practice, I refer to my adult learners as participants, signalling their autonomy and agency in the process of conduction. Based on data< disability conceptualisation is a *matter*ing for conductors and must be considered in CE's theorisation and the conceptualisation of the philosophy.

other professionals

- 2
-  **Anonymous** 18m
Listening and sharing ideas to help remain a person-centred approach
-  **Anonymous** 17m
Working alongside other professionals right from the beginning of my career has shaped my identity as a conductor and found that this experience also prompted me to think about what it means being a conductor. Having said that, i would have loved working alongside other conductors rather than in isolation when I started my career and I would support this idea for the future.

Figure 54 is from FG1. In the second comment a conductor shared their reflections on how working with other professionals rather than conductors shaped their *becoming*-identity.

C16 shared their views on collaborative working stubbornly: *"Whilst I approach those conversations with other professionals to check that what we are doing compliments one another, but I don't even try working along the same aims because undoubtedly, they will not be the same aims."*

Figure 54: Padlet extract 51

3.6.7 Significance of culture and language (of CE and of the conductor)

Culture

The topic of culture was exclusive to FG2. Data< shows that conductors' native language and culture impact their professional identity especially if working in a different context from their original. Seemingly this section mostly relies on the spoken narrative, however, there is *spacetime*mattering highlighting the role of temporality and spatiality in CE. The conversation blurred the line of the *then* and *now* and the *here* and *there*.

C9 expressed with wonder: “...that’s one of the things with my identity. I wouldn’t know how to speak ‘professional’ in Hungarian, everything I learnt is in English.” C8 was showing agreement. C9 continued: “... perhaps I have an English identity as a conductor although I’m Hungarian.” C6 said without hesitation: “I agree with you, I feel the same way”. C7 joined in the conversation: “...that’s quite interesting because the Hungarian way of thinking is very different from the British context and where it [CE] came from. When I went there [Hungary] the difference culturally was the defining factor of why CE was so different”. C7 continued: “...even your language structure is different from English, that gives you a different way of thinking. When we went there [Pető Institute] one of our jobs was to find out what is CE. And we couldn’t. You couldn’t separate the social context within which it was delivered from the system”. C8 agreed: “We can’t separate CE from the culture, from the social environment it originated from”. This conversation did not trigger any embodied responses from me, as an inside insider I know the language, the culture and the profession.



1

Anonymous 7m
the past helps to understand the present and will help to build the future.

On Padlet respect was paid to the heritage of CE – emphasising the importance of culture and the past (space and time). The photograph (Figure 55) shows Professor Pető and Dr Hári.

Figure 55: Padlet extract 52

The idea of culture further featured on Padlet (Figure 57) with the recognition that CE must be relevant for the time and place it is offered. Social context and culture were discussed alongside each other yet the two comments made for “social context” (Figure 56) shows broadening insights and considerations made by conductors regarding their learners’ needs.

Social Context

2

- Anonymous** 19m
The group and how this needs to be created
- Anonymous** 14m
Looking at the wider context:
Family/ Team around the child

Figure 56: Padlet extract 53

Culture

3

- Anonymous** 18m
Adapting CE to the relevant culture.
- Anonymous** 17m
where CE comes from and the culture of the ‘service user’ (not only the culture where CE is delivered)
- Anonymous** 17m
Developing our practice to meet different cultural needs

Figure 57: Padlet extract 54

Language

The topic of language was exclusive to FG2. Language as discussed as C10 said: “... *the Hungarian thinking is different and is reflected in the language as well and that’s why it’s [CE] so unique. And maybe that’s why Hungarians get it better or it just relates to them in a different way because that’s just how we think*”. This made my head hurt, I kept re-turning to this with questions... Does that mean that Hungarian conductors are better? Or do some think that they are? A hierarchy, leading to tension, Is there a them and us? Am I them or us? This was another sign to the different level of conductor-ness and (un)spoken hierarchies in CE.

Changes over time

Conductors shared their feelings regarding change, for example C9 reflected on conductor training in the UK: “... *when I started 20 years ago, it was more Hungarian style, to the point. The culture and the system go through the training. In a way the next generation of conductors are trained in a slightly different way*”. This signals an impact on conductors’ identity who trained in Hungary at a different time, in a different way, showcasing the role of temporality and spatiality on producing *becoming-conductor*.

The narratives highlight how CE evolved to be relevant for the social context it operates within. C8 recognised the bravery of British parents taking their children to Hungary to receive CE especially as there were many reports that conductors were strict and not smiley. C10 joined in enthusiastically: “... *for me the big difference... it’s the fact that it [CE] was kept as a big ‘secret’ even from the parents. Now I cringe, it’s not right. We have to be teaching the parent. It is so much better how we do it now engaging the whole family*”. This indicates that the profession has to stay in flux to remain relevant for the social context and time it operates within.

3.6.8 Judgment and lack of clarity in the profession

Data< segments suggest that conductors have fixed ideas of what CE should look like in practice and deviation from it is disapproved of. C7 provoked: “... *but there’s the elephant in the room: Is what we do still CE?*”.

A comment from FG4 (Figure 58) claims that CE looks different in different settings and also acknowledges the potential impact this might have on the profession and its professionals. I was confused, data< suggests that conductors judge each other as well as their own profession against an unwritten set of rules.

Anonymous 15m

but also, not all conductors have quite the same mindset... there are variations in CE. How does this impact what we do?

Figure 58: Padlet extract 55

Further to this, there appears to be strong feelings regarding the conductive-ness of a CE session. Conductors openly indicated that CE should be done in groups. For example, C3 plainly stated: *"... people are doing one-to-one sessions, which is not 'conductive', but there is no recent documentation to help you with that"*. Or in FG3, C13 said innocently but distinctively: *"... we're not working one-to-one isn't it? We are working in a group. A group of professionals working with a group of parents and a group of children"*. C11 replied somewhat defensively and in a slightly hurt tone: *"I think that's a really interesting point. So, I am a lone conductor because of where I am, rural [name of county], it's very hard to get groups together"*. This indicates that the heterogenous nature of the system divides rather than unites the profession.

What to call the learners in CE?

Under the heading *"Different professional – Different perspective"* (page 113) data< offered a glimpse into the choice of word/s that should be used (or not) to call the person attending CE. There was further interrogation regarding words used to refer to learners, for example, there was a degree of tension in FG3. C16 stated: *"... I call them clients now, even that is a bit of a strange thing"*. C16 did not expand on why they felt that way. C19 responded: *"... we have children, we have adults, we don't have clients, but we want them to be learners but we can't call them students if they're 90"*. As such, C19 openly resented the terminology of *"client"* used by C16 and I felt tension in the space amongst all conductors. This further indicates conflict within the profession and signals that there are different degrees of CE-ness.

A different encounter from C14 who said: *"... I feel a lot more confident when they seem like the more typical CE child"*.



Anonymous 7m

Not just for the conditions that are "typically CE"

From FG3's Padlet (Figure 59) the idea of *"a typical*

Figure 59: Padlet extract 56

CE child” is materialised. There were no discussions regarding what this term meant it was understood by all of us.

Variations in CE

Data< implies that conductors, who work in MD teams feel more confident if they supplement their CE sessions with additional approaches. For example, C14 shared their perspective: *“I’ve still got CE as the base; I’ve just got little add-ons”*. C2 had similar thoughts: *“I don’t feel like I’d ever lose the training [CE], I just added to that pot with all the different therapists that I’ve worked with. How would I cope if I went somewhere purely conductive, I don’t know?!”*.

The idea of a traditional conductor was introduced by C5 (section 3.4.8) without any explanation offered as to what this might mean. During the discussion further categorisation is used by the same conductor. C5 said: *“... I worked with other professionals and that was really nice, but I was not a full conductor because I picked up things from them. When I came to [current setting] I had to sit down and learn to be a pure or a real conductor”*. Nobody seemed to react in a negative way even though, C5’s words indicated that those who work in MD teams are somehow less than those who work in conductor only teams introducing a hierarchy within the profession.

The *matter*ing of being “a pure or a real conductor” is present on FG1’s Padlet. In Figure 60 the choice of the word responsibility signals commitment and the use of the question mark in Figure 61 shows grappling.

responsibility



Figure 60: Padlet extract 57

Anonymous 13m

Where we work and who we work with really can shape our identity. Lots of conductors now work with other professionals, but is this diluting CE and therefor our identity?

Figure 61: Padlet extract 58

Further data< on ideas around different degrees of CE-ness is present in the terms of “being diluted” and “being watered down”. For example, C16 shared: *“I’ve been watered down by it at times ... I definitely think that there’re points in my career so far*

where it kind of made me lose some of the CEness of CE". C20's narrative shared similarities: "... Whilst I think CE is unique and you don't want to dilute it down, but actually there is great power in having a shared common goal with other professionals as well, for it not conflicting ...".

Figure 62 is an extract from FG4's Padlet, through the fourth and fifth comment the degrees of CE-ness materialises. The phrase "*being watered down*" suggests that conductors feel that there are different degrees of CE-ness, which would inevitably impact how they understand the profession, their confidence, identity and professional worth.

These are all ideas and terminology I am familiar with as I have heard them being discussed over the years informally. I was a little stunned, yet relieved that is has come up openly during the FGs. This shows the importance of this on *becoming-conductor*.

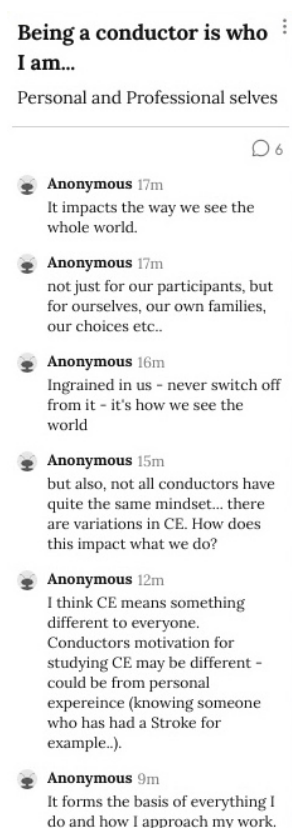


Figure 62: Padlet extract 59

3.7 Summary of data< matters from the second activity

Confidence is impacted negatively by the historic perception that CE is not widely known or understood. Conductors feel the need to prove their worth mostly to therapeutic professionals. Yet they find it challenging to deal with confrontation. Conductors feel most like an imposter when directly needing to express their professional opinion, which might not align to a therapeutic professional's views. This area needs to be addressed when looking at the theorisation of CE.

In this study, conductors tended to position CE in opposition of traditional therapies, identifying differences, highlighting what they do in comparison to other professionals. This demonstrates that conductors describe what they are not, rather than what they

are. It could be argued that not being able to define what a conductor does or what makes the profession distinct and unique would inevitably impact identity in a negative way – indicating low confidence through comparing knowledge and expertise with professionals. Conductors in this study compared themselves to therapeutic professionals rather than teachers, this might signal that they see the profession aligning more to the health rather than the education sector. However, conductors value the flexibility and time that being outside of the statutory system offers them, as it enables them to individualise their approach to meet their learners' needs based on their observations. This signals that for conductors, differences do *matter* as they produce them as professionals.

Conductors understand their profession as a vocation rather than a job. This impacts not only their professional identity but also their personality – resulting in blurred boundaries between their professional and personal identities leading to entanglements and being part of an assemblage. Conductors see the world through a “*conductive lens*” and this has a significant impact on their identity and therefore the profession as a whole. There is an indication that years and types of experience as a conductor, who they work (both in terms of learner and team), conductors' place of work, their job roles and continual professional development all impact conductors' identity. The heterogenous nature of CE *affect* conductors. Conductors' professional identity is in flux; both temporality and spatiality are in play in *becoming*-conductor.

The role of relationships appears to be a vital influencing aspect on conductors' identity and how they see their own value. Conductors place high importance on the connections they build with not only their learners but the families too – this *matters*. Conductors pride themselves on their ability to create the right environment for learning to happen in a fun and enjoyable way. Therefore, the progress made by the participants conductors work with, impact their professional worth and identity positively. This further signals to conductors' entanglements and the role of intra-actions in the assemblage of CE. Conductors talk about the “*the magic*” of CE but they cannot articulate what this is, this will be significant in the conceptualisation of the philosophy.

Conductors' native language and culture impact their professional identity especially if working in a different context from their original. This signals an impact on conductors' identity who trained in Hungary but now work in the UK. Conductors expressed different degrees of CE-ness – signalling that conductors judge their own as well as each other's practice. The most prominent findings are: conductors should work in groups rather than with individuals, those working in an MD team are “*watered down*”, there is a “*typical CE child*” and there is no agreement of how CE's learners should be referred to. Furthermore, conductors use language such as “*traditional conductor*”. These highlight hidden complexities of how conductors view the profession and indicates to an (un)spoken hierarchy of conductors – signalling a lack of standardisation leading to inconsistencies and tension.

Throughout this chapter, data< (the selected *thing*, narrative accounts, Padlet, my embodied experiences, theory) was interrogated, which opened up possibilities to re-think the system of CE and conductors' professional identity. In the next chapter diffractive analysis will be put to work in order to discuss the guiding questions.

Chapter 4: The opening up new possibilities

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I re-turn to the three guiding questions to open up possibilities for data< *matterings* to provoke thought. Inspired by St Pierre (2018: 605) I must trust myself to “do the next thing... and keep on moving” carefully considering how this inquiry has re-oriented ideas. I set out to understand: “what differences matter, how they matter and for whom” (Barad, 2007:90). In chapter 3 data< was explored and now glowing *matterings*, which produce conductors are considered in the context of wider literature regarding the professional identity construction of teachers and early years professionals. The heterogenous nature of the profession, systematic issues, the merging of personal and professional selves and divisions within the profession is discussed in section 4.2. Currently there is no literature or research available specifically on the professional identity construction of conductors; this thesis is therefore able to offer new knowledge to show itself. I then re-turn, to diffract what we know about the principles of CE and problematise each of the *four philosophical building blocks* in the context of wider literature, new-materialist theories and data< *matterings* from this study. This process enables a new way of looking at CE philosophy, conceptualising the human principle. The focus then pivots to re-theorising CE for contemporary times using the concept of the threshold to plug into new materialist ideas of entanglements, intra-actions and thing-power.

4.2 RQ1 What informs conductors’ professional identity and how does this matter?

The findings suggest that conductors’ professional identity is not a fixed entity. The most relevant literature is from education professionals, including Lightfoot and Frost (2015) and Ibarra (1999) where professional identity construction is multi-faceted; it is ongoing and is impacted by experiences and external factors (Murray, 2013). Data< *matterings* suggest this to be the case for conductors. For example, regarding identity not being fixed, C1 commented: “...*identity is not static, if we had this same group in 10 years-time ... I’d bring something different ... helping me to define my identity*”. On the other hand, C3 expressed: “... *I’m at the start I don’t feel like I’ve found myself yet fully as a professional*”. In addition, C8 and C10, both conductors with over 30 years

of experience, chose technological advancements as their *thing* that impacts their professional identity and brought *it* along for the first activity of the FG. The conductors' selection showcased positive changes over their careers impacting their professional identity. Data< highlight that conductors' professional identity is in flux and is constantly being *affected* by external and internal factors. This is new insight in relation to the on-going nature of conductors' professional identity construction, which adds to the existing literature.

4.2.1 Heterogenous profession

The literature (Chapter 1) identified that CE is a heterogenous profession and there is diversity in terms of the team around the conductor, for example conductor-only or multi-disciplinary teams (PCA, 2014), as well as conductors working alone (PCA, 2022c). The multiplicity extends to the learner population in regards of age and diagnosed condition (PCA, 2009a), type of delivery: part time, full time or intensive (PCA, 2009a). Furthermore, the type of work context: local authority, independent, charity or self-employed (Berger-Jones, 2024b). These differences featured heavily in conductors' material and discursive engagements in this study. Data< adds insight around how this heterogeneity has a significant impact on conductors' identity. For example, comments on FG4's Padlet (Appendix M) under the heading "*What impacts your identity?*" conductors wrote: "*team around you, children/adults you work with, experiences you have*". Existing literature by Tucker (2004) on the impact of policy and practice on the professional identity construction of those working with young people in the fields of health, welfare and education, suggests these insights have relevance to conductors as CE is delivered across different sectors and age ranges. Similarly, there are tensions in the professional identity of Early Childhood Education and Care teachers, who also have various facets to their role: "... blending care, emotionality, emotional labour, professional knowledge and skills" (Fairchild, 2021: 3).

Place of work

Data< suggests that conductors' place of work inform their professional identity. For example, C4 commented: "... *we have a nice community where we can go to other people, you can say I'm stuck, can you help*". This has parity around practice having an impact on identity construction with Tucker's (2004) findings in their research with

those working with young people. In terms of the material, C6, C13 and C19 selected their workplaces' uniform for the first activity in the FGs, highlighting that they identify as practitioners and are proud of where they work. Furthermore, C5 and C9 explicitly chose their workplaces as the most significant factor impacting their identity construction, indicating that where a conductor works *matters* to them. Important to note that attending a CE provision is not compulsory for children, young people or adults. Yet, conductors have to comply with different macro and micro policies (NICE, 2024b). This finding offers new insights into conductors' identity, which has not been documented before. Linked to the place of work, is the team and the conductor which is discussed below, a strong *matter*ing in this study.

The team and the conductor

Breaking data< together-apart, showed differences that *matter* (Barad, 2007). Conductors' work contexts play a significant role in their identity construction, the type of team they work in *produce* different conductor identities. Wenger (1998) argued that the work community shapes professional identity construction. This is present in C1's account: *"... the development of my professional identity as a conductor was influenced by how I started to work in a MD situation straight after qualifying and working exclusively with conductors"*. There is no current literature about this, which signifies that the team around the conductor impact their professional identity. Drawing parallels with research into teacher identity, Hoffman-Kipp (2008: 153) described it as: *"... a mix of values, beliefs, attitudes, approaches to interaction, and language that has been developed in personal realms (life history, family, community of origin) combined with understandings, pedagogical approaches, and routines of professional practice..."*. Conductors' discursive and material utterances suggests that this is valid in the context of CE, aiding understanding further of what impacts conductors' identity construction. This showcases that existing within different macrosystems impacts individuals (Bronfenbrenner, 1986). In secondary schools, Day et al, (2006) recognised the influence of the work environment and situation on their identity construction, which this thesis now extended to conductors' identities.

I offer a narrative account where C2 shared how their work colleagues impacted their identity: *"Over the years, we worked with some very knowledgeable OTs [occupational therapist], physios [physiotherapist] and SALTs [speech and language therapist] and*

I just feel that they all bring something to my identity". C16 had a different experience and stated: "... *there's times when working with a physio has drawn me to be too concerned about posture and lose sight of the individual*". This indicates that working with other professionals compromised C16's conductor integrity. Another example from C17: "... *when I first qualified, I worked in a conductor only team and then I moved to a MD school ... I have learnt so much about myself and what my job is*". Based on these data< segments, the type of team the conductor works in/with, impacts their identity construction and informs their professional identity. As discussed in Chapter 1, traditionally conductors only worked with other conductors (Sutton, 1997). Over the years in the UK this has changed and the PCA (2014) published a document, *Working within a team*, to support conductors with this transition in their work contexts. In a sense recognising that the team around the conductor needs to be considered. The document highlights various perspectives of different professionals and explores the range of integrated teams a conductor might find themselves in (PCA, 2014). This study expanded understanding on the team around the conductor by exploring the direct impact this has on conductors' professional identity.

Data< mobilised the idea that conductors' work gives them purpose and a strong sense of commitment with feelings towards their learners; which appears in line with what Page (2018) called, professional love. According to Murray (2013) similar characteristics give early years practitioners agency; data< suggests that this also applies to conductors. For example, C17 openly talked about difficulties in their journey of finding their voice, there was a strong expression of conflict in working with non-conductors. However, they found a solid conviction in their identity and now they are able to own it: "*I am a conductor, that's who I am!*" indicating a merging of professional and personal personas: "*being a conductor influences how I approach everything I do*". In C17's case this signals that having to convince others of the value of CE, increased their own self-worth, their level of conductor-ness. This conductor was able to use difference (as in conductor being different from a teacher or a physiotherapist) as a positive force *affecting* and being *affected* by other bodies (conductor, teacher, physiotherapist, student, parents), instead of the usual negative construct (Lenz Taguchi, 2012). In a Deleuzian understanding, difference is a positive force in *becoming* (Lenz Taguchi, 2012) – for this conductor, their *becoming-conductor*, was a transformation of a strengthened rather than a loss of identity.

Conductors' material engagements further stress the impact their work context has on their professional identity. For example, for the first FG activity, two conductors (C2, C14) who work in MD teams chose a *thing* to highlight their differences from the other professionals they work with. Research by Murray (2013), studying early years professionals, found tensions arising from their own self-image and expectations of others. Applied to conductors, this is likely to be more significant if a conductor directly works with various professionals, each of them viewing the learners through a different lens. This featured in C16's narrative on how a physiotherapist called a young person, they both work with, a patient: "... *she has given me her map of the world, she sees that person medically...*". In addition to this, C19 said: "... *we want to achieve more, it is quite common for others [other professionals] to tell us to settle for less*". Arguably, this is expected, given that medical professionals are guided by their own codes of practice and aligns with Rix (2020) who acknowledged that health and education professionals speak in different languages. Nonetheless, the study has confirmed that conductors see the learners' potential differently through a "*conductive lens*", and this view *matters* to them.

Influence of the learner population and relationships with them

Existing literature by Day et al, (2006) on primary and secondary school teachers' identity being influenced by the students they work with has relevance for conductors. Data< suggests that the type of learner conductors work with impact their professional identity. For example, C5 said: "... *where I found my way ... working with people with stroke ... that gave me who I am... , where I belong...*". A comment on FG1's Padlet (Appendix J) under the heading "*The environment/setting*" a conductor wrote: "*where we work and who we work with really can shape our identity*". Furthermore, a *thing* chosen by conductors for the first activity of the FGs demonstrates this notion. For example, aligning with their professional identity three conductors (C15, C18, C20) who work with children chose teddy bears, toys and bouncy ball. Therefore, findings of this research align to Day et al's, (2006) study, but it adds to the current literature as it is in relation to conductors' identity. Consequently, it should be recognised that depending on the specific learner population a conductor works with, the impact on their identity will vary. Therefore, the type of learner is significant in *becoming-conductor* identity.

Lightfoot and Frost (2015) acknowledged that for early years professionals, making a difference to children and the families they work with has a positive impact on their identity. This rings true for the professionals of CE, conductors loudly expressed their dedication to their learners through both discursive and material engagements. For example, on FG1's Padlet (Appendix J), a conductor put a photo of themselves and their pupil with the caption: *"celebrating every achievement"*. In addition, C6 stated: *"the identity is very much in the listening skills of the conductor and the building that initial relationship with the child and the parents"*. Furthermore, C12 confirmed: *"That's the role of the conductor ... the relationship you build with the child and with the families ..."*. This suggests that the role of relationships and the value learners and the families place on conductors' work, *produce* them. Therefore, this is a significant new insight which needs to be considered when conceptualising the philosophy of CE.

Job titles and roles

McGillivray (2008) found that professional identity construction for early years practitioners was negatively impacted due to the various names used to describe what they did (e.g. nanny, nursery nurse). Chapter 1, section 1.13.2 explored the variety in job titles used by CE providers, for example: Conductor (NICE, 2024a) or Conductive Education Specialist (MBH, 2024). This act of naming creates a degree of inconsistency adding further layers to an already heterogeneous profession. For example, suggesting a degree of confusion regarding identity, is a comment on FG1's Padlet (Appendix J) under the heading *"What do conductors do?"* stating: *"a bit of everything"*. Furthermore, C3 shared: *"I'm also a qualified teacher..., so I have this fight with teaching and conductive, which area should I focus in"*. This highlights that the diversity in CE provision regarding conductors' job titles have led to a lack of consistency and some confusion regarding conductors' role and therefore their professional identity. Existing research has not problematised this area in CE, the findings of this study in regards to conductors share similarities with McGillivray's (2008) conclusions.

Native language and culture

Data< revealed that conductors' native language and culture impact their professional identity especially if working in a different context from their original. This is in line with

the findings of Hoffman-Kipp (2008) who suggested that if the forming of teachers' professional identity happens in a different socio-political context using a foreign language within which their personal identity was shaped, can be challenging to make sense of. Whilst this area has not been investigated regarding conductors, however data[<] from this study suggests that Hoffman-Kipp's (2008) conclusions apply to Hungarian conductors currently working in the UK, impacting their/my professional identity. For example, C9 said: "... *perhaps I have an English identity as a conductor although I'm Hungarian*". Furthermore, C8 added: "... *I completely agree. I'm still learning to adapt this old conductor personality that I've got to a completely different social environment and culture. It's not easy*". Additionally, Beijaard et al, (2004) revealed that teacher identity construction is influenced by their own background, the aspects they find important in their professional roles, their experiences and their practice. All of which, as suggested by data[<] from this study, is applicable to the professionals of CE; who the conductor is as a person, impact their/our professional identity. This offers new insights into *becoming*-conductor.

The *matter*ing of the heterogenous nature of the profession

Inspired by Fairchild's (2021) thinking around the posthuman post-professional, conductors' *becoming*-identity is materialised through their personal and professional experiences. Therefore, heterogenous nature of the profession *matters* to conductors. The discussion offered so far showcases that conductors' place of work, the team around them, their impact on the learner population and relationships with them, job titles/roles, conductors' native language and culture all impact the way conductors make sense of their world. As explored throughout this section, some aspects of conductors' professional identity construction are aligned to teachers' and early years professionals. These factors *matter* at an individual level and is specific to each conductor and their unique contexts, *affecting becoming*-conductor in different ways. Furthermore, these various factors mean being part of a different assemblage, having different entanglements and intra-actions with colleagues, professionals outside of their organisations, learners and the families. As currently there is no literature or research available on the professional identity construction of conductors these findings offer new knowledge and understanding in this area.

4.2.2 Division within the profession

The existing CE literature has not explored divisions within the profession leading to the categorisation of conductor-ness. During the FGs, conductors discursive and material engagements signalled to different degrees of CE-ness and some judgement of other's and their own CE practice (Chapter 3, sections 3.4.8 3.6.8). Current knowledge in CE connected to this area is discussed in this section. Wider literature regarding teachers' and early years professionals' identity categorisation are also utilised to aid sense making and to provide context. Therefore, this study facilitates understanding the division in the profession, leading to categorisation of conductor-ness, offering an original contribution to the field of CE.

Community of practice

On the Professional Conductors' Association (PCA, 2024b) website, benefits for joining are highlighted, however no penalties are detailed for not being a registered member. Based on that, it is fair to assume that there are no consequences upon conductors' authority to practice based on their registration status. Wenger (1998) advocated that professional identity is constructed by engaging with others from the community; this suggests that not being a member of a professional body, could reduce conductors' feelings of conductor-ness. An example from research, Barkhuizen (2016) found that teachers investing in their further development strengthened their positive teacher identity. This could indicate that conductors who take part in specific CPD or carry out postgraduate studies in CE could have a stronger conductor self. Data<, such as C3's narrative shows this: *"...I did the CPD sessions with the Conductive College while I was doing my teacher training. I just needed to hear about CE. That was so helpful"*. Crucially, being a member of the PCA is part of the *expected features* in point 1.6 of the Professional Standards for Conductors (PCA, 2017). Encouragingly, registered conductor numbers rose from fifty-three in 2023 (Brown, 2023) to sixty-five in 2024 (PCA, 2024a). This suggests that if a conductor subscribes to what is offered by the PCA, they are more likely to feel part of the occupational group of conductors, increasing feelings of being a conductor.

Professional roles in CE

The PCA (2022a) detailed professional roles in CE, which offers a degree of grouping based on levels of experience and responsibilities. However, current CE literature

does not consider the context within which conductors work. Drawing on research around primary and secondary school teachers' identity, Day et al, (2006) found the influence of the student population. Applied to conductors, it could be assumed that the age demographic they work with, directly impacts how conductors view their profession and therefore their own conductor-ness within it. CE research argues that conductors work with a wide age range in a variety of settings (Berger-Jones, 2024b) in comparison to teachers. The findings suggest tensions pointing to hidden complexities of how conductors view the profession and indicates an (un)spoken categorisation of conductor-ness, which adds context to the PCA (2022a) document.

Categorisation of conductor-ness

CE has evolved and transformed since its beginning, as Brown (2024) summarised CE has changed since it left Hungary in the 1980s. For example, in the UK currently, there are different types of services and delivery methods provided by conductors (PCA, 2009a) as opposed to it being offered on a full-time residential basis only (Hári, 1997). Furthermore, as pointed out by Blackburn and Ward (2020) conductors' work is regulated by national and local legislation. Conductors' narrative and material accounts suggested that some of the variations in service provision inhibit their work. For example, C3 talked about how certain ways of working *"is not conductive"* – giving a strong indication of unwritten hierarchies within the profession. As explained by Brown (2024), over the decades CE has been deliberately transformed in the UK by conductors in order to meet the changing demands of society. Tensions emerged during the FG activities indicating an (un)spoken categorisation of conductor-ness. Conductors used words like *"traditional CE"*, *"pure CE"* or talked about their practice having been *"diluted"* and *"watered down"*. An example is a comment from C9: *"... when I started 20 years ago it was more Hungarian style ... The culture and the system go through the training. In a way the next generation of conductors are trained in a slightly different way"*. This suggests that conductors hold onto a dogma of what CE should be like based on its original Hungarian context (Chapter 1, section 1.6). This is explained by C7's narrative: *"... but there's the elephant in the room: is what we do still CE?"*. Yet it seems that conductors now fear that what they offer is no longer CE, this is confirmed in the terminology (*"traditional CE"*, *"pure CE"*; being *"diluted"*, *"watered down"*) used by conductors in this study. This is problematic as it attacks point 1.5 of the Professional Standards for Conductors (PCA, 2017: 4), which states:

“Be committed to responsible change and development in Conductive Education to meet new requirements and new approaches”. Conductors are encouraged to embrace CE as a living system, yet if conductors are concerned that what they offer is not “*true*” CE, then they are unlikely to identify themselves as a “*real*” conductor. This could lead to feelings of imposter syndrome, unnecessary tensions amongst conductors impacting professional identity construction in a damaging way.

(Lack of) coherence and unity

The findings suggest a lack of coherence and unity amongst the conductors who took part in the study. According to Beijaard et al, (2004) to foster positive teacher identity, it is important for the professional to see themselves as a teacher. The discussion above regarding the categorisation of conductor-ness suggests that some conductors struggle to see themselves as a “*real*” conductor. Taking Beijaard et al’s, (2004) idea and applying it to conductors’ identity could indicate a problem not only for the conductor but the CE profession. If conductors do not see themselves as conductors, it is likely that their professional integrity would be affected. In addition, Sutton (2018) and Oravec (2017) suggest that conductors are challenged in theorising their beliefs and articulating the complexities of the system of CE. In line with this, at the national CE conference, Brown (2024) pointed out that conductors do not have one united voice. This is despite the fact that point 1.4 of the Professional Standards for Conductors (PCA, 2017: 4) stipulates that CE professionals should be “able to articulate their understanding of the philosophy of CE...”. These factors all point to fragmentation within the profession. Data< from this study shows that a key challenge for conductors is to articulate the message of CE fit for different audiences in a succinct way. For example, C15 stated: *“I think I gave up trying to explain to my family what a conductor is”*. And C7 articulated: *“... in one sentence what is CE? And equally no one can do that on special education, on physiotherapy or anything else. But of course, we all feel that we should”*. C21’s comment carries a positive note: *“I think we are really in a golden time of actually promoting who we are and why we do what we do”*. Data< and the literature presented signal that the degrees of conductor-ness have led to the absence of a shared sense of professional identity. This further confirms that there is a lack of coherent professional perspective on what CE is today in the UK. To address the absence of a united voice, Brown (2024) suggested a visual pathway into CE and

a structure to those involved in the delivery of CE to aid clarity in terms of conductors' identity (Figure 3, page 53). In response to Brown's proposal, this research has led to the development of an emergent visual pathway into CE and roles for conductors (Figure 63, page 133).

4.2.3 The *matter*ing of professional identity

The discussion offered in sections 4.2.1 and 4.2.2 highlighted that the heterogenous nature of the CE profession *produce* conductors in different ways, *affecting* identity and knowing the system of CE. The findings suggest that the lack of unity and fragmentation in the profession have led to confusion about what CE is in the UK today. C3 expressed their frustration regarding the profession not having contemporary documentation or guidance:

"I would say that being a conductor, there is no like standards that you have to hit, like when you are a teacher. I feel like a framework for newly qualified conductors would be helpful. There's no documentation that's like recent. Everything is very old, obviously it's relevant and correct, but does it not need to be updated?"

Data< uncovered feelings of imposter syndrome and categories of conductor-ness – dividing the unity furthermore. This aligns with Blackburn and Ward's findings (2020) that conductors feel under-recognised and to Brown's (2024) statement regarding conductors waiting for confirmation that what they are delivering is *still* CE. Findings of this study confirm a crisis in CE and amongst its professionals grappling with ambiguity, a pressing need to belong and be recognised for their contribution.

Using the existing PCA (2022a) document, Brown's (2024) suggested model (Figure 3) and findings from this study, I offer a visual diagram (Figure 63 below). This is not with the purpose to categorise but to highlight differences within the profession that *matters* to conductors and impact their professional identity. The model is emergent and situated in the current UK context and does not try to be all encompassing. Instead of unspoken categorisations of conductor-ness, the model acknowledges the various directions conductors can take with the aim to reduce stigma and feelings of imposter syndrome. The model maps out the under- and post-graduates training routes into becoming a conductor but also acknowledges the conductor assistant levels; it lists

the variety of roles, which can be filled by conductors. Importantly, the model considers the context within which conductors work including the methods and modes of delivery as well as the learner population. Blackburn and Ward (2020) suggested that conductors want to feel valued. This original contribution to knowledge, offers a strengthened sense of identity and an embedded sense of belonging to conductors, which has the potential to increase their/our sense of value.

Pathways into CE – A visual model

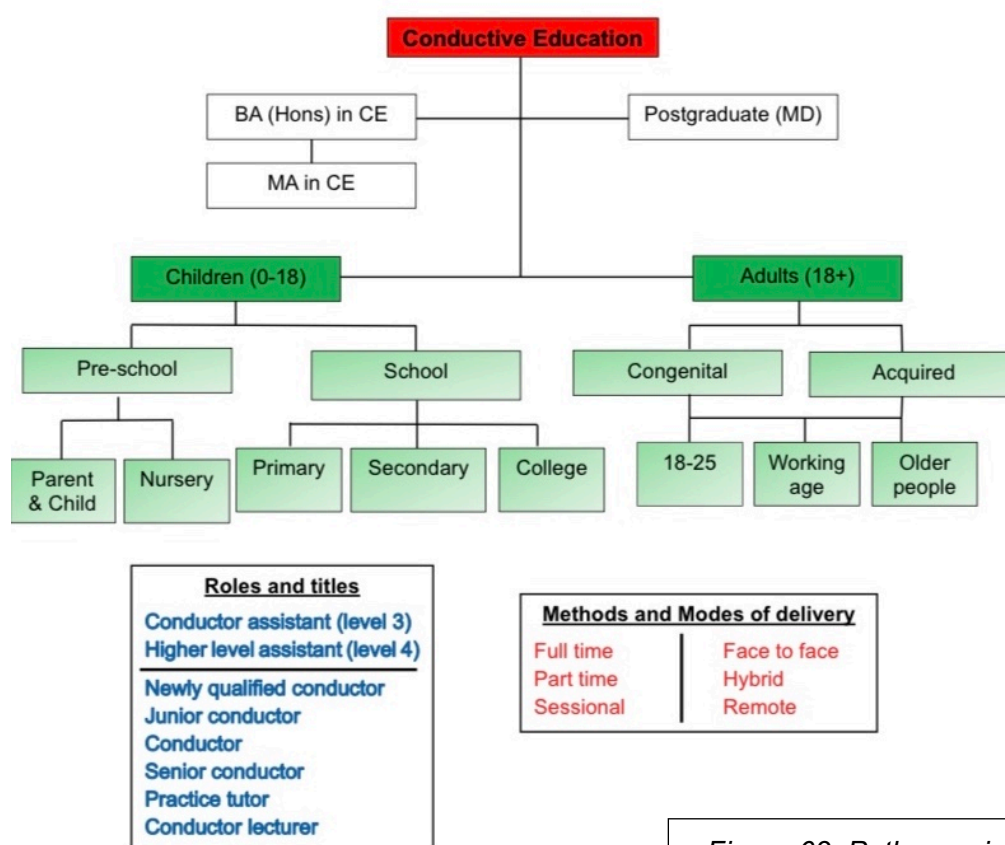


Figure 63: Pathways into CE

4.3 RQ2 How can CE philosophy be conceptualised for contemporary times?

Chapter 3 identified the merging of personal and professional selves as a significant data< *matter*ing – conductors see the world and act through a “*conductive lens*” and they are entangled in their practice. For example, C18 said: “... *being a conductor, I think is engrained in us*”. C16 agreed: “... *it is a being*”. This is what C21 thought: “... *I always find that interesting to see how strong that [conductor] identity is and how much it impacts how we see everything*”. CE produces the conductor and the

conductor is where the system of CE, including its philosophy is actualised – showcasing the assemblage of the system.

Conductors being entangled in their practice, at a professional and a personal level, was showcased explicitly by two conductors (C4, C17), who presented themselves as their *thing* during the first FG activity. This was discussed in Chapter 3, section 3.4.11, however, I would like to re-turn to this *matter* with the question: how does this matter *matter*? Focusing on C4, they said: “*I was thinking about what do I use?*” – indicating that the *things* used in daily practice informs professional identity. The *thing* claims its *thingness* by how, who by it is used (Bennett, 2010a & 2004) and what intra-actions *affect it* and are *affected* by it (Barad, 2007). C4 selected: “*myself*”, yet their focus was on the children they work with – their actions and pedagogical tools were all guided based on the reactions given by their learners. Revealing an assemblage of bodies (conductor, children) and matter (plinth, batons, beanbags) “...entangled beings (be)coming together-apart” (Barad, 2012b: 208) in the classroom constantly intra-acting making each other feel and *matter* in a space for learning, trust and mutual respect. This *matters* as it increases conductors’ feelings of conductor-ness, and therefore positively impact their professional confidence and self-worth. It can be summarised that conductors feel secure in who they are, what they do, and the potential impact they have when they are working with their learners. This newly found understanding adds to existing knowledge on what is currently known in the field. This is significant as it highlights that conductors are *produced* by their learners and the relationship with them in the space they occupy together, signalling that the essence of CE can be found in the human principle (HP).

4.3.1 The whole and its parts

Chapter 1 explored that CE is a wholistic system and it cannot exist without all of its parts. Thinking with Barad (2007), it can be assumed that each part is entangled in the assemblage of CE and are intra-acting, making each part *matter*. However, conductors’ narrative and material engagements highlighted a number of systematic issues in the CE profession. These areas are interconnected and therefore overlap, but to facilitate an ease of discussion below they are separated out into the following sub-headings: *Where does CE sit/fit?*, *(Lack of) acknowledgment of the profession*, and *Feelings of imposter syndrome*.

Where does CE sit/fit?

Despite the PCA (2009a) describing CE as a pedagogical system, conductors in this study, did not compare themselves to teaching professionals neither did they explicitly position themselves in the field of education. Instead, primarily, the comparison was made to health professionals, highlighting incidents where conductors felt their knowledge was secondary and, in some cases, this led to conductors compromising their professional integrity. Berger-Jones (2021a) argued that the confusion over situating CE in education is partly due to historic misconceptions, originated during the second phase of CE entering the UK. As Hári (2007) recognised, for most observers CE appears to offer intense physical exercises based on the most visible facets of the system; and the pedagogy supporting it, is overlooked. Conductors, in this study, comparing themselves mostly to physiotherapists could indicate a recognition that both professionals are concerned with movement but from different perspectives. This aligns with Pető's (Balogh & Balogh, 1998) intentions, he advocated that CE teaches movements the same way as reading, writing and self-care – in a systematic and wholistic way with purpose. Alternatively, a comparison made to therapeutic professionals indicates that conductors align CE to a treatment option. However, it could also stem from the fact that most published research compares CE to therapeutic interventions (Blackburn & Ward, 2020). This is significant in CE, Blackburn and Ward (2020) recognised that the comparison made between CE and health-based interventions creates issues around professional identity for conductors. One reason is the language used to describe the person health professionals work with, calling them patients as opposed to learners in CE. In relation to the field of special educational needs and disabilities, Rix (2020) stated that education, health and social care professionals use different languages, keep professional boundaries and have clear ontological differences in their approach. Point 1.7 of the Professional Standards for Conductors is "Know the boundaries of their professional competence and define their practice accordingly" (PCA, 2017: 4). This suggests a recognition from the PCA of blurred lines of conductors' responsibilities leading to possible tensions. Based on the literature and the findings from this study, I argue that the professionals' skills and knowledge conductors have, are not comparable to those who hold medical qualifications, due to key conceptual differences in their views. This suggests that positioning CE as a therapeutic intervention is misplaced and impacts conductors' professional identity in a damaging way. Blackburn and Ward (2020) highlighted CE's

holistic nature and its aim to enhance psychological well-being for the learner. The idea that mind and body are inseparable is presented through a post-humanist lens by Page and Sidebottom (2022). Based on the findings of this study, the heterogeneous nature of CE combined with the profession often viewed as a treatment option rather than a pedagogical approach appears to have created uncertainty and confusion for conductors regarding their own identity.

(Lack of) acknowledgment of the profession

Brown (2024) posited that conductors believe that CE is relatively unknown and therefore not understood by other professionals, which can manifest in us/them feeling invisible. This aligns with Blackburn and Ward's (2020) small scale research where conductors felt under-valued and under-recognised. Not receiving recognition for the work they do, is not unique to CE, Early Childhood Education and Care teachers are professionals in a similar situation (Fairchild, 2021). Findings from this study agree with and build on Blackburn and Ward's (2020) work with its larger sample size. In this study, through their material and discursive encounters, conductors expressed that they do not feel seen or heard, because CE is not well known or understood outside of the profession. For instance, C2 stated: *"... there is still a lack of knowledge and an exact appreciation of what we [conductors] do. I don't know whether it comes still about the history of CE..."*. C7's narrative aligned to this: *"... we've [conductors] got this hangover of everybody doesn't understand us, nobody likes us..."*. As a result, conductors do not seem certain, which space they occupy and where they belong. This *matters* as it impacts conductors' professional identity, leading to feelings of imposter syndrome.

Feelings of imposter syndrome

Data< revealed that conductors identify themselves based on their differences from other professionals. This could be due to a lack of understanding and acknowledgment of the profession, in this study, conductors tended to describe what they are not rather than what they are. For example, C1 said: *"... I identified myself in contrast to whatever was around me"*. This is important, in the context of primary school teachers, Kelchtermans (1993) posited that the way a professional describes their job has an impact on their identity.

Some significant data< *matterings* point to feelings of imposter syndrome in regards to working with health professionals – conductors find it challenging to deal with confrontation and express their own professional opinions. C7 felt strongly about the impact of this: “... *if people are apologising how they do something it means they have no professional confidence*”. C13 shared their position with honesty: “...*where my confidence rocks, is challenging other professionals. ... they’re just a little bit more trained in anatomy. And I just think, maybe I’m not that clever to challenge, and I would say quite a lot of conductors would struggle with that*”. C14 commented on a similar line: “... *we had a kid who had hip problems and went in for surgeries. And I was like, I really don’t feel confident working with this kid because I don’t wanna hurt them, so I had to get a physio to come in and help me*”. Similarly, to Early Childhood Education and Care teachers (Fairchild, 2021) conductors are expected to have both practical and professional knowledge, which can leave them open to tensions based on their work contexts impacting their identity. In CE, there is no existing research into this area of the profession.

The findings from this study and the literature suggest that CE crossing traditional paradigms is disorientating, resulting in some uncertainty for conductors regarding who they are and where the profession should be situated. As Blackburn and Ward (2020) highlighted, research on CE tends to compare the system to health-based approaches. Based on participating conductors’ material and narrative engagements in this study, conductors feel inferior, and question their status in terms of (other) professionals. Conductors are unsure of their own worth leading to feelings of imposter syndrome, as they seem to believe that they lack authentic competence (Clance & Imes, 1978) in comparison to health professionals. This is likely to be fuelled by conductors feeling under-recognised and needing to justify their existence in the field of SEND (Blackburn & Ward, 2020). Thinking with Taylor (2013), this signals that conductors feel that the bodies of (especially) physiotherapists’ matter more than their own. Drawing on this related literature and data< show, that the impact of historic misconception regarding CE is still carried by conductors and feeling *othered* is present in their material and discursive encounters and therefore professional lives.

In Chapter 1, section 1.12.2 the known about the principles of CE was summarised and it was highlighted that CE philosophy has not been explicitly formulated. Sutton

(1986) warned that most of the attention has been spent studying the application of CE (its methodology), rather than what drives it – its philosophy. Possibly, as a result of this neglect, more recent evidence from the UK (Sutton, 2018) and Hungary (Oravecz, 2017) suggest that conductors are challenged in theorising their beliefs and articulating the complexities of the system of CE. The most current assortment comes from Brown (2024), urging conductors to agree on one well-defined narrative and use that consistently to improve the clarity regarding what constitutes of CE. It is this absence of conceptualisation that this thesis responds to by opening up possibilities for conductors to showcase CE’s pedagogic value and increase professional confidence.

4.3.2 A re-imagined CE philosophy

In order to re-orient thought around CE philosophy, parts of the whole of CE need to be separated out. This process does not aim to describe each part of the whole to categorise it; conversely, it enables the production of something new by knowing the parts of CE and recognising the differences that Barad (2007) suggested *matter*. The doing of this inquiry awakened insights to show themselves. The findings signal that the differences that *matter* in CE are its philosophy, process, pedagogy, the application of the system and the unique paradigm it offers. Figure 64 below offers a visual tool of the applied system of CE; it does not try to represent the system instead facilitates knowing CE.

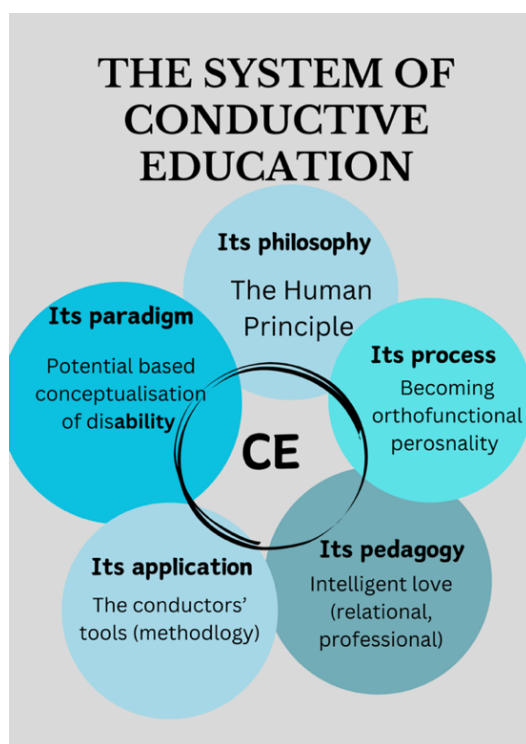


Figure 64: The system of CE

Brown (2018) claimed that Pető and Hári passed on a living practice but this thesis, including the review of the literature, reveals the lack of current thought leaders who are developing the essence of CE. This is important, as without this continued legacy, the identity of the system could be lost. As an aspiring inside change agent (Thomson & Gunter, 2011) who wants to accentuate the value and position of CE in a 21st century Western world, I want to use my agency and positionality to re-orient thought. Gegenwarth et al (2012: 22) alleged that “... core theorists are essential to provide CE with a unique identity” yet these have not materialised and I aspire to move into this space. Data showed that CE’s unique identity lies in its underpinning philosophy, which further highlights a pressing need to conceptualise it. The 2024 PCA run annual conductors’ workshop’s agenda was: “*collating the collective message of CE*”. This focus reveals an urgency reminding conductors to have a united voice. The diagram (Figure 64) offers a practical tool, which can be utilised by conductors to share one message about the system of CE and its parts. Based on the findings of this study, despite of the heterogenous nature of the profession, conductors still offer the applied system of CE. This can only happen if the professionals follow a shared set of beliefs and principles. This indicates that conductors’ work is driven by the philosophy of CE and therefore, attention needs to be re-directed to it. In the sections below, the attention re-turns to *four philosophical building blocks* as they were presented by Berger-Jones (2022) to argue for a re-imagined philosophy of CE. By problematising them individually each of them will have the possibility to claim a space. In order to produce new insights, I offer a re-conceptualisation of CE philosophy fit for contemporary times by “putting philosophical concepts to work...” (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012: 5).

The orthofunctional personality

To re-orient thought, the concept of the orthofunctional personality should be thought of as a *becoming* to showcase the transformative aspect of CE, which focuses on the overall growth of the learner as their autonomy and resilience develops and strengthens. This re-framing is important to situate the system as a transformative pedagogical approach with a clear process.

The orthofunctional personality has been viewed as the main aim of CE over the decades (PCA, 2009a; Hári & Ákos, 1988). This aligned with McDonald’s (2019: 45)

more recent findings: "... orthofunction is regularly stated as the ultimate aim of CE". In addition, re-viewing the literature uncovered that it is the most discussed aspect of CE. This aligns to Maguire and Sutton's (2004) claim that the orthofunctional personality is the most frequently cited in the literature. This suggests that over the past two decades the dominant discourse in CE remained static. It was surprising thereafter that during the FGs there was only one explicit comment made about orthofunction. On FG1's Padlet (Appendix J) under the heading "*Justification / Belief*" with the comment: "*the first word that came to my head was, orthofunctional personality*". No further explanation was made by the conductor as to what they understood by this concept. Three definitions of orthofunction were offered in Chapter 1, section 1.12.2 (orthofunction), the most recent from 2009. This is problematic, if achieving an orthofunctional personality is the main of CE, there should be an up-to-date definition available capturing the essence of this concept. McDonald's (2019: 45) study raised similar apprehensions: "... with such variety of definition this raises significant questions about the 'true' aim of CE".

Berger-Jones (2022) recommended not positioning the orthofunctional personality as the main tenet of CE, instead, they suggested that it should be described as a process rather than a product. However, they included this concept in what they coined as the *four philosophical building blocks* of CE, this was with the aim to consolidate concepts for an ease of comprehension for student conductors. Understanding orthofunction as a process is helpful but as such it is misplaced as part of the four building blocks. Brown (2024) defined CE as a transformative approach to learning; this refers to a change in learners' levels of confidence, attitude to learning, a newly developed ability to problem-solve and work towards an un-capped potential (PCA, 2009a). Furthermore, Blackburn and Ward (2020) highlighted that conductors improve the psychological well-being of their learners. Based on data from this study conductors take pride in being able to individualise their approach to meet their learners' needs offering a person-centred learning experience. C11's narrative confirms this: "*It's that motivation, engagement, it's that relationship. ... Because you spent time with them, you get to know the families, you know exactly what it is that motivates them*". The literature suggests that the development of the orthofunctional personality encapsulates a change in a person. Therefore, in contemporary terms, orthofunction can be explained as developing resilience and autonomy in the person so they can

work towards their own goals, or as coined by Bandura (1977) achieving self-efficacy. Resilience and autonomy as part of this are outlined below using wider literature.

Resilience can be described as the ability to adjust to internal and external demands, the ability to adapt well, to cope with stress and to strive against diversity (Price, 2023; Southwick et al, 2023). Orthofunction is a process that describes changes in someone's ability to adapt and learn in order to meet the demands of life at any given time in a comprehensive way (Hári & Ákos, 1988); in a sense describing a social construction of resilience. Leeuw et al, (2020) posited that a person achieves autonomy through building relationships with others. In this study, following on from Runswick-Cole and Goodley (2013: 70) in their context of critical disability studies, resilience is understood as “culturally situated and socially mediated”, pushing against normative ideas. Therefore, it can be assumed that by supporting learners to develop and have confidence in their autonomy, their overall well-being is nurtured as autonomy impacts well-being (Darwall, 2006). According to Yeager and Dweck (2012) a growth mindset can positively impact a person's level of motivation and resilience. This further emphasises the process rather than product focus in the concept of the orthofunctional personality.

Importantly, thinking of orthofunction as a process, which nurtures resilience and autonomy in the learner, is fully aligned with the founder's original intentions. Pető (Hári, 1997) advocated that CE's focus is on the upbringing of the person or in Hungarian *nevelés*. As a Hungarian speaker, who lives in a British context, the alternative I suggest for the word(s) *nevelés/upbringing* is – *overall growth*; this further affirms the need for seeing the learner as a whole – educating head, heart and hand (Pestalozzi Society, 2021). Consequently, it can be elaborated that Pető advocated CE's focus being on the overall growth of a person. In addition, resilience and autonomy are essential components for the wholistic development of each individual. Pető was very clear that no one should be left to struggle to face any challenges on their own – a conductor should always be there to guide the learning process until the person becomes able to succeed independently (Balogh & Balogh, 1998). Utilising ideas from Vygotsky (1978), this means that the learner works in their ZPD with the right scaffolding in place until it can be removed and the guidance of the MKO (the conductor) is no longer needed by them (Daniels, 2016). In contemporary terms, it can

be seen how Pető's ideology defined the development of autonomy. Deci and Ryan (1987: 1025) described autonomy as "... an inner endorsement of one's actions, the sense that they emanate from oneself and are one's own". Put differently, autonomy is about having agency, exercising the freedom to make decisions, having dignity and in a sense, it is about independence of will (Deci & Ryan, 1987). This links closely to Conductors' Professional Standard 1.2: "Respect the vital importance of choice and self-determination in learning" (PCA, 2017:3). Bandura's (1977) social cognitive theory highlights the importance of agency in achieving self-efficacy. Self-efficacy by its nature is individual to each person, much like orthofunction, it is not fixed therefore, it cannot be prescriptive or static. This is important as it emphasises the transformative aspect of CE, highlighting that it is the process of CE, *becoming*-orthofunctional personality (Figure 64).

Belief in potential

The concept of belief in potential is present in CE literature, including the Professional Standards for Conductors (PCA, 2017) and based on conductors' embodied encounters in this study this concept *matters* to them. For example, C16 talked about CE as a "*belief system*", and continued: "... *we talk about a belief in people, in potential, that's the bit that always rings to me as different*". Further ideas around belief and potential were discussed in the FGs (Chapter 3, section 3.6.1). On FG3's Padlet (Appendix L) a conductor wrote: "*Showing our families that regardless of the narrative they have heard before THERE IS HOPE and there is always room for progress*". This comment captures the essence of belief in potential and the longstanding view of *how* conductors see their learners; in this study, conductors called this a "*conductive lens*".

The findings suggest that belief in potential should be recognised as an integral part of conductors' values and behaviours. For example, C19 pointed out: "*I feel like when we believe in potential and that potential manifesting, we get that sense of magic...*". Or FG4's Padlet (Appendix M) entry: "*How often do we use the word belief in our daily work etc...? I use it all the time!*". Indeed, Pető (Sutton, 2011) directly challenged the medical model of disability and instead recognised unlimited possibilities for people with damage to their central nervous system to grow and develop (Hári, 2008). This worldview is actualised in conductors' belief in everyone's potential to learn (PCA, 2014). This shows that CE is not a deficit but a potential focused system; data<

emerged from this study underpins this idea; CE challenges and pushes against normative ideas on potential. This is in opposition of a humanist view of disability, where people are known for what they lack or what they are not (Goodley et al, 2014). A comment on FG3's Padlet (Appendix L) echoes this: "... *seeing the participants achieve no matter how small and being able to celebrate those moments with the families*". This is also evident in the high expectations conductors hold for their learners. In line with Vygotsky's (1978) pedagogy through scaffolding and differentiation, conductors facilitate learners to work at a higher level than possible on their own and as a result individuals progress and succeed (Brown, 2006a). This ensures that the belief conductors have in their learners, overtime, becomes the person's belief – they start to see their own potential. This aids a change of mindset in the learner, with a growth of confidence they become more willing to try new things, fostering what Dweck (2006) described as a growth mindset.

The material and discursive encounters in this study showcased that conductors see the world/learner/potential through a "*conductive lens*". Conductors became alive and animated when they talked about their CE practice and they used the phrase "*the magic*". Conversely, the wording *belief in potential* does not enable possibilities for this concept to show how it *matters* to conductors. This aspect of CE highlights the paradigm shift originally suggested by Pető and aligns with the idea of a "*conductive lens*". Based on the findings and Pető's intentions, I claim that CE offers a distinct and different model of disability, which is based on a potential-based conceptualisation of the learner. Runswick-Cole and Goodley (2013) posited that due to the presence of an impairment some disabled people have been excluded from the category *resilient*. I argue that this is the case for having potential, and as a result the *ability* in disability is overlooked. Therefore, in the model I propose the word *ability* will appear in a bold font: potential-based conceptualisation of **disability**.

Throughout this thesis, references were made to various existing models, including the affirmation model (Swain & French, 2000), the tragedy view (Cameron & Lingwood, 2020;), the medical or deficit model (Bartlett & Burton, 2016), the social model (Morgan, 2012) and the bio-psycho-social model (Wade & Halligan, 2017). All of these models offer a different lens through which disability and the person can be viewed through, which offers context to compare and contrast them with/against CE.

Each model advocates for different priorities however, they do not directly reject ideas proposed by the other models. For example, the social model does not refuse the idea of and benefits gained from medical interventions (Morgan, 2012). Oliver (2013) introduced the idea of the social model of disability in the early 1980s, but three decades later he admitted that it was never meant as an “all-encompassing framework” (Oliver, 2013: 1024). Oliver (2013) added that the development of alternative models could improve the lives of people with disabilities. Based on the findings and the literature, I posit that CE does not align to any existing model of disability or health; instead, with its strong belief system, CE offers a new and distinct model. Drawing on Connor and Gabel (2013: 101) who talk about a “deficit-based conceptualisation” of what is known as “disability”, I suggest CE’s model to be a potential-based conceptualisation. Through the social model of disability, Oliver (2013, 1990) proposed to move the focus away from limitations caused by attitudes and environmental factors. CE’s model intends to highlight possibilities, potential and ability moving away from outdated ideas of what is possible based on ableist norms. This view offers an alternative model of viewing disability, focusing on the *can* instead of the *cannot*, this captures the belief in potential advocated by CE. This is significant as it formulates a part of the whole system of CE, its paradigm (Figure 64).

Intelligent love

The concept of intelligent love demonstrates an enabling rather than a disabling relationship (House, 1968), where conductors are truly dedicated to their participants’ learning so they create an environment which is motivating, active and happy in order for everyone to thrive (Hári, 1988). This is resonant to what Pestalozzi called a *pedagogy based on love* (Pestalozzi Society, 2021) and acknowledges the third step of Maslow’s (2013) hierarchy of needs *love and belonging*. Conductors are expected to have the “personal qualities to facilitate the development of safe and trusting relationships” with their learners and their families as stipulated by the Professional Standards (PCA, 2017: 5). The significance of intelligent love was present in conductors’ discursive and material accounts during the FGs. Conductors revealed that having trusting relationships, real connections with learners and their families and the ability to give them time and care, were key factors in CE. For example, C13 said: “... to me the most important thing beyond the relationship building, is care. I think a conductor cares. ... we care about them, build relationships with them”. This aligns

with Blackburn and Ward (2020) stating that CE offers a family-centred approach. The quotation also encapsulates that intelligent love is linked to the importance and role of relationships that conductors have with their learners. This data< highlighted that conductors' work gives them purpose and they have feelings of what Page (2018) coined professional love towards their learners and the families.

Despite the prevalence of intelligent love in data< there appears to be a different meaning, which is emanating from this study. For example, a comment made on FG3's Padlet (Appendix L): "*intelligent love is the best way for me to describe how as conductors we form relationships with our participants...*". Intelligent love as a concept and the terminology itself, is something conductors use to articulate their pedagogical choices. Linked to this is Gombinsky (2010) who recognised that conductors are able to empower their learners by facilitating them to learn to live with their condition. From a post-humanist stance, inspired by Page and Sidebottom (2022) this could be viewed as recognising the body's agency in the process of conduction. This idea is in agreement with Hamre et al, (2006: 95), who stated that "... disability is part of life" and as such it "... contributes to one's identity and viewpoint". Putting it in a more contemporary way, the relationship described in intelligent love, enables learners to develop secure attachments which is a key factor for development and growth (Page, 2018).

The concept of intelligent love recognises the impact of the conductor on the learner, but dismisses the role of the learner in the relationship. This is problematic as this view makes the person passive, which directly contradicts the intention of CE as outlined by the PCA (2009a). Leew et al, (2020) suggest that learners should be viewed as partners. However, viewing this relationship with an understanding of intra-actions, it must be accepted that just as conductors *affect* their learners, the learners also *affect* conductors. They mutually emerge *affected* from each encounter had together, establishing a dynamic rather than a one-sided, passive relationship. Therefore, the concept of *intelligent love* is a significant characteristic of CE, it emphasises the importance of relationality and connections.

Fairchild et al, (2024) acknowledged that relational pedagogies – pedagogies, which put relationships and care at the heart of what they do – have become more used and

needed in higher education. Data< mobilised the notion that the relationship conductors have with their learners and the families is significant in informing their professional identity. This *matters* as it increases conductors' feelings of *conductor-ness*, producing *becoming-conductor*. This is a significant insight, accentuating further that conductors have passionate care at the core of their professionalism. The theorisation offered here, emphasises the active role of the learner acknowledging their impact on the conductor and as such recognises a partnership. By articulating the significance of relationships in the learning partnership, possibilities are opened up to know CE as a relational pedagogy. Therefore, intelligent love is positioned as the pedagogy of CE (Figure 64).

The human principle (HP)

This inquiry uncovered that conductors uphold the HP the most; the role of relationships has been a reoccurring refrain in conductors discursive and material utterances. For example, a comment on FG3's Padlet (Appendix L): "*...as conductors we care about the people around us as positive relationships are the corner stones who we are and what we do*". This aligns with existing literature, according to Hári (1988) conductors have emotional investment in their learners and they add something of themselves to learning process. Data< shared in Chapter 3 showed that conductors treasure their relationships with their learners and the families based on mutual trust, care and respect. This links to the concept of the HP, which according Berger-Jones (2024a) showcases the significant role of connections in the process of conduction. Findings highlight that conductors have passionate care at the core of their professionalism. This *matters* as it is a significant factor in informing conductors' professional identity, which has not been previously identified in the literature.

Furthermore, this study revealed that conductors are proud to be able to individualise their approach to meet changing needs in the learning environment. For example, on FG3's Padlet (Appendix L) a comment reads: "*Every person is different on different days. We have such an amazing opportunity to be flexible in our practice to meet the need of that child on that particular day*". Moreover, C8 summarised: "*we observe the little ones when we see them and we respond on the spot ...*". Existing literature by Hári (1975) explained that observation enables conductors to turn negative situations into learning opportunities, into something positive, which in turn ensures activation

and participation. Bandura's (1977) social cognitive theory highlighted the role of observational learning also advocates this strategy.

In the first and main publication explicitly on the HP, Hári (1988) wrote that this concept has three elements: the conductor, the person (with the disability) and the learning environment. This inquiry suggested that when considering the relationship between conductor, learner and the environment intra-actions as well as interactions should be put to work. If applied to the HP, this would indicate intra-actions of conductors \rightleftharpoons learners, learners \rightleftharpoons environment (including human, non-human and other than human), environment \rightleftharpoons conductors. The use of double-sided arrows embraces the intra-actions and entanglements where body and matter are always being *affected* and are *affecting* (Lenz Taguchi, 2012) this indicates a dynamic relationship (Lambert, 2021). From this perspective, the environment (object) can no longer be viewed as something created by the conductor (subject) to serve their purposes and neither can the learner be viewed as a passive recipient. Applying ideas from Mazzei (2014), the learner, the conductor and the environment mutually constitute and produce each other. Importantly, the learner, the conductor and the environment make each other *matter* in their ongoing-*becoming*; this indicates that the concept of the HP is the pillar of CE, therefore its philosophy (Figure 64). Formulating the philosophy of CE around the HP respects its heritage and captures its "*magic*" while thinking with new materialist concepts facilitates a re-orientation of thought.

4.4 RQ3 How can a new materialist understanding facilitate the theorisation of CE?

This section demonstrates how a new materialist understanding aids the theorisation of CE. Brown (2024) Sutton (2018, 1986) and Oravecz (2017) raised concerns regarding the lack of theorisation of CE and the challenges conductors face in articulating their profession with clarity. In order to answer RQ3, a visual conceptual framework is offered as a useful tool. This tool could open up possibilities to showcase and articulate CE's layers and complexities (Figure 65, page 155) suitable for academic and professional audiences. To do that, the attention turns to discussing RQ3 from a theoretical perspective. Introducing a new materialist understanding, I aim to shake things up (Jackson & Mazzei, 2018) in a response-able way (Barad, 2007) to aid the theorisation on contemporary CE. I begin by entering the threshold.

The concept of the threshold is my starting point and thinking with theory helps me create opportunities to attribute other ways of seeing – thinking the un-thought. The threshold is a space full of possibilities; Mazzei and Jackson (2012) liken it to a passageway, which needs to be connected to other spaces or else, it has no purpose. By attaching the threshold to different things, “other things, different from itself”, something new can be created (Mazzei & Jackson, 2012: 450). Jackson and Mazzei (2018) offer the threshold as a dynamic place enabling the researcher to problematize. In a sense, by reorienting my thinking I can produce something different (Taguchi & St Pierre, 2017). Consequently, I strive to use the threshold as a place for transformation to prevent the reproduction of what is already known (Jackson & Mazzei, 2013). After all, by crossing the threshold something invigorating can happen (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012) both to the inquirer and the inquiry.

The threshold becomes a place where I re-turn to data< to turn them over and over and over again (Barad, 2014) whilst thinking with/through different theoretical concepts and CE. Through this process a different encounter with data< *matterings* can be opened up (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012), inviting them to work with me (Lenz Taguchi, 2012) to intra-act with me (Barad, 2007). This process whilst trying to address RQ3, enables a re-orientation of thought or the awakening of curiosity instead of the more traditional coding and categorising, which tends to represent collected information. Two specific aspects of material and discursive encounters glowed and it is now I re-turn to these viewing them through a new materialist lens, these aid the interrogation of RQ3:

- the importance and role of relationships [entangled in this is: the merging of personal and professional selves]
- the role of the learning environment [entangled in this is: the way equipment is used by conductors in CE practice].

4.4.1 The importance and role of relationships

The theory I started to think with, the one I plugged into (Jackson & Mazzei, 2013) were Barad’s (2007) entanglements and intra-actions linked to the significant *matterings* of the importance conductors place on relationships and the role this plays in CE practice. A new-materialist lens opens up possibilities of exploring what intra-actions with human and non-human and other than human bodies can produce instead

of trying to construct meaning (Mazzei, 2013). Thinking with entanglements and intra-actions can facilitate the much-needed theorisation of CE. As highlighted earlier, theorisation within the field is lacking and possibly as a direct result, conductors are challenged in conveying a compelling and consistent narrative regarding CE.

Data[<] revealed that relationships are a vital influencing aspect on conductors' identity and value. During the first activity of the FGs, regardless of the matter selected by individual conductors, their discursive and material utterances revolved around their learners (and families). In the second activity each FG highlighted key factors influencing their professional identity. These included: relationship and trust; time and care; motivation and fun. Based on the *affect* these factors produced on conductors, it could be seen/felt/heard/observed that conductors place high importance on the relationships they build not only with their learners but the families too. In line with existing literature (Blackburn & Ward, 2020), this further showcases that conductors offer a family-centred approach and foster the creation of a supportive learning environment viewed through theory around the person's micro- and meso-systems (Bronfenbrenner, 1986). This inquiry adds new knowledge as there is an absence regarding current theorisation of the role of relationships in CE and around the HP as the philosophy of the system.

To consider the theorisation of CE through a new materialist lens and plugging into the concepts of entanglements and intra-actions it becomes clear from the findings that conductors' practice and professional emotions are bounded together with the needs of their learners. This means that the conductor makes the learners *matter*, equally learners make the conductor *matter*, the conductor and learners make the environment *matter*, and the environment makes both the learners and the conductor *matter*. For example, conductors are proud of the way they are able to work with their learners and the families. This was made clear on FG3's Padlet (Appendix L) with a comment: "*Being able to 'see' each child on that specific day and during that specific moment and adjust and adapt to get the most from the session for them*". Conductors are entangled in their professional practice. They intra-act with the people, *things* and environment surrounding them creating a new assemblage: conductors \rightleftharpoons learners, learners \rightleftharpoons environment (including human, non-human and other than human), environment \rightleftharpoons conductors. For example, in terms of the non-human, this was present

in a conductor explaining their approach to resources on FG2's Padlet (Appendix K): " ... *equipment is irrelevant it's why and how we use it*". Thinking with Mazzei (2014), this requires not privileging the discursive over the material or the material over the discursive – they mutually constitute and produce each other. Therefore, it must be recognised that in any intra-action, all matter makes other matter, *matter* and it also needs to be acknowledged how this comes to *matter* (Jackson, 2013). In a sense, both the learner and the learning environment *affect* and produce the conductor. With that in mind, in the next section the attention turns to the importance of the learning environment in CE.

4.4.2 The role of the learning environment

The existing literature recognises the importance of the *learning environment* in CE as it is one of the named eight methodological components (PCA, 2009a) and is part of the HP (Hári, 1988). Underpinning theories of CE, such as Vygotsky's (1978) socio-cultural theory and Pestalozzi's pedagogy (Pestalozzi Society, 2021) also promote the crucial role of the environment on learning and development. These two theories are fundamentally centred around the human cogito, however, what comes to *matter* when trying to answer the RQ around the theorisation of CE through a new materialist application, is that these two theories both value the role of the environment in the learning process. An agential realist stance stresses that the space/place *affects* the person who occupies it, the environment produces the person's agency through their intra-actions (Barad, 2007). The significance of the learning environment in CE and on conductors' professional practice was present in the narrative and discursive encounters in this study. For example, during the second activity each FG highlighted the importance of the specific environment/context that the conductor works in. In addition, C13 stated that conductors have an: "... *ability to create an environment where we can build a relatable relationship with families*". The space/place *matter* as they produce the conductor and *affect* their relationships with the learners. Therefore, these embodied experiences signal that the learning environment needs to be a key element in the theorisation of contemporary CE.

To continue with the theorisation regarding the role of the learning environment, a return to C2 and C14 (Chapter 3, section 3.4.1) with the question, how does this *matter*?. A new materialist understanding prompted a deeper exploration of the selected *things*

agentic dimensions and made me pay more attention of their importance (Taylor & Fairchild, 2020). The findings suggest that the space occupied by the conductor influences their professional worth and produces *becoming*-conductor. C2 and C14 explored how they put their selected *things* to work within their professional practice. Through the desire for their pedagogical values to be visible/physical, the conductors transformed matter – a mirror to showcase the wholistic stance of CE and a notepad where ideas get recorded and become actualised. The selected *things* made themselves intelligible to the conductors (Barad, 2007) – mirror/notepad were intra-acting with the conductors so they can feel/see/distinguish who they are and what they bring to the MD teams they work in. This aligns with Ahmed's (2010) notions of a matter's orientation can shape how *it* might *matter*. Mirror/notepad become actants – these two items with their thing-power, produced *affect* on the conductors working with other professionals (Bennett, 2010a). The *things*' agentic power, enabled the conductors to distinguish their pedagogical beliefs, through which they silently/loudly/physically aligned CE to an educational viewpoint where the person is seen as a whole and planning is crucial towards the progression of each learner. "To be orientated in a certain way is how certain things come to be significant" (Ahmed, 2010: 235). Significantly, this indicates a desire to be recognised for the paradigm shift in how the learner is viewed by the conductor. This further showcases that CE offers a potential-based conceptualisation of disability and this *mattering* is significant in producing the conductor with strong pedagogical values.

Based on the findings from this study, an important part of conductors' role includes creating a learning environment which is meaningful and enjoyable. This aligns with existing literature, Pető (Balogh & Balogh, 1998) placed high importance on aesthetics, including the physical learning environment (the room, equipment used) and the non-tangible learning environment (atmosphere, learners' feelings, experiences). Linked to the learning environment is the equipment used in CE practice, this was present in conductors' encounters. Five conductors (C8, C11, C12, C15, C18), almost a quarter of the participants, selected equipment or resources as their *thing* for the first activity in the FGs. In order to answer RQ3 and aid the theorisation of CE, thinking with new-materialism, I had Jackson's (2013:769) question on my mind: "How do we make matter (matter), and how does matter make us

(matter)?”. To think of equipment through a new materialist lens, the theoretical concept I plug into (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012) is Bennett’s (2004) thing-power.

Data< revealed that conductors pride themselves in being resourceful in employing versatile and simplistic items, which are put to work in a multi-functional and multi-purposeful way. C12 confirmed: “... *a baton is a simple piece of equipment but we can do so much with it, it helps us work towards aims. It’s not the equipment we are using but what we do with it*”. Furthermore, beanbags’ and batons’ robust simplicity go against a materialistic way of life (Bennett, 2004) – they are sustainable and environmentally friendly. Thing-power is a term brought into life by Bennett (2004) to highlight the power *things* can have on humans and to explore the *thingness* of *things*. Barad (2008) prompted a recognition that in an agential realist view, matter is not a substance that is fixed or static. Additionally, thing-power helps to articulate the “force exercised” by the non-human *thing* upon the human (Bennett, 2004: 351). It is about viewing *things* more than just objects, instead recognising the power, *things* can have on humans. As such removing humans from the ontological centre of thinking and being (Bennett, 2004); not overlooking what a *thing* can do and therefore not prioritising the human over the non-human or other than human (Bennett, 2010b). The *things* conductors brought to the FGs (e.g. beanbags, batons, toys) appeared to gain agency as they were employed with intent and purpose by the conductors to teach, motivate and engage their learners to become active in the learning process in a fun way. These items’ agency/power grows as they intra-act with both conductor and learner. As such creating what Page and Sidebottom (2022: 778) through their post-humanist lens called a “dynamic material environment”.

The findings around the learning environment and the use of equipment demonstrate that the process of CE constitutes of both material and discursive forces, which highlights that a new-materialist understanding is a helpful vehicle in the theorisation of CE. The equipment carefully selected by the conductor offer functionality and become a tool for learning. Using Barad’s (2008) agential realist ideas in the context of CE, it can be said that matter comes to *matter* through intra-acting with conductors ⇔ learners ⇔ environment. Only then, will the items have the power to support conductors in various ways; in their hands matter can become alive and useful (Taylor et al, 2019). The focus shifts from the what (object), to what is made and unmade in

this continuous intra-action of non-materialistic matter \Leftrightarrow conductor \Leftrightarrow learner (Jackson, 2013). Moreover, thing-power views matter as active, even energetic, but not purposive (Bennett, 2010b). It is a recognition that *things* are not passive, on the contrary, *things* have agency “affecting other bodies enhancing or weakening their power” (Bennett, 2010a: 3). As *things* have the power to produce *affect*, they need to be viewed as an actant. Bennett (2010a) stressed that an actant requires other *things* to act with – the agency of the actant will depend upon the intra-actions with other matter (Lenz Taguchi & St Pierre, 2017). This is echoed by Barad (2008: 144) “agency is a matter of intra-acting; it is an enactment, not something that someone or something has”. Importantly, the *thing* gains its power by operating with others (humans and non-humans and other than humans) as part of an assemblage (Bennett, 2004). In CE this assemblage consists of but not exclusive to: learners, conductors, other professionals, families, the physical space and the non-tangible learning environment. This further emphasises the presence of intra-actions and connections in CE – a feature which the findings suggest is important in the theorisation of CE using a new materialist lens.

Based on data<, it appears that the equipment chosen intentionally by the conductor to serve the purpose of the learner is entangled within the learning environment and therefore it becomes entangled with the concept of the HP. Thinking with Barad (2012b: 208) this reveals an assemblage of bodies “...entangled beings (be)coming together-apart”. Applied to CE, an assemblage of bodies of conductors/learners and matter (batons/beanbags/toys) in the learning environment constantly intra-acting making each other feel and *matter* in a space for love, trust and mutual respect. This is an important factor in the theorisation of CE, highlighting that in CE everything is connected, or always already entangled.

4.4.3 A re-animated theorisation of CE

In order to answer if a new materialist lens can facilitate the theorisation of CE, this inquiry showed that the less tangible aspects of the profession such as the role of relationships are felt and valued by conductors. This inquiry found that conductors’ professional practice embodies the system of CE. However, in line with Brown (2024), the study confirms that conductors are challenged when articulating the essence of

the system consistently to different audiences. This negatively effects both the profession and the professional in arenas where the discursive is prioritised. Data showed this, for example C11 said: “... *people don’t get it [CE] until they see it in action*”. Indicating that when visitors observe they are able to feel/see/experience the assemblage of CE and the intra-actions *matter*ing to the conductors, learners and the environment. Nevertheless, conductors are not able to convey this same message in another format, which is necessary as stipulated by Conductors’ Professional Standards (PCA, 2017). This leaves people who are unable to physically experience CE sessions, unsure of the system and its value. Importantly, conductors are left questioning their own autonomy and place amongst other professionals. As expressed by C13: “*You want to be accepted as an equal professional you know what they know and more*”. These findings authenticate the pressing need of the theorisation of CE.

In response to the findings and to answer RQ3, I have to trust myself to do the next thing (St Pierre, 2015), which feels right for CE and its practitioners. It is my responsibility (Barad, 2007) to take positive action, responding to what the inquiry has uncovered regarding the absence CE theorisation has caused to the profession and conductors. Further to the development of visual tool, which showcases the applied system of CE (Figure 64, page 138), I offer a conceptual framework to facilitate CE’s theorisation with a new materialist understanding. A model (Figure 65 below) to showcase the layered, complex and non-linear nature of CE and its temporal qualities. Each aspect of it has been chosen after careful consideration respecting the past, present and future of the system, its practitioners and importantly the people CE was established for and continues to serve today.

Conductive Pedagogy (The Pető System) - *A transformative approach to learning*

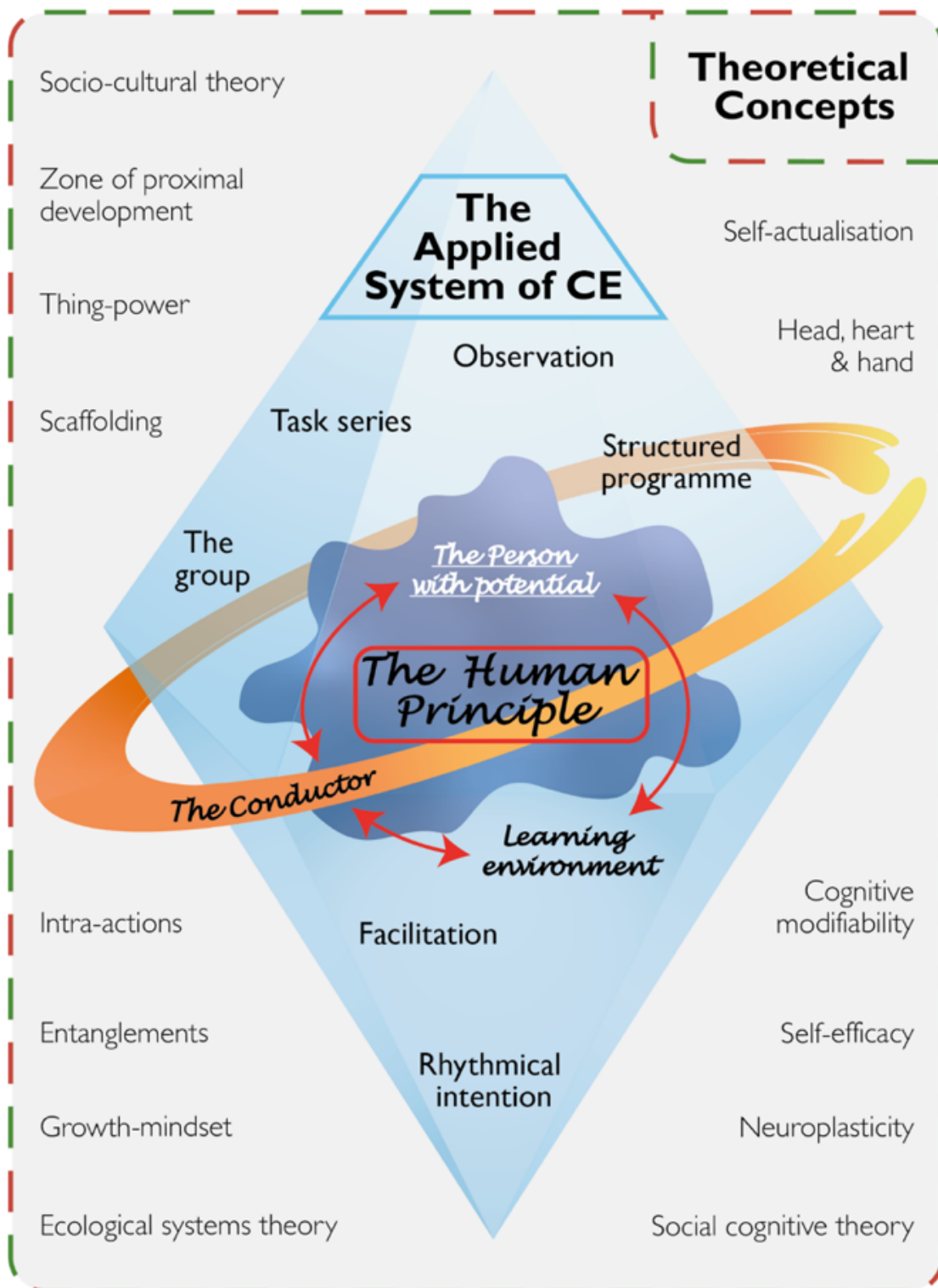


Figure 65: Visual conceptual framework

The visual conceptual framework explained

The theorisation of CE is complex as it uses multiple theories and concepts, therefore using a visual conceptual framework facilitates understanding and knowing the system. The development of the framework was informed by conductors' material and discursive encounters in this study, existing literature, new materialist theory and my embodied experiences. This model does not wish to represent the system of CE as an all knowing, fixed framework. The design is through an agential realist understanding, therefore offering a sense of agency, non-linearity and energy, showcasing connections and the assemblage of CE.

Firstly, a matter of language. The literature (Chapter 1, sections 1.8, 1.9, 1.10.3) highlighted historic misconceptions regarding the system of CE, some of which stem from a mistranslation of its name. Findings from conductors in this study reveal they still carry the impact of the legacy, negatively impacting their professional identity. Therefore, I recommend moving away from the name *Conductive Education* and instead the profession must reintroduce the less frequently used term *Conductive Pedagogy (The Pető System)* with the undercurrent: *A transformative approach to learning*. This encompasses and explains the system's intention comprehensively through its naming, preventing future misunderstandings.

This study uncovered that conductors' have passionate care at the core of their professionalism and their work is guided by their learners' needs. Consequently, the person is at the heart of the system and is placed at the centre of the framework. I selected an amoeba shape for this as it is ever changing and non-geometric. This serves two purposes, firstly aligning with agential realism, it is a pushing against humanistic ideologies of what an ideal human should look like and present as. Secondly to highlight that CE is non-prescriptive (Sutton, 1986) as each person is different with changing needs (Hári, 2008). This aligns with Oliver (2013) who posited that disabled people are not a unitary group, they have varied needs. The system of CE recognises this and offers differentiation through its specific pedagogical approach. In this study conductors' narrative and material accounts showcased their use of observation in CE to meet learners' needs; conductors pride themselves on being able to respond to requirements in a positive way.

The methodological aspects of CE are in the rhombus shape, or as I referred to it, the *application* or *conductors' tools* (Figure 64). Two changes are suggested to the existing eight methodologies of CE which are currently identified by the PCA (2009a) as: the conductor, the learning environment, observation, facilitation, rhythmical intention, the group, the task series and the daily routine. In this study, the heterogenous nature of CE was a reoccurring refrain in conductors' encounters and the findings showed that this is a significant factor of the profession, which impacts identity. The term *daily routine* links back to how CE used to be delivered, which was across a whole day in a residential setting (Hári, 1997). This mode of delivery is no longer representative of the way conductors work in the UK (PCA, 2009a). Brown (2024) posited that conductors are concerned that what they offer is no longer CE, data aligned to this. Findings showed that conductors hold onto a dogma of what CE should be like based on the Hungarian context, indicating that anything else is not "*pure CE*" and therefore, they are not a "*traditional conductor*". To recognise changes in the British context and the *matter*ing of the heterogenous nature of CE, I put forward the term *structured programme* instead of *daily routine*. Secondly, I recommend not including the conductor as part of the methodology; I posit that being listed as part of the methodology impacts professional identity in a detrimental way. Blackburn and Ward (2020) found that conductors feel under-valued and this study identified feelings of imposter syndrome amongst conductors. This inquiry highlighted that conductors do not feel confident to occupy certain professional spaces, being identified as the lead professional of CE would have the potential to change that.

Hári (1988) confirmed that the conductor holds the applied system of CE together, they guide the process of conduction. The conceptual framework recognises that through the choice of the ring shape with its active rather than static appearance. Conductors' narrative and material encounters showcased that they are entangled in the system of CE. To demonstrate this, the orange ring (the conductor) visually goes through and physically touches (intra-acts) with every part of the whole system and the system as a whole. The orange colour is a nod towards Hári (1988) calling the conductor a *catalyst only*, as such recognising the learners' autonomy. A conductor has to remain open to meet the needs of their learners (Hári, 2008), the importance of flexibility and adaptability were present in conductors' narrative and material engagements in this study. Consequently, the shape of the ring is not closed.

This inquiry uncovered the HP guides and informs conductors' work therefore it is deemed as the essence of CE, the system's philosophy. Consequently, it is positioned in the middle of the framework, with its three parts. Originally, Hári (1988) identified the conductor, the person and the environment. Conductors' embodied encounters highlighted the importance of a "*conductive lens*" and the focus on potential, which aligns with principles set out by the PCA (2009a). In line with the paradigm offered by CE (Figure 64), I suggest re-naming the person, to *person with potential*. Using new materialist concepts to theorise CE, this inquiry found that in the assemblage of CE the conductor, the person with potential and the learning environment are constantly *affected* and are *affecting* each other indicating a dynamic relationship. Therefore, thinking with intra-actions is a useful way to understand the entanglements in the HP. The use of the double-sided arrows recognises the intra-actions of the person with potential \rightleftharpoons conductor, conductor \rightleftharpoons learning environment, learning environment \rightleftharpoons person with potential.

In order to explore the theorisation of CE through a new materialist lens, the underpinning theoretical concepts of CE are included as they aid an understanding of the mechanics of CE and help to place the applied system in a context. These include: Maslow's (2013) self-actualisation, Vygotsky's (1978) socio-cultural theory and concepts of scaffolding and zone of proximal development, Pestalozzi's holistic pedagogy of head heart and hand (Pestalozzi Society, 2021), Feuerstein's (2008) belief of cognitive modifiability, Dweck's (2006) growth mindset, Bronfenbrenner's (1986) ecological systems theory and Bandura's (1977) concept of self-efficacy and social cognitive theory. These are aligned to the professional practice of conductors and were present in the material and discursive encounters in this study. The concept of neuroplasticity is essential (Brown, 2024); the knowledge and understanding regarding the brain's ability to create new neural pathways was not available in Pető's era, yet he was advocating the idea of it and used it in practice (Hári, 2008). RQ3 focused on the usefulness of a new materialist understanding in the theorisation of CE. Thinking with Barad's (2007) intra-actions, entanglements and Bennett's (2004) thing-power opened up possibilities to showcase CE's pedagogic and transformative essence highlighting connections and relationality. Therefore, these concepts are added onto the conceptual framework as they aid the theorisation of CE for contemporary times.

The conceptual visual framework is surrounded by a boarder made up of dashed lines to recognise that new discoveries in the future could further aid understanding of CE and therefore the profession should remain open to them. This highlights that CE is situated and temporal and is important as according to Pető (Gegenwarth et al, 2012: 23) “Conductive Education is a complex system that is to remain constantly in flux”. The colours, red, white and green, were chosen in an acknowledgment to the origins of CE, utilising the national colours of Hungary. Red and blue are used as other key colours throughout the diagram as a link to the UK.

4.5 Closing remarks

In this chapter diffractive analysis was used to discuss and address the three RQs. Data< (the selected *thing*, Padlet, conductors’ intra-actions, new materialist theory, my embodied encounters) were cut together-apart to highlight differences that *matter* in *becoming*-conductor identity. Findings for RQ1 informed understanding of RQ2 and therefore aided conceptualising CE philosophy for contemporary times. New knowledge from RQ1 and RQ2 opened up possibilities for the theorisation of CE using a new materialist understanding. The next chapter brings this thesis to its final conclusions.

Chapter 5: and... and ... and

5.1 Introduction

This chapter concludes the written thesis but as the title suggests it does not mark the end of this inquiry. Firstly, the three RQs are answered, leading to an acknowledgment of the original contributions made to knowledge. I explore their impact for CE, conductors and other stakeholders. In a sense continuing to ask the question *how does this matter?* I then offer a critical insight into my *becoming*-researcher by looking at my learning from this doctoral journey and highlight some perceived limitations. Dissemination and publications to date are shared and possible future ones are mentioned, the last section considers future agenda.

5.2 The *mat*tering of the inquiry

This inquiry set out to produce new and useful knowledge differently and was guided by three questions. It is important to note that these RQs are connected and not separate, they are entangled in the assemblage of CE and therefore with each other. Subsequently, it must be recognised that the answers/findings/insights are emergent and relational and always *becoming*.

5.2.1 RQ1

What informs conductors' professional identity and how does this *mat*ter?

This doctoral thesis intended to address the absence of available literature and research, specifically on conductors' professional identity. I was interested in what produces conductors and how this *mat*ters to the professional and therefore CE.

It was uncovered that conductors' professional identity is in flux and is constantly being *affected* by external and internal factors. The heterogenous nature of the profession was an on-going *mat*tering for conductors; this variety *produce* conductors in numerous ways highlighting *spacetime**mat*tering. For example, conductors' specific work contexts and the type of learner they work with play an important part in their identity construction. Moreover, conductors' native language and culture impact their professional identity especially if working in a different context from their original. Conductors' material and discursive encounters showed that they are entangled in

CE; they identify as practitioners, showing a merging of personal and professional selves. These factors *matter*; as posited by Barad (2007) we make sense of the world because we are part of it. However, the heterogenous nature of the profession has been viewed negatively by conductors, consequently this has created hidden complexities within the field, leading to feelings of imposter syndrome. This is materialised in conductors identifying themselves based on their differences from other professionals; conductors tend to describe what they are not, rather than what they are. Importantly, this study revealed that conductors have passionate care at the core of their professionalism. These factors inform professional identity and they *matter* as conductors gauge their impact based on the value their learners and the families place on their work.

The *affect* the heterogenous nature of the profession had on conductors, prompted me to seek out a different way of seeing/knowing the diversity. In order to re-orient thought and showcase the multiplicity of the profession as differences that *matter* (Barad, 2007) rather than something that divides, I felt it was necessary to offer something useful to move the profession forward. Informed by the *matte*ring of data and the available literature, I developed a tool to aid conductors knowing what produces them. A model is offered (Figure 63, page 133) to showcase the different pathways into the profession, acknowledging CE's heterogenicity. Re-directing focus is important in order to find a strengthened sense of identity and an embedded sense of belonging, aspects conductors expressed they wish to have. Therefore, this emergent and in-flux model offers value to the professional and subsequently the profession by turning division into unity.

Through a post-qualitative lens, I re-imagine conductors' professional identity. It is materialised in a *spacetime mattering* where/when conductors confidently occupy their space alongside/with education, health and care practitioners. And professionals acknowledge their boundaries without tensions created by hierarchies. And conductors embrace the heterogenous nature of CE as we are all part of the assemblage of the system.

5.2.2 RQ2

How can CE philosophy be conceptualised for contemporary times?

This inquiry re-directed thought and revealed that CE philosophy can only be conceptualised for contemporary times by knowing the whole system whilst identifying its parts for their differences that *matter*. Therefore, the system of CE has to be understood as an assemblage, which the philosophy is an entangled part of.

The material and discursive encounters as well as existing literature emphasised that conductors find it difficult to articulate what CE is and what it does to different audiences. Historically, practice has been prioritised over conceptualising theory in the field of CE (Sutton, 2018, 1986; Oravecz, 2017). This has left conductors without a united voice or a clear message on what constitutes of CE (Brown, 2024) as well as feeling under-valued by other professionals (Blackburn & Ward, 2020). The philosophy of CE has not been formulated or explicitly articulated in writing beyond one publication identifying *four building blocks* (Berger-Jones, 2022). Aligned to this, in this study, conductors' material and discursive encounters highlighted signs of imposter syndrome, a tendency to describe what CE is not and a hesitation to occupy their own professional space. This is problematic for both the profession and the professional as it does not enable knowing the system and its value.

In order to conceptualise the philosophy of CE, the inquiry aimed to identify the essence of the system. Conductors embodied experiences and discursive accounts highlighted strong feelings regarding the way they view the learners. This is through a “*conductive-lens*” (as it was described by conductors). Data< revealed that conductors' work gives them purpose and a strong sense of commitment, CE is more than a job for them. It was also suggested that conductors uphold connections and relationships the most. Furthermore, it was found that conductors pride themselves on being flexible, resourceful and on their ability to create a motivating learning environment. These various data< segments signal to three philosophical concepts of CE (as currently known), *belief in potential*, *intelligent love* and *the human principle*.

With the intention to facilitate a different way of viewing CE and to conceptualise its philosophy, a diagram (Figure 64, page 138) started to emerge. This visual tool aids seeing the system of CE as a whole (an assemblage) whilst knowing its differentiated

parts, which *matter* to the professional and therefore the profession. The naming of the parts is used to offer possibilities rather than to describe or represent each, it must be viewed as relational. Based on the discoveries from this inquiry, the system of CE embodies its philosophy (the HP), paradigm (a potential-based conceptualisation of **disability**), pedagogy (intelligent love), process (*becoming* orthofunctional personality) and its application (the methodological tools). The value of this tangible tool lies in its potential to facilitate conductors having a united voice with a shared message regarding the applied system of CE. I became an inside change agent (Thomson & Gunter, 2011) and accentuated the value and position of CE in this 21st century Western world by offering a re-configured understanding of CE. Subsequently, this supports understanding CE as a professional practice, directly reducing conductors feeling invisible, this in turn positively impacts professional identity and confidence.

Philosophy Asking the question: how does the matter make the conductor *matter* and why does that matter, *matter* to the conductor (Jackson, 2013)?, opened up the possibility to see that the learner *matters* the most to the conductor. Thinking with Barad (2007) it could be noticed that conductors are produced in the intra-actions of conductors \rightleftharpoons learners, learners \rightleftharpoons environment (including human, non-human and other than human), environment \rightleftharpoons conductors. This way of knowing, embraces entanglements where body and matter are always being *affected* and are *affecting* (Lenz Taguchi, 2012). This gave a new understanding – the human principle is the philosophy of CE, the driving force behind the system. Learner, conductor and environment mutually constitute and produce each other in their ongoing *becoming* therefore form the essence of the system.

Paradigm Breaking data< together-apart enabled new knowledge to show itself. Conductors using a “*conductive lens*”, signals that CE offers its own paradigm, which challenges the normative discourse of deficit and what it means to have potential. It is an alternative way of re-framing disability by re-orienting attention to potential rather than what is deemed as a limitation in a socially constructed idea of normalcy. This is a potential-based conceptualisation of **disability**, which is in line with Pető’s original intentions of challenging perspectives on disability (Hári, 1988). The paradigm offered by CE is conductors’ *becoming*-identity and it is the *thing* that makes CE distinct and unique.

The process The orthofunctional personality is thought of as the process of CE. A process in a Deleuzien sense, the learner *becoming* orthofunctional personality. This, fundamentally showcases the transformative aspect of CE as it focuses on the overall growth of the person with strengthening autonomy and developing resilience.

Pedagogy The theorisation offered regarding the concept of intelligent love, emphasised the active role of the learner acknowledging their impact on the conductor and as such recognising a partnership. By articulating the significance of relationships in the learning partnership, possibilities were opened up to know CE as a relational pedagogy.

5.2.3 RQ3

How can a new materialist understanding facilitate the theorisation of CE?

This study revealed that a new-materialist understanding is a helpful vehicle to make sense of CE as it demonstrates that the process of CE constitutes of both material and discursive forces. In turn, this new insight facilitates and enables the theorisation of CE for academic audiences. Data< investigated specifically to answer this RQ were the importance and role of relationships, and the role of the learning environment.

Plugging into the new materialist concepts such as entanglements and intra-actions, aided the theorisation of CE. It was highlighted that conductors' practice and professional emotions are bounded together with the needs of their learners. This new knowledge further showcased that in CE everything is connected, focusing on relationality. Conductors are entangled in their professional practice, which means that they do not only interact but intra-act with learners, *things* and the environment creating a new assemblage. This further demonstrated that the philosophy of CE is the HP; conductors \rightleftharpoons learners, learners \rightleftharpoons environment (including human, non-human and other than human), environment \rightleftharpoons conductors. Therefore, it must be recognised that the conductor makes the learners *matter*, equally learners make the conductor *matter*, the conductor and learners make the environment *matter*, and the environment makes both the learners and the conductor *matter*. Through an agential realist understanding it becomes clear that the space/place *affects* the person (conductor/learner) who occupies it, the environment produces the person's agency through their intra-actions. By using a new materialist stance, this inquiry was able to

theorise that some of the less tangible aspects of CE, which are embodied by conductors, from an agential realist position *matter*.

A new materialist stance enabled both material and discursive encounters to come to life in the assemblage of CE. In order to show the complex, non-linear system of CE at a glance, a visual conceptual framework was offered as a practical/useful tool to open up theoretical conversations about the system especially with academics and researchers (Figure 65, page 155). The visual element of the framework showcases the non-linear and entangled aspect of the whole. Attention must be drawn that this is not an all knowing, fixed representation of CE. The framework includes the person with potential at the centre as such directly acknowledging the paradigm offered in CE. The human principle, the philosophy of CE highlights on-going intra-actions conductors \rightleftharpoons learners, learners \rightleftharpoons environment (including human, non-human and other than human), environment \rightleftharpoons conductors as they produce each other's *becoming*. This *affect* pinpoints CE's transformative process for the learner. The applied system, the tools of the conductor are identified as part of the layers of the whole and signals that the conductor is the unifier between the philosophy and the methodology (the application of the system). CE's theoretical underpinnings are acknowledged, this should aid the situating the system as a relational pedagogy based on love and motivation. The dashed lines used as the boarder in the colours of the Hungarian flag is a reminder of the temporal and spatial situatedness of the system. It also further signals my own entanglements in CE, its theory building and professional practice. I trust the development of the conceptual framework further highlights my investment in the academisation and safe-keeping of CE for future generations. This aids my intention to transform theoretical knowledge, with a positive impact on the practice of CE.

5.3 Original contributions to knowledge

This thesis contributes to the existing knowledge base as it includes a thorough review of both Hungarian and English language resources, offering a succinct overview considering political and cultural contexts, clarifying some misconceptions surrounding CE and their impact on the profession. This is important as previously those interested, were unable to find what is known about CE in one place or could not understand what was written due to language and cultural barriers. Furthermore, reducing the e/affect

of historic misunderstandings regarding CE as this inquiry found that conductors still carry this burden and feel othered as a result. This thesis, including the literature review, will be useful for CE students, conductors, other interested professionals as well as researchers. Through re-viewing the literature and making sense of it, this thesis has opened up possibilities for others to (re)discover CE's pedagogic value in the present. The literature review highlights how CE is not positioned as transformative even though the system's purpose is to be that. This suggests that the pedagogic essence of CE and the value of its process has not been accentuated as yet.

A contribution to knowledge is a visual model of pathways into CE (Figure 63), this re-orient thought to enable the heterogenous nature of CE to be viewed as differences that *matter* (Barad, 2007) rather than something that divides the profession. The model should be viewed as something emergent and experiential rather than fixed and definite. Showcasing aspects of the profession, which produce conductors, should strengthen CE and therefore improve professional confidence. Subsequently, offering *usefulness* to the profession and professional.

The existing knowledge base has used traditional ways of researching to measure outcomes (e.g.: Tuersley-Dixon & Fredrickson, 2010; Jung-Ae Hur's, 1997) by evaluating the effectiveness of CE. In contrast, this inquiry has used post-qualitative thinking and a new materialist stance, which aims to disrupt normative ways of researching by adding to existing knowledge through a different means of thinking, writing and researching. This thesis has illuminated different ways of viewing and knowing the system of CE by looking at the whole and diffracting its parts which *matter*. Previously, the profession only differentiated between the methodology and the philosophy of CE. This thesis has added to this knowledge by formulating the philosophy and identifying the pedagogy, paradigm and the process of CE. While cutting the assemblage together-apart, differences that *matter* presented themselves, in order to produce something new, I developed a diagram (Figure 64). This illustrates the system of CE in a tangible way with its key components. This is meant as an emergent useful tool with practical benefits to conductors and CE students to make understanding and knowing CE consistent.

This thesis contributes to the existing knowledge base as it explicitly identified that CE's unique and distinct feature is the way conductors view their learners' potential. CE's strong belief system offers its own model of disability, which is a potential-based conceptualisation of **disability**. This offers a lens through which to view potential in order to recognise diversity and disability as part of life (Hamre et al, 2006) valuing individuality. The paradigm CE offers, *matters* to the conductors as it produces their *becoming*-identity; this will increase understanding and knowing CE outside of the profession. It is important to highlight that I am not trying to offer an all-encompassing model; this can only be partial as it cannot (and is not trying to) represent all people with disabilities. This conceptualisation of **disability** is based on CE's paradigm, my positionality and experiences.

A contribution to knowledge is the creation of an emergent conceptual framework (Figure 65), which offers value to the profession by engaging different audiences such as academics and researchers. This showcases the non-linear and entangled nature of CE and offers a new insight into the complexities of the system at a glance. Including its underpinning, multiple theories, the tools used in its application as well as its underlying philosophy. The framework also acknowledges the intra-actions between the person with potential \rightleftharpoons conductor, conductor \rightleftharpoons learning environment, learning environment \rightleftharpoons person with potential.

Findings from this study will inform the under-graduate curriculum for conductor students in the UK as well as continual professional development sessions offered to conductors across the Globe. New knowledge offered by this thesis is useful as it will aid student conductors to grasp and articulate the system of CE with more ease leading to increased professional confidence already at a graduate level. Furthermore, qualified conductors will be able to re-orient their thought regarding the essence of CE with the aid of visual diagrams designed in this study, this should open up possibilities for conductors to stay in flux, *becoming*-identity.

5.4 Learning from my doctoral journey

I started my professional doctorate in September 2019, the timing of this journey coincided with a Global pandemic. During the second taught module (March 2020) the World changed. Reading, writing, thinking had become welcome distractions and an

escape from the stark reality around me. Working in/from a different space, a space that was home, not the office or lecture room, created head space for a new *becoming* (Dr), as I gained time and energy, which previously would have been spent on commuting.

Certain changes in reality and the advancement of platforms facilitated the ease of *normalising* online data< generation. Using MS Teams for the FG enabled conductors from across the UK to take part without logistical or financial demands on them, which I believe increased levels of participation. Recording the groups and storing these were made straight forward, consequently reducing pressure and increasing the ethical integrity of the study.

A key aspect of personal/professional learning was the realisation that I am an inside insider in CE. This was interrogated in the third agential cut enacted. The hiatuses were significant moments where my own identity shifted. These encounters show my entanglements with the inquiry/profession/professionals/learners. Cutting my embodied experiences together-apart have opened up the possibility for my *becoming*-identity to show itself. These mindful pauses emerged organically where I was able to have, and offer a different encounter with the inquiry becoming entangled with it furthermore. Through putting diffraction to work in Chapter 3 and 4, the intra-action with data< formed part of the thinking/writing/inquiring and therefore agential-cuts appear as part of the text.

The inquiry had two main focuses: CE philosophy/theorisation and conductors' professional identity. My intentions were to uncover new insights, re-orient thought and to offer *usefulness* and value to the profession and professional. Even though there were three separate RQs to guide the study, they were seen as connected and entangled in the theoretical framework used. However, the scope of the written thesis did not permit the intricate, deep exploration of data< segments that my mind and body signalled it desired. The parameters of a neo-liberal doctoral research (in terms of word count and time) have been limiting and restricting factors and were a source of frustration. Overall, I feel satisfied with how I met my intentions and addressed the RQs.

5.5 Perceived limitations of the study

The intention was to have a larger sample size, however the response rate was still a positive proportion of conductors. Twenty-one, a third of all PCA registered conductors and about a fifth of the estimated CE professionals currently working in the UK (PCA, 2024a). Whilst twenty-six conductors accepted MS Teams invites, five of them did not attend the meeting on their chosen dates; contacting them separately in order to set up another group was considered. However, I did not want to compromise the ethical integrity of the study by putting pressure on them and hindering the notion of voluntary consent.

Carrying out a post-qualitative inquiry without a predetermined structure and guidelines to follow, have been both cathartic and extremely challenging. Would I chose do it differently? No, it would not have been possible for me to align to any other paradigm, chose a different design or take an alternative stance. There are a number of parallels between the ideologies of CE and new materialism, which facilitated disrupting the norm and enabled the meaning making that it has. Not privileging language practices in a written thesis has been a trial, but it has pushed my thinking beyond anything I have ever known and has developed me as a researcher.

5.6 Dissemination and publication

At a BERA conference, I gave an overview of my study and shared some emerging findings (Berger-Jones, 2023). This was an excellent opportunity to engage with an academic audience.

I shared the first draft of the visual conceptual framework (Figure 65) at an annual CE conference in order to gain peer feedback (Berger-Jones, 2024c).

I had a narrative review (Appendix N) published on the professional practice of CE (Berger-Jones, 2024b). On the feedback of the manuscript, one of the reviewers made a specific comment regarding the importance of my unique role as a conductor and speaker of both Hungarian and English languages in the literature review process.

The next aspect of this study I wish to disseminate is the diagram on the system of CE (Figure 64). I am interested to see its immediate usefulness to conductor colleagues (Berger-Jones, 2025).

My plans for future publication include: the *matter*ing of conductors' professional identity; the use of Padlet as a creative data generation tool during focus groups; the conceptual framework of CE (Figure 65); the potential-based conceptualisation of disability that CE offers.

Furthermore, I was inspired by Jackson's (2010, 2016) writing, where they re-turned to the same embodied encounter (the backflip) from their research and problematised it through plugging into different theories. This is what I wish to do, re-turn to glowing data< segments without the pressure of writing to be assessed against specific criteria. I want to continue to ask questions to provoke my thinking enabling further insights to show themselves. I will have an opportunity to do this in June during a writing retreat fellowship with International Professional Development Association's international journal, Practice.

5.7 Future agenda

The most significant area of future inquiry that I wish to undertake is to trouble the value and usefulness of the emergent tools (Figures 63, 64, 65) offered in this thesis both for within and outside of the profession.

The undergraduate CE degree programme is due to be revalidated over the next eighteen months, I aim for the curriculum to be influenced by new knowledge offered in this study. Teaching the system of CE as a whole with its named parts will ensure that conductor students learn to confidently articulate the profession.

Findings from this study regarding feelings of imposter syndrome and categories of conductor-ness will influence the topics of future CPD sessions offered to conductors in the UK and around the Globe. This will be with the aim to reduce and reverse these thoughts, which negatively impact conductors' professional identity and confidence.

I will continue to push against normative ideas that those with disabilities are unable or less able (Goodley et al, 2018; Connor & Gabel, 2013; Oliver, 1990); please note that my intention is not to privilege ability or erase disability.

This is not the end, but the entry point to the future... and ~ and ~ and

Hiatuses: Cutting Together-Apart

Agential cut 1 (Chapter ∞)

The agential cuts enacted offer the space and time to re-turn, as in turning over and over again to aerate, inviting new insights to show themselves (Barad, 2014). They serve multiple purposes:

- ⇒ a pushing against linearity (Koro-Ljunberg & Hendricks, 2020)
- ⇒ a shaking up the concept of fixed time (Barad, 2017)
- ⇒ a refusal of what St Pierre (2015) calls - conventional humanist qualitative methodology
- ⇒ a rejection to produce a tidy text but instead offer “multiple ways of reading” (Lather, 1996: 529)
- ⇒ an opportunity to intra-act with the line of inquiry (Barad, 2010)
- ⇒ to enrich the authenticity and truthfulness of the discursive and material shared
- ⇒ to showcase my development – *becoming*-identity.

Throughout the text the enactment of an agential cut appears as so:

.....
AGENTIAL CUT

(please go to page X)
.....

These markers serve as signposts, to know which page to turn to, in order to cut together-apart before re-turning to and re-entering the text in possession of different insights. The categories of difference I offer are as set by Deleuze and Guattari (1994: 82) “Interesting, Remarkable or Important”. I use time differently to alter my writing, creating a rupture in the text (Hein, 2013). The hiatuses literally and symbolically aid the creation of ruptures, or breaks in the text, playing with the experimental nature of a post-qualitative inquiry (St Pierre, 2015). Therefore, agential cuts are an ideal vehicle to attend to material-discursive practices in a playful way, after all “different agential cuts materialise different phenomena” (Barad, 2007: 178). Importantly for this thesis,

agential cuts are in flux and dynamic in a *spacetime mattering*, highlighting diffraction patterns, intra-actions and entanglements (Barad, 2010).

Diffraction is a physical phenomenon yet it is a useful approach, which enables to “respond to differences and how they matter” (Barad, 2007: 71). The word diffraction has Latin roots meaning to break apart (Hill, 2017). Diffraction is a widely used term in physics to explain patterns of difference unique to wave behaviour (Barad, 2007). To facilitate a move away from sameness, to avoid reproducing something already known, Barad (2007) highlighted the difference between two optical phenomena: reflection and diffraction. When using reflection, a widely used methodology in qualitative research (Mazzei, 2014), themes of mirroring sameness is produced; whereas diffraction has the ability to produce something new (Barad, 2007). Reflection focuses on accurately copying what is already there and known – therefore, it is representationalism (Barad, 2007). In contrast, diffraction challenges that, it is a process “whereby a difference is made and made to matter” (Davies, 2014: 734). Barad (2007) demonstrated this through the example of water meeting an obstruction – the waves react by bending and overlapping, changing their behaviour through the process. In other words, when faced with a problem/challenge, by intra-acting (rather than interacting) with the obstacle or matter, the inquirer will have the ability to produce something unexpected.

These mindful pauses have allowed me to breathe and enabled the inquiry to have its own agency, aiding my *becoming* post-qualitative researcher. Deleuze and Guattari (2004) aimed to encourage thinking to be more mobile, ridding itself from fixed ideas (Colebrook, 2002). Consequently, *becoming* is newness, a fluid production of difference emerging immanently *and* continually *and* constantly (Jackson, 2010; Deleuze & Guattari, 2004). *Becoming* as a concept rejects binary logic, as such aligns well with new materialist ethico-onto-epistemology; it prefers connections on a level, rather than a hierarchical plane (St Pierre, 2013). According to Barad (2014) *becomings* are fluid and constantly happening through various intra-actions. It is about movement in/of thinking and a being of in-betweenness (Lenz Taguchi, 2013; Deleuze & Guattari, 2004). *Becoming* does not happen at/in a specific time and space; the process is not linear, which takes place between two fixed points (Jackson, 2010) the focus is not the end product but the “...enfolding of mattering” (Barad, 2007: 180).

Therefore, *becoming* should not be viewed as an identification (Holmes, 2020) as it challenges the very idea of being a fixed entity (Colebrook, 2002).

Cutting the text together-apart has emerged organically in the process of this inquiry. Enacting these enabled me to pause and have various intra-actions within an assemblage (Völker, 2019). I found myself transported to a different time and space through my reading, re-living, writing and engaging with the research in a material way. Therefore, the agential cuts offer an opportunity for the reader to intra-act (Barad, 2007) with my thoughts. Intra-action is a physics term, which refers to “relationships between multiple bodies ... they are always affecting or being affected by each other” (Lenz Taguchi, 2012: 271). Barad (2007) focused on the contrast between intra-action and inter-action. When referring to interactions Barad (2007) implied that the *things* interacting, already have their own agency, they are separate of each other. Intra-actions on the other hand recognise that the *things* mutually constitute to each other’s *becoming* (Barad, 2007). Intra-action takes away the boundaries between the subject and object (human and non-human and other than human), instead focuses on how bodies/matter emerge from each encounter (Barad, 2007). A relationship where an assemblage is formed through the intra-actions of human and non-human and other than human agents and matter co-existing (Hultman & Lenz Taguchi, 2010). Distinguishing between inter- and intra-action signals a conceptual shift. In order to understand how and why certain intra-actions impact upon us, my way of viewing the world must be challenged.

According to Barad (2010) entanglements do not refer to *things* being as one, but being obligated to each other, not being able to separate from one another (Lambert, 2021). Entanglements suggest “... specific material relations of the ongoing differentiating of the world” (Barad, 2010: 265). This further demonstrates that matter and meaning are not detached entities, they are firmly united and are inseparable (Barad, 2014).

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Agential cut 2 (Chapter ∞)

My initial encounter, in 2020, with Post thinkers resulted in a paradigm shift; thinking with these concepts has expanded and stretched any/all previous ways of knowing and being for me (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012). I found that my mind was hungry for more and I could not stop reading, the way the texts and ideas were intra-acting with me, I knew that I was always and already entangled in this reality (Barad, 2007). Below, I share an extract I wrote of my feelings/thinking/writing from a different *spacetime mattering* prompted by the seduction of the various authors five years ago.

(Her)Story is just as important as any Other's story yet it is *his*story (Tuhiwai-Smith), this story might have been silenced ... but silence also tells a story (MacLure, Koro-Ljunberg)! Her story is my story, I am her and I am the Other (Tuhiwai-Smith), I am the one writing this story. It is my becoming and I am *becoming* something (Deleuze & Guattari). Something, concerned with the moment, with the depth, the depth of the flat, the flattened space (Deleuze & Guattari).

This space, which is my space, but it is not exclusive to me. A space, rich with intra-actions (Barad). I share this space and the sharing is with excitement and joy. There are Others, humans and non-humans in this space (Braidotti), without an order or a hierarchy (Deleuze & Guattari). It is a happy *matter*, where things have power (Bennett). Yet, there is nothing comfortable here, perhaps comforting and welcoming but/and at the same time provoking and seducing... offending but not threatening (MacLure).

I find myself reading and thinking and then reading some more (St Pierre) so the thoughts are buzzing and waiting to glow (MacLure) so I can be mapping and seeing (Deleuze & Guattari) and ... and... and ... I keep asking questions, the same ones differently and different ones the same way (St Pierre). Then there is more reading, the writing is/will be... but by the time you are entangled (Barad) in this part of my story, by then, to me, traditionally this would be history... excuse me while I 'plug into' another theory (Mazzei & Jackson).

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Agential cut 3 (Chapter ∞)

I always thought of myself as a conductor who is an insider but also an outsider within the profession. Being a Hungarian who trained in the UK made me feel that I do not belong with Hungarian trained conductors. On the other hand, being a British trained conductor who is a fluent Hungarian speaker made me stand out from other British trained conductors.

The photograph to the right (Figure 1) resonated with me – belonging, yet longing to belong. A tree in a forest feeling like a fraud. Only seeing the negatives in the differences rather than the value these differences bring to the whole.



Figure 1: An inside outsider

Breaking my assumptions together-apart, highlighted low professional confidence, not regarding my competence but my standing within the profession. My fear of not being accepted showed itself loudly. I could not help but wonder whether seeing differences about myself as negative hinted at my perception of CE. Did I focus on CE being different as an obstacle rather than as the features, which make it unique and distinct? Have I not appreciated the process that *matters*?

Enacting this agential cut, helped me see how I needed to respond to my own differences “... and how they matter” (Barad, 2007: 71). Previously, my focus was on how I did not belong and why I was an inside outsider (Thomson and Gunter, 2011). Until Barad’s (2007) ideas worked their way into my thinking/writing, I was not able to experience this in any other way. Re-turning to my positionality and thinking with theory facilitated this *becoming*, and enabled me to produce something new (Barad, 2007). I turned my attention to the *matter*ing of intra-actions and encounters with conductor colleagues (Davies, 2014). Individuals/things develop from/through being entangled through specific intra-actions; this is on-going and continuing in space and time and

matter (Barad, 2007). There are no clear boundaries between *things*, what *matters* is how they emerge through various intra-actions (Barad, 2014).

In the process of re-turning (Barad, 2014) to how differences *matter*, entanglements were highlighted (Barad, 2012a)! My unique position does not push me to the periphery of the profession, quite the opposite, it draws me in. All aspects of my positionality intertwine me – making me part of the assemblage of CE – an inside insider. This is truly showcasing entanglements and connections.

Breaking this/me together-apart opened up the possibility for new insights to brightly show themselves. The differences that *matter* regarding CE need to be highlighted, as those are the things that make CE, CE – a unique and distinct approach.

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Agential cut 4 (Chapter 3)

I found myself re-turning to the first activity of the FG, what *thing* I would have selected and why? This helped me understand the reason conductors found it difficult to choose only one significant *thing*. CE is a layered system (PCA, 2009a) and it relies on each of its parts to be connected to each other to create the whole (Hári, 1997). In other words, to use Barad (2007), CE focuses on relationality not separation. This applies to its practice hence why choosing an individual facet of CE is challenging. However, by focusing on its essence – its philosophy – rather than its practice, my *thing* emerged.

The *thing* I would have brought is this photograph from 2008 (Figure 2). The picture shows me as a junior conductor, with six adult participants from my first Parkinson group. The photo was not taken in the structured part of the session, but afterwards, during the social time, an important aspect of the *daily routine* in CE. Besides the smiles, the photograph captured a sense of belonging, care and an investment in each other. It can be seen how the seven of us enjoy each other's company: bodies touching comfortably, postures at ease – a group entangled. The most significant factor in informing my professional identity as a conductor is the people I work with, my participants; they produce me as a professional. Evidently, this has been a defining feature early on in my career but it is just as important to me today as it was back then. This highlights that to me the essence of CE lies in its philosophy, the human principle. It is all about relationships, the interpersonal connections in a safe and enabling environment where everything is possible. The intra-actions between conductor \rightleftharpoons person \rightleftharpoons environment in the assemblage, *matter*ing. As a conductor, I gain meaning through these intra-actions, they produce me.



Figure 2: A photograph from 2008

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Appendices

Appendix A – Pilot study: Participant Information Sheet



Participant Information Sheet PILOT

15th June 2022

Study title	A theoretical exploration of contemporary conductive education (CE) philosophy and conductors' professional identity
Aims of your study	My primary intention is to offer a clearly articulated theoretical framework concerning the philosophy of conductive education (CE). This will aid the understanding of the complex narratives in CE and could offer clarification on some misconceptions. Through this conceptualisation, situating contemporary CE within education in a cogent way could be made possible. Issues surrounding conductors' professional identity will also be addressed. We need to find a more useful way of knowing. This will not only have a positive impact on CE and us conductors, but it could also influence the dominant discourse in the field of disability.
Research questions	RQ1: How can a post-qualitative inquiry aid the theorisation of contemporary CE philosophy? RQ2: Which theories can be applied to help the conceptualisation of contemporary CE philosophy? RQ3: What informs conductors' professional identity and how does this matter?
An invitation to participate	The purpose of this information leaflet is to inform you about the project so that you can decide whether you would like to take part in the pilot study or not.
An explanation of why the participant(s) has been invited	I invited you to be a part of this pilot study as you are a qualified conductor, you may or may not be currently employed as such. You may or may not be based in the UK. I believe that with your experience and expertise, you would be able to inform this study by sharing your thoughts.
Whether participation is voluntary	Participation in this pilot study is voluntary. Non-participation is entirely your choice and will not have any adverse effects. Please read this information and do ask any questions. If you are happy to proceed, I will ask you to sign a consent form. If you prefer I can audio record your consent.
What you expect of participants if they consent	I would like to invite you to be a part of a focus group via the online platform MS Teams. The length of this will be around 60-90 minutes. The size of the group will be around 5-6 participants.

	<p>The findings from the pilot will not be included in the actual study but it will very much inform how the rest of the research will be conducted.</p> <p>With your consent I would like to make a video recording of the focus group. If you would like to review this recording, please let me know. The video recording will be transferred to the university's secure One drive server at the earliest opportunity. It will be deleted from any other devices.</p> <p>Please note that video recordings will be disposed on completion and verification of the transcript. Consent forms will be kept for 3 years after project completion. Final reports will be kept for 6 years upon project completion. Study data will be preserved and accessible for 10 years on Birmingham City University servers. This is in line with BCU Research Integrity guidelines.</p>
Potential benefits of participation	There is no financial reimbursement for participation in this study. However, I hope you will find the study interesting and I would be very happy to share my findings once my study is completed.
Potential risks of participation	I believe this is a low-risk piece of inquiry. Focus groups can enable a group of professionals in a non-threatening environment to exchange stories, listen to each other's views – enabling 'group-think' and allowing a multi-voiced discussion. Focus groups facilitate an in-depth exploration of a specific theme; this could be a positive experience for you, offering a platform to interact with other conductors.
Confidentiality arrangements	All at times your anonymity will be protected. Your name will not be used and care will be taken to remove any indirectly identifying information such as your place of work or geographical location. All members of the group will be asked to also respect confidentiality and anonymity. Data will be stored securely on the University's One drive server.
Data protection	<p>GPDR (2018) regulations protect your information. Any data related to this study will be anonymised and held on the university's secure one drive server. Data will be kept until the successful completion of my thesis and then destroyed. Although I will discuss my work and findings with my supervisor and fellow students this will always be anonymised.</p> <p>Should you have any concerns about how your personal data is used please contact the Data Protection Officer on informationmanagement@bcu.ac.uk or +44 (0)121 331-5288 or Data Protection Officer, Information Management Team, Birmingham City University, University House, 15 Bartholomew Row, Birmingham, B5 5JU.</p> <p>Should you need to make a complaint you can do so directly at: The Information Commissioner at Information</p>

	Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF, further information available at www.ico.org.uk
Participants' rights	Participants have the right to informed consent. You have the right to withdraw from the study until the recording from your focus group has been transcribed (without prejudice). You retain the right to anonymity and data protection throughout.
Who the funders are	This study is not funded.
Details of anyone who has been responsible for reviewing the study	This work will be overseen by my BCU supervisors, Dr Carolyn Blackburn, Dr Shannon Ludgate and Dr Julia Everitt.
Details of Supervisors/senior academics	Should you have any concerns please contact: Dr Carolyn Blackburn carolyn.blackburn@bcu.ac.uk
Details of who to contact if participants have a complaint	HELS_Ethics@bcu.ac.uk
Your own contact details	Annamaria Berger-Jones annamaria.berger-jones@mail.bcu.ac.uk
Details of providing informed consent	If you are happy to take part in my study, please sign the accompanying consent form electronically and send it back to me in a return email. I can record your consent if that is preferable.

Appendix B – Pilot study: Consent form



15th June 2022

If you are happy to proceed to be a part of the PILOT study, please read this consent form. Please tick all applicable statements at the end of this form and sign and date at the bottom. The form needs to be returned to me electronically **by 21st June 2022.**

I would like to remind you that participation is entirely voluntary and **thank you** for your consideration.

Study title	A theoretical exploration of contemporary conductive education (CE) philosophy and conductors' professional identity
Summary of the project	<p>My aspirations of conceptualising the philosophy of CE aligns with Conductors' Professional Standard 1.4: be committed to explanation and clarification of their philosophy and 2.7: articulate CE both orally and in writing (PCA, 2017).</p> <p>Besides of a theoretical exploration, my interest also encompasses issues surrounding conductors' professional identity. I feel that by writing a robust theoretical framework for contemporary CE, some of the issues surrounding professional identity could be addressed allowing me to make a positive impact.</p>
Voluntary participation	Participation in this pilot study is entirely voluntary. Non-participation is entirely your choice and will not have any adverse effects.
An invitation to participate	I would like to invite you to take part in this study by engaging in a focus group with other conductors. You would be in a group with 5-6 other conductors on the online platform MS Teams.
Participants to consent to participate in different ways	<p>Please tick the boxes next to statements you agree with/are happy to consent to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) I have read and understood the information sheet <input type="checkbox"/>b) I have had the opportunity to ask questions <input type="checkbox"/>c) I understand that participation is entirely voluntary <input type="checkbox"/>d) I agree to take part <input type="checkbox"/>e) I agree to be video recorded <input type="checkbox"/>f) I understand that I have the right withdraw from the study without prejudice until the data analysis process started <input type="checkbox"/>g) I understand my right to anonymity/confidentiality <input type="checkbox"/>

Name:

Signed:

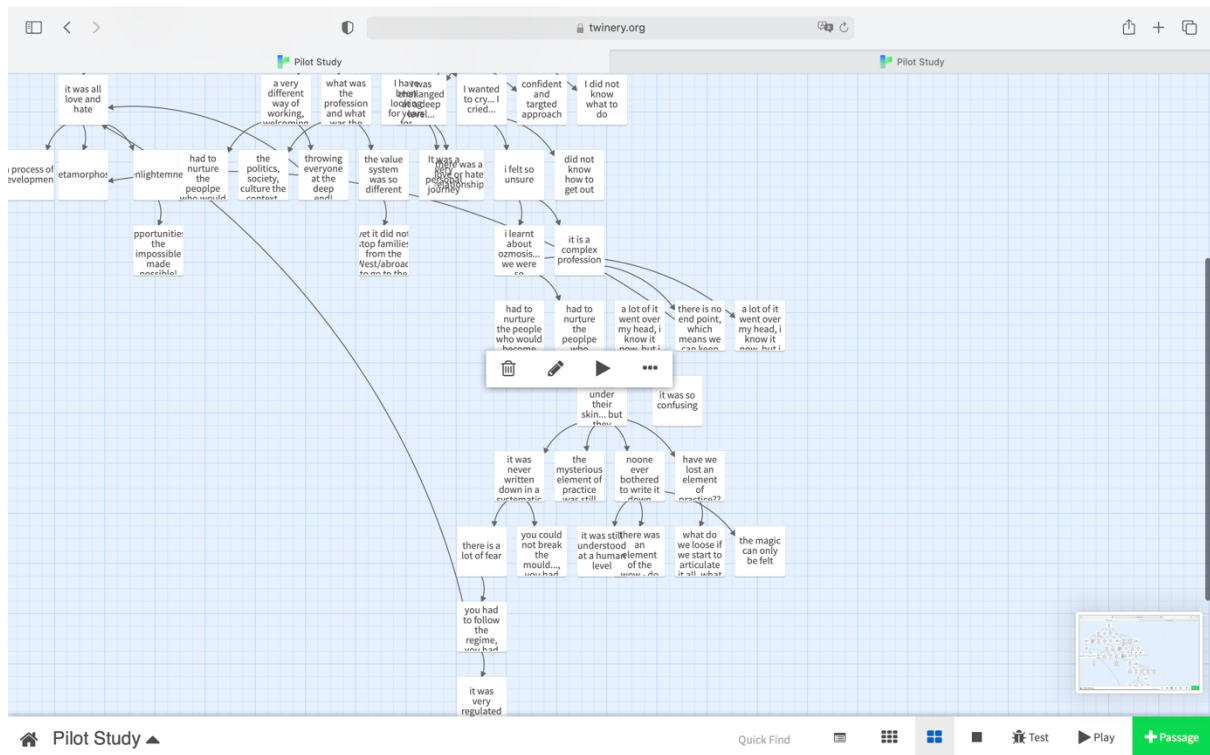
Dated:

Remember to return this form to me by 21st June 2022.

Thank you.

Annamaria

Appendix C – Pilot study: Twine



Appendix D – Participant Information Sheet



Participant Information Sheet

7th May 2022

Study title	A theoretical exploration of contemporary conductive education (CE) philosophy and conductors' professional identity
Aims of your study	My primary intention is to offer a clearly articulated theoretical framework concerning the philosophy of conductive education (CE). This will aid the understanding of the complex narratives in CE and could offer clarification on some misconceptions. Through this conceptualisation, situating contemporary CE within education in a cogent way could be made possible. Issues surrounding conductors' professional identity will also be addressed. We need to find a more useful way of knowing. This will not only have a positive impact on CE and us conductors, but it could also influence the dominant discourse in the field of disability.
Research questions	RQ1: How can a post-qualitative inquiry aid the theorisation of contemporary CE philosophy? RQ2: Which theories can be applied to help the conceptualisation of contemporary CE philosophy? RQ3: What informs conductors' professional identity and how does this matter?
An invitation to participate	The purpose of this information leaflet is to inform you about the project so that you can decide whether you would like to take part or not.
An explanation of why the participant(s) has been invited	I invited you to be a part of this inquiry as you are a qualified conductor currently working in the UK. Therefore, you would be able to inform this study by sharing your thoughts and experiences.
Whether participation is voluntary	Participation in this study is voluntary. Non-participation is entirely your choice and will not have any adverse effects. Please read this information and do ask any questions. If you are happy to proceed, I will ask you to sign a consent form. If you prefer I can audio record your consent.
What you expect of participants if they consent	I would like to invite you to be a part of a focus group. You can choose if you would like to / be able to do this in person or via the online platform MS Teams. Focus groups will be run in one or the other format, no hybrid sessions will be offered. The length of this will be around 60-90 minutes. The size of the group will be around 6-7 participants. If you decide to take part face to face, a suitable and convenient venue will be arranged to suit all members of the focus groups.

	<p>With your consent I would like to make a video recording of the focus group. If you would like to review this recording, please let me know. The video recording will be transferred to the university's secure One drive server at the earliest opportunity. It will be deleted from any other devices.</p> <p>Please note that video recordings will be disposed on completion and verification of the transcript. Consent forms will be kept for 3 years after project completion. Final reports will be kept for 6 years upon project completion. Study data will be preserved and accessible for 10 years on Birmingham City University servers. This is in line with BCU Research Integrity guidelines.</p>
Potential benefits of participation	There is no financial reimbursement for participation in this study. However, I hope you will find the study interesting and I would be very happy to share my findings once my study is completed.
Potential risks of participation	I believe this is a low-risk piece of inquiry. Focus groups can enable a group of professionals in a non-threatening environment to exchange stories, listen to each other's views – enabling 'group-think' and allowing a multi-voiced discussion. Focus groups facilitate an in-depth exploration of a specific theme; this could be a positive experience for you, offering a platform to interact with other conductors.
Confidentiality arrangements	All at times your anonymity will be protected. Your name will not be used and care will be taken to remove any indirectly identifying information such as your place of work or geographical location. All members of the group will be asked to also respect confidentiality and anonymity. Data will be stored securely on the University's One drive server.
Data protection	<p>GPDR (2018) regulations protect your information. Any data related to this study will be anonymised and held on the university's secure one drive server. Data will be kept until the successful completion of my thesis and then destroyed. Although I will discuss my work and findings with my supervisor and fellow students this will always be anonymised.</p> <p>Should you have any concerns about how your personal data is used please contact the Data Protection Officer on informationmanagement@bcu.ac.uk or +44 (0)121 331-5288 or Data Protection Officer, Information Management Team, Birmingham City University, University House, 15 Bartholomew Row, Birmingham, B5 5JU.</p> <p>Should you need to make a complaint you can do so directly at: The Information Commissioner at Information Commissioner's Office, Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF, further information available at www.ico.org.uk</p>

Participants' rights	Participants have the right to informed consent. You have the right to withdraw from the study until the recording from your focus group has been transcribed (without prejudice). You retain the right to anonymity and data protection throughout.
Who the funders are	This study is not funded.
Details of anyone who has been responsible for reviewing the study	This work will be overseen by my BCU supervisors, Dr Carolyn Blackburn, Dr Shannon Ludgate and Dr Julia Everitt.
Details of Supervisors/senior academics	Should you have any concerns please contact: Dr Carolyn Blackburn carolyn.blackburn@bcu.ac.uk
Details of who to contact if participants have a complaint	HELS_Ethics@bcu.ac.uk
Your own contact details	Annamaria Berger-Jones annamaria.berger-jones@mail.bcu.ac.uk
Details of providing informed consent	If you are happy to take part in my study, please sign the accompanying consent form electronically and send it back to me in a return email. I can record your consent if that is preferable.

Appendix E – Consent form



15th June 2022

If you are happy to proceed please read this consent form. Please tick all applicable statements at the end of this form and sign and date at the bottom. The form needs to be returned to me electronically by 21st June 2022. I would like to remind you that participation is entirely voluntary and thank you for your consideration.

Study title	A theoretical exploration of contemporary conductive education (CE) philosophy and conductors' professional identity
Summary of the project	My aspirations of conceptualising the philosophy of CE aligns with Conductors' Professional Standard 1.4: be committed to explanation and clarification of their philosophy and 2.7: articulate CE both orally and in writing (PCA, 2017). Besides of a theoretical exploration, my interest also encompasses issues surrounding conductors' professional identity. I feel that by writing a robust theoretical framework for contemporary CE, some of the issues surrounding professional identity could be addressed allowing me to make a positive impact.
Voluntary participation	Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. Non-participation is entirely your choice and will not have any adverse effects.
An invitation to participate	I would like to invite you to take part in this study by engaging in a focus group with other conductors. You can choose whether you would prefer to do this online or face to face. You would be in a group with 6 other conductors in line with your preference, no hybrid sessions will be offered.
Participants to consent to participate in different ways	Please tick the boxes next to statements you agree with/are happy to consent to: h) I have read and understood the information sheet <input type="checkbox"/> i) I have had the opportunity to ask questions <input type="checkbox"/> j) I understand that participation is entirely voluntary <input type="checkbox"/> k) I agree to take part <input type="checkbox"/> l) I agree to be video recorded <input type="checkbox"/> m) I understand that I have the right withdraw from the study without prejudice until the data analysis process started <input type="checkbox"/> n) I understand my right to anonymity/confidentiality <input type="checkbox"/>

Please indicate your preference in what format you would like to engage in a focus group.

I would prefer ...

1. ... online focus groups ☐

2. ... face to face focus groups ☐ (Have you got a location preference? How far are you willing to travel?
.....)
3. I have no preference ☐

Name:

Signed:

Name of setting:

Dated:

Remember to return this form to me by 21st June 2022.

Thank you.

Annamaria

Appendix F – Recruitment script

Dear Conductor Colleagues,

For my doctoral research I need your help! I am looking to recruit 35 conductors currently working in the UK.

I would like to invite you to a focus group exploring professional identity. These can be done online or face-to-face (based on your preferences) in groups of 6-7 and it would take no longer than an hour and a half. Please get in touch if you are interested so I can email you a participant information sheet as well as a consent form.

The cut off for expression of interest is 13th May.

To give you an idea of my study:

“My primary intention is to offer a clearly articulated theoretical framework concerning the philosophy of conductive education (CE). This will aid the understanding of the complex narratives in CE and could offer clarification on some misconceptions. Through this conceptualisation, situating contemporary CE within education in a cogent way could be made possible. Issues surrounding conductors’ professional identity will also be addressed. We need to find a more useful way of knowing. This will not only have a positive impact on CE and us conductors, but it could also influence the dominant discourse in the field of disability.”

Appendix G – Focus group guidelines

1. *Welcome and thanks*

2. *Will read out the 'rules':*

- Participation in this focus group is fully voluntary, thank you for choosing to be here. But please remember that if at any point you would like to leave, it is your choice to do so. By doing that, you are removing your consent and anything you said until that point will not be used in the study.

- I would like this focus group to provide a platform for everyone to freely express themselves, their feelings and opinions without the fear of judgement or prejudice. It is important that everyone's voices are heard, listened to and respected.

- Everything said here today will be treated with the strictest of confidence, this applies not just to me the researcher, but all group members as well. Thank you.

- In my thesis, no names of conductors or their settings will appear - ensuring confidentiality.

- The focus group will be video recorded, this then will be transcribed and analysed by myself. The recording will be kept safely in accordance with regulation and will be deleted on completion of my study. However, the data collected will be kept for 10 years.

- I will invite you to take part in two activities with me today, I hope you will enjoy them as well as the experience of being part of this group.

- Would anyone like to add anything further to these 'ground rules'. It is important that you feel comfortable with this process.

3. Now I would like to invite you to share the one thing/something/anything you selected to bring with you, which aligns with or informs your professional identity. Please explain why you picked what you picked to the group.

4. *Show Padlet.* The idea is to use this platform to create a wall with vignettes around conductors' professional identity. Would be great, if this could be a collaborative and organic process. I will ask you to start talking about yourself as a conductor with each other. I will mute myself and only act as a facilitator. I will pull out some words/phrases from what you say and put them onto the Padlet. After 20-30 minutes or so, I will stop the conversation and invite you to contribute to the Padlet.
Stop screenshare!

5. I would like to ask you to start talking about yourself as a conductor, your professional identity and anything else which you think is relevant. Please feel free to ask each other questions, and just have a chat.

Triggers for words/phrases I will input onto Padlet:

- *change in speaker's voice / body language / energy*
 - *change in other participants from what they hear / experience / remember*
 - *silences*
 - *aspects which resonate with most/all*
 - *controversial feelings*
 - *anything that moves me in an unexpected way*
6. *Stop conversation, drop link to Padlet into chat.* If you would like to please take a 5 minutes break. Otherwise, or on your return if you could follow the link to the group's Padlet and start to contribute to it. Please upload a photo of your chosen 'thing', you can write about it or just simply add the photo. You then can continue to write wherever you would like on the wall. If any of the words/phrases I picked out move you, please add to those. You can just write words, sentences or paragraphs whatever feels right (vignettes are meant to be short and snappy). Think back to the conversation had, please write about aspects of the transaction had, which made you feel/think, gave you ideas, resonated with you. As this is designed to be a collaborative process as you finished writing/adding to one, see if anyone else wrote anything that triggers you, if yes, add to it. You can add images/quotes if you feel they could express your thoughts better. There is about 20 minutes or so to do this.

Call time. Thank people, and ask for any other contributions

Appendix H – Focus group date confirmation and survey link letters

Good afternoon,

Hope this email finds you well, enjoying the summer holidays.

Thank you for sending me your availability, apologies if I was not able to give you your first choice. The group you will be part of will take place on:

DATE at TIME.

A Microsoft Teams invite will be sent to the same email address you will receive this email on. Please accept the invite, this will let me know that you got it ok.

I would like to ask you, on the day, to bring something / anything / one thing with you which aligns with and/or informs your professional identity as a conductor. This will shape of our first activity 😊

Could I please also ask you to fill out a very short survey (6 questions) following the link here:

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=VeArfoqCI0W15bd62ZOXhakAhQ_efZZLrS6mLpMP5cFUQ1NIWjE0STNMRFpCSDU2REVHWTNWWFZCMi4u

The information provided will give my study some context.

Thank you for your willingness and time! Without you, I could not conduct this research.

Do let me know if you have any questions or queries regarding any part of the process or if you are no longer able to make the date/time above.

Kind regards,
Annamaria

Appendix I – Focus group date letter

1st July 2022

Thank you again for consenting to take part in my focus groups. In order to accommodate busy home and work lives I will suggest dates in the summer then some more if needed in the autumn/winter period.

Please could you indicate your preferences and availability in the table below by marking the dates with a Y (yes, you are available) and an N (no, you are not available).

Date	Start time	Yes/No	Indicate preference
Tue 23 August	10.30		
Wed 31 August	14.00		
Thu 1 September	10.00		
Thu 1 September	19.00		
Fri 2 September	16.00		

If none of the above suggested dates/times work for you, could you please let me know below what are the best days of the week where you might be available and during what periods (am/pm/evening).

Alternative dates / day(s) of the week / time period (am/pm/evening)	
--	--

I appreciate your patience while I try to navigate the logistics of organising these groups. Please could you return your answer to me (annamaria.berger-jones@mail.bcu.ac.uk) by the very latest 1st August so I can get sorted and send invitations out.

Again, thank you. Without willing participants research cannot take place. Looking forward to working with you.

Kind regards,

Annamaria


Appendix J – Focus group 1: Padlet

Padlet
 abergerjones + 3 • 9m
Becoming Professional Identity 1
 23 August 2022

Adaptability

Add comment

The environment / setting



Anonymous 13m
Where we work and who we work with really can shape our identity. Lots of conductors now work with other professionals, but is this diluting CE and therefore our identity?


Add comment

love

Anonymous 10m
commitment and love for the people you work for

Add comment

A conductor needs many of hands



Add comment

Duty to educate about CE

Anonymous 13m
Ensuring your team are aware of the key aspects! E.g importance of rhythmical intention

Add comment

Understanding of conditions/diagnosis

Add comment

responsibility

Anonymous 17m
When working with other professionals we have a responsibility to remember our training and who we are.

Add comment

Personality

Anonymous 19m
Using yourself to be a motivator- we all have different strengths and areas we thrive in e.g 'preppiness' for young children to be engaged

Anonymous 18m
Encouraging others to be themselves. Providing situations/ environments to allow them to express themselves in different ways.

Add comment

Privilege

Anonymous 13m
To be able to help others!

Add comment

Justification / Belief

Anonymous 19m
Believing in potential.

Anonymous 15m
Confidence in own identity (professional and personal) is strongly linked with own beliefs and this is constantly shaped by new experiences.

Anonymous 14m
The first word that came to my head was, orthofunctional personality

Add comment

What do conductors do??

Anonymous 20m
Teach movements and techniques to overcome difficulties. Improve confidence.

Anonymous 13m
a bit of everything

Add comment

other professionals

Anonymous 18m
Listening and sharing ideas to help remain a person-centred approach

Anonymous 17m
Working alongside other professionals right from the beginning of my career has shaped my identity as a conductor and found that this experience also prompted me to think about what it means being a conductor. Having said that, i would have loved working alongside other conductors rather than in isolation when I started my career and I would support this idea for the future.

Add comment

CPD - taking responsibility for own learning

Anonymous 19m
When working with other professionals there is often opportunity for CPD on a daily/weekly basis from these professionals, but we must remember to carry out CPD specifically for CE

Anonymous 14m
Our own identity is subject to change and stopping to reflect on how it is changing and what influences and experiences are changing it is very important in our CPD.

Add comment

DUTY

Anonymous 22m
keeping safe, exploring, providing challenges, believing in yourself and others, seeing their potential, having fun and always learning.

Add comment

adjustments in my head


Anonymous 18m
Learning from mistakes- trial and error is the best way to learn!

Add comment

Impact of a place/space

Anonymous 16m
Form us, help to find our own way.

Add comment



Celebrating every achievement!

Add comment

Appendix K – Focus group 2: Padlet


Padlet

abergjones + 4 • 7m

Becoming Professional Identity 2

AM 1st September 2022

Remember our roots!!



Anonymous 7m
the past helps to understand the present and will help to build the future.

Add comment

Be human

It's OK to not know!

Add comment

change-develop

Add comment

Being strong

Knowing where our professional boundaries are
Being clear on our own professional identity and staying true to that

Add comment

Power of the human brain

Understanding and believing how the brain can change

Add comment

Simple resources

Anonymous 16m
Beanbags: can be used in so many ways

Anonymous 15m
Doesn't have to be complicated

Anonymous 14m
knowing why we use the resource as we may use them differently to other professionals - equipment irrelevant it's why and how we use it

Anonymous 9m
Show how CE is adaptable in home environment/ daily life

Add comment

Continuous learning. Gathering information. (using Google)

Add comment

Role of emotions in movement

Looking broadly at how movements are influenced by how we feel - in both directions

Add comment

Communication

Anonymous 13m
using a wide variety of communication strands

Anonymous 13m
With the participants

Anonymous 12m
and other professionals

Anonymous 11m
wider community (CE awareness)

Add comment

Team work

Anonymous 20m
group of senior, experienced and newly qualified conductors

Anonymous 20m
Learning from each other.

Anonymous 20m
Respecting each other

Add comment


build trust

Anonymous 19m
with participants

Anonymous 19m
with other professionals

Anonymous 16m
with team members

Add comment



Anonymous 13m
teaching by example

Add comment

RELATIONSHIPS

Anonymous 21m
Building strong relationships with the participants.

Anonymous 20m
Supporting the whole family

Anonymous 16m
Working with other staff/professionals - mutual respect and support

Anonymous 15m
intelligent love

Add comment


personal/professional

Anonymous 18m
Confidence

Anonymous 15m
being flexible

Add comment

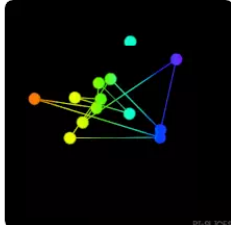
observation



Anonymous 19m
Conductor skill: To stand back and observe

Add comment

CONNECTIONS



Anonymous 21m
Connecting with the parents and the children.

Anonymous 21m
also between conductors

Anonymous 12m
across whole family

Add comment

Listening Skills

Anonymous 18m
Understanding the impact of living with a disability on the person and their family - being non-judgemental

Add comment

Social Context

Anonymous 19m
The group and how this needs to be created

Anonymous 14m
Looking at the wider context: Family/ Team around the child

Add comment

BELIEF

Anonymous 14m
in the philosophy

Anonymous 14m
in the participants

Anonymous 14m
in ourselves

Add comment

Language

Anonymous 18m
as a tool for thinking

Add comment

DO YOUR BEST

Anonymous 11m
Use the team for the best possible problem solving

Add comment

Culture

Anonymous 18m
Adapting CE to the relevant culture.

Anonymous 17m
where CE comes from and the culture of the 'service user' (not only the culture where CE is delivered)

Anonymous 17m
Developing our practice to meet different cultural needs

Add comment

Appendix L – Focus group 3: Padlet


:Padlet

abertgerjones + 2 • 6m

Becoming Professional Identity 3

PM 1st September 2022

Highlighting the achievements



Add comment

Confidence




Photo took of my son whilst I was in training to become a conductor and as soon as I look back on it I feel like to me it visualises the ladder within the zone


Recognising the confidence and development of our participants and the confidence within our professional selves when we just take a step back.

1

Anonymous 6m

I am more confident now than as a newly graduated conductor - to explain CE to families and other professionals and show a parent what and how they can facilitate their child. Partly due to time and gaining experience with more children but also we are lucky to have had great support from a private physio and SaLT who has greatly increased my confidence giving my opinion in front of other professionals - by asking my opinion and using examples of our good practice to put their points across also.


Add comment



This t-shirt identifies me as a conductor. It makes me feel like I belong.

Add comment

confrontation



1

Anonymous 11m

Sometimes we need to voice our opinions and be the little cat

Add comment

willingness

Add comment

What is the magic?

3

Anonymous 20m

Seeing the participants achieve no matter how small and being able to celebrate those moments with the families

Anonymous 16m

Being available in the moment of need. Showing our families that regardless of the narrative they have heard before THERE IS HOPE and there is always room for progress

Anonymous 7m

Magic is the love and care we provide to build positive relationships, which enables us as a professional to create an environment for learning.

Add comment

care

2

Anonymous 17m

We have the ability to show care far beyond most professionals as we are outside the system. We should take hold of this with both hands.

Anonymous 9m

As conductors we care about the people around us as positive relationships are the corner stones who we are and what we do.

Add comment

flexibility

3

Anonymous 18m

Every person is different on different days. We have such an amazing opportunity to be flexible in our practice to meet the need of that child on that particular day.

Anonymous 18m

Always being able to allow other professional inputs and incorporating them into my sessions

Anonymous 12m

Being able to 'see' each child on that specific day and during that specific moment and adjust and adapt to get the most from the session for them.

Add comment

MOTIVATION

5

Anonymous 10m

always finding a way to motivate the child weather it be through a toy or game etc.

Anonymous 9m

This comes out of relationship and being willing to adapt your way INTO their way. Not only does it tap into their motivation but it taps into their need of being HEARD and them knowing their wants are valid too.

Anonymous 8m

An individual's motivation will change from one moment to the next, being flexible with this and having multiple options helps me when delivering sessions

Anonymous 6m

To be motivated to learn and to motivated to teach.

Anonymous 6m

The APPLE 🍏

Add comment

relationships

3

Anonymous 19m

Intelligent love is a the best way for me to describe how as conductors we form relationships with our participants, to other professionals

Anonymous 12m

Relationships are important at all levels when as a conductor you work with other people, such parents, colleagues and other professionals.

Anonymous 12m

The positive fun caring yet professional relationship you build with the child as a conductor. The relationship with the parents and siblings also is unique. We ask parents (usually during CE awareness week) what they find is different about CE from other professionals working with their child and what they feel works for their child in CE. The fact that we get to know their child so well as an individual, we care, and the family dynamic.

Add comment

supporting the family

2

Anonymous 20m

This is so important! To know that not only the child is being supported but the whole family is too! Everyone is valid!

Anonymous 11m

A lot of the families feel isolated (this is even worse post covid) and so offering them a support system and other families to link with can be a lifeline.

Add comment

positive framing

1

Anonymous 8m

always shining a positive light on situations and during sessions framing them so they are always positive

Add comment

multi-purpose

1

Anonymous 7m

Not just for the conditions that are 'typically CE'

Add comment

Planning and Preparation

1

Anonymous 12m

How we plan our sessions compared to other professionals, how we tailor it for the childrens motivation etc. and try to make it fun and engaging, also with a routine that they can follow not only in the session but at home

Add comment

FUN

3

Anonymous 15m

BUBBLES!!!

Anonymous 15m

Always making everyone smile and laugh during the sessions

Anonymous 9m

Learning should be fun - more is learnt, remembered and incorporated into every day life if there is enjoyment while learning. Fun can be simple - bubbles! or more complex games and activities depending on the group.

Add comment

Appendix M – Focus group 4: Padlet


Padlet

@bergerjones + 3 • 6m

Becoming Professional Identity 4


2nd September 2022

Patience




Add comment

Trying to juggle lots of things all at once



Add comment

running trainers old and new...representing the different seasons of being a conductor...the many roads walked down, the falls and knock backs and the stories to tell...and the freshness and confidence that comes with a new season. Old and new but the same brand...the things that make me a conductor are the common threads.

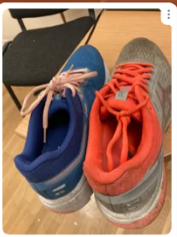


Add comment

We give hope to parents, families


Anonymous 7m
Our work with them is as vital as the work with the participant.

Add comment



Add comment

Professional identity



Able to bounce back, often captures peoples attention and can be motivating!

Add comment

stronger identity through conflict

Anonymous 16m
this is not a constant process but one that ebbs and flows. Some experience strengthen our identity, some weaken it, some take it in a different direction even. At times I feel my identity has been diluted and sometimes made stronger.

Anonymous 12m
asking yourself questions about what you believe and why helps you to prepare for situations where your perspective might be challenged.

Add comment

How do we, how should we, how can we communicate CE to others?

Anonymous 14m
Consistently and persistently

Anonymous 14m
Can this be done through having a presence in places? For example, review meetings. Sending a report may not portray the essence of CE, so how can we show up and make time to be in conversation about CE.

Anonymous 10m
I do feel social media is a really strong avenue for this. I have noticed the way in which CE is being written and talked about online and in media is now much more heavily led by conductors' voices themselves. This means we are actually saying what we are saying about our own world. Since I think this is very likely the first point for many people to 'see' CE I think this is a very positive thing... however - we need WIKIPEDIA to be a better reflection of CE as currently this isn't the best and would also be a first point of learning for those new to the approach.

Add comment

Is there magic? What is it? Is it one thing?

Anonymous 15m
Being inspired and use the source of our inspiration to inspire others.

Anonymous 12m
The giving of 'hope'

Anonymous 9m
I think the magic is the gift of seeing the world through our CE 'lens'... seeing things differently

Add comment

What impacts your identity?

Anonymous 12m
team around you, children/adults you work with, experiences you have, conflicts you encounter

Anonymous 12m
The environment is key.

Anonymous 10m
Experiences!

Anonymous 6m
The belief I have in myself- who I am not just what I do.

Add comment

POTENTIAL

Anonymous 15m
Recognising that there is potential in me as well as those I work with. Where I am now 'professionally' isn't where I have to stay. There is more I can learn

Anonymous 10m
Totally agree...I have learnt not to set limits on my own potential in the same way I wouldn't with the children. I have achieved more than I thought I would...who knows what the future holds?

Anonymous 7m
We saw paralysed people learning to walk. why should we limit others or ourselves?

Add comment

What is the WHOLE?
(W)Holic, (W)Holism

Add comment

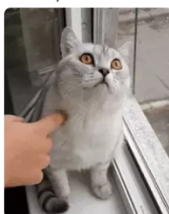
Seeing the World through a conductive lens

Anonymous 16m
How do we encourage other professionals to see through this lens too?

Anonymous 13m
I like to think that for both our participants and other professionals it is about 'loosening the soil'... i.e. to just loosen their ideas a tiny bit to begin to allow new shoots to grow.

Add comment

Conflict/Frustration



Anonymous 16m
makes us stronger

Anonymous 15m
Can help to improve your confidence and our work.

Anonymous 11m
We call it productive discomfort. It help us to learn much more than comfort and peace would do.

Anonymous 7m
feels more useful and easier to approach (and achieve success) the further into my career I go...

Anonymous 6m
Being challenged makes us think.

Add comment

DUTY?!...

Anonymous 11m
I would disagree for me personally, it doesn't feel like a duty more like a calling maybe

Anonymous 10m
Rather passion and profession.

Anonymous 8m
I think we have a strong sense of doing the 'right thing' for people but I am not sure we frame that as a 'duty'. More a purpose...

Add comment

Passion for CE

Anonymous 11m
I think places like CEPEG conference and PCA workshops help to reignite the passion! It is great when Conductors can come together, encourage each other and share practice. This always fuels me for the next challenges that I face.

Anonymous 9m
We use social media platforms to spread the words, connect families with CE and each other and telling stories that help them to understand while we believe in CE and so they should.

Add comment

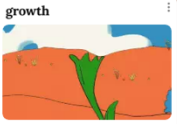
Professional Development

Anonymous 14m
Takes many forms from structured sessions to day to day experiences.

Anonymous 6m
professional development = personal development

Add comment

growth



Anonymous 17m
recognising a growth mindset in ourselves, nurturing growth in our participants and recognising not everyone we come across will have growth mindset (or be in a position of readiness for it).

Anonymous 8m
Growing even in 'adverse' conditions - perhaps when practice has changed or been challenged

Add comment

BELIEF

Anonymous 14m
How often do we use the word belief in our daily work etc.? I think I use it all the time!

Add comment

Being a conductor is who I am...
Personal and Professional selves

Anonymous 17m
It impacts the way we see the whole world.

Anonymous 17m
not just for our participants, but for ourselves, our own families, our choices etc.

Anonymous 16m
Ingrained in us - never switch off from it - it's how we see the world

Anonymous 15m
but also, not all conductors have quite the same mindset... there are variations in CE. How does this impact what we do?

Anonymous 12m
I think CE means something different to everyone. Conductors motivation for studying CE may be different - could be from personal experience (knowing someone who has had a Stroke for example..)

Anonymous 9m
It forms the basis of everything I do and how I approach my work.

Add comment

FUN and MOTIVATION

Anonymous 9m
Can differ depending on the age group you are working with

Anonymous 8m
I am for fun and motivation to be a common theme in all my sessions. I want to feel motivated myself through fun in the hope that this will be seen and shared by the children.

Anonymous 8m
if children are motivated they will learn and learning should be FUN!

Add comment

Appendix N – Published article

Berger-Jones, A. (2024) A narrative review of Conductive Education as a professional practice. *Educational Futures*, [online] 15(2), pp. 27-60.

Article available [here](#)